

SNCC 50th Anniversary Conference
Shaw University, Raleigh NC, April 2010
Transcript Video Recording #13
(Raw, unedited, no annotation)

Speaker 1 (00:00:18):

And what I'm gonna do is to, um, uh, to conserve time. Uh, I'm gonna introduce my name is Avon Rollins. I was originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, and I'm back in Knoxville. I see, I was, uh, the field secretary, the member of the executive committee of the student non-violent coordinating committee as the project manager for, uh, projects in Axel, as well as in, uh, Virginia and North Carolina. And we have a very distinguished panel here with me today on wood line that Avon Rollins introduced himself. Pull the mic over to you. Ivanhoe hold. Yeah, just introduce yourself. Thank you. Going to introduce ourselves.

Speaker 2 (00:01:02):

I'm Ivanhoe Donaldson. I was with SNCC from 1960, uh, late fall to, uh, 1967. And, uh, I'm a rattle RER,

Speaker 1 (00:01:17):

Matthew I'm, Matthew Jones. I started with snake and before it started in 4, 19 60, I was with the freedom singers and I went to Danville, Virginia and worked with Avon Rollins. And later on, came back to snake full time. Okay.

Speaker 3 (00:01:39):

My name's Bill Hanson. Um, I was in SNCC from sometime the summer of 61 until I don't know, sometime in the fall of 66, as I recall, uh, uh, senior moments, memories, fade, uh, uh, and, uh, I currently, uh, live in Nigeria, which is why I'm wearing this.

Speaker 1 (00:02:04):

Okay. Shocked. We don't have anybody, was anybody here from Cambridge was involved in Cambridge movement? No,

Speaker 3 (00:02:10):

I was

Speaker 1 (00:02:11):

On,

Speaker 4 (00:02:12):

Yeah. You can

Speaker 1 (00:02:13):

Just look like you at,

Speaker 3 (00:02:17):

Um, I, I was in, I was, I was in Cambridge. I went to Cambridge, Reggie too, so I can talk about that one.

Speaker 1 (00:02:22):

Yeah, but Cambridge was a very, very interesting community, uh, with SNCC. It wasn't a few projects. It was really headed by a, a very mature adult person. And in terms of glory, rich, uh, most of us back in, uh, the early 1960s were in our early twenties someplace. And I think Mrs. Richardson, she had to be some 20 years older than us. And she got involved as a result of her

daughter involved in the movement in, uh, Cambridge. Uh, Cambridge is a very interesting, uh, community. Uh, so you wanna talk about Cambridge a bit?

Speaker 3 (00:03:05):

I can.

Speaker 1 (00:03:06):

Okay. Yeah,

Speaker 3 (00:03:07):

Go ahead. You remember just, uh, what the, the history of it? Um, Cambridge, Cambridge, Cambridge, uh, the, um, I had, uh, uh, gone off to Mississippi in the summer of 61 as a freedom rider and spent six, eight weeks. I don't know, whatever it was in, in prison there. Um, never heard of SNCC before and after it was over. After I got outta prison, I went home to Cincinnati, my hometown, I got bored. I had been bitten and I caught a bus to New York city to of the core office and the core people were doing something in Baltimore. I went to Baltimore. I mean, this is a very short form here, uh, where I met Reggie reginal, J Robinson, who was wandering around here somewhere who's from Baltimore and was a, uh, one of the, the new bunch of, uh, of, of SNCC field secretary says we were called then, um, I don't know about 13 or 14 of them at that time.

Speaker 3 (00:04:05):

And he talked me into, uh, into joining up. We, we, uh, there are a couple of things going on there. He decided I'm again, I'm gonna keep this short. We, we should go over to, uh, because he's from Baltimore and knew the Eastern shore. So we said, let's go over to the Eastern shore and see if we can do something. We went over there and scouted out a couple of places, found a place to live with a, the, a family called the Sinclairs, who were, uh, uh, in the undertaking business in, uh, in Cambridge. And we moved in with them. And one day I was, I went over to dock facet who owns a, a drug store there. And his niece, as I recall, that would, uh, was, uh, working behind the counter. And I began talking to her that was Gloria Richardson. It's first time I met her. And, uh, uh, I, I thought that she might enjoy coming to a meeting that night. And, um, she did. And the, that rest of that part is history. I was only, I was there from something in the neighborhood of, oh, I don't know. It would've been November of 61 until perhaps March, April of, of, of 62. I think, I think, I mean, yeah, I think it's a about, about the time I was there.

Speaker 4 (00:05:25):

Hey, John. Um,

Speaker 5 (00:05:28):

No, no, come on on,

Speaker 4 (00:05:31):

I just, I'm not sure. Does this work,

Speaker 6 (00:05:40):

Does it work okay or, I'm not sure if this is, uh, also people want to have an oral history of what took place so that we can pass it on, uh, in the spring of, uh, 63, um,

Speaker 6 (00:05:56):

Some students at Swarthmore and some of the other, uh, Philadelphia, uh, schools, mainly white. One of them being Judy Richardson, who wasn't, um, came, uh, started freedom rides to Cambridge, um, to, uh, protest the segregation in Cambridge. Um, and, um, I think one of the things people have to understand is that, um, the, this is Maryland. This is just, I don't know, 90 miles from Philadelphia. It's not very south. And the Western shore, the city of Baltimore had desegregated its schools in the late fifties. I'm not saying it was a Paragon virtue. All I'm saying

is that the Western shore had already faced up to, uh, this and the Eastern shore was very, very far behind. And so, um, the, uh, it was very, very close by, uh, during the spring of 63, about 30, um, people, half of them called, was students. Half of them local blocks, uh, got arrested, spent a ma a week in jail for two counts of inciting, a riot, two counts of disturbing the peace and two counts of disorderly conduct.

Speaker 6 (00:07:10):

There were, there was a summer project there, um, during, um, one evening, I think it was a Saturday night. Um, we met at the local church and we walked down the main street of, um, of, um, Cambridge, which by the way, was called race street. Um, it divided the black community from the white community. And, um, we go to city hall and have a vigil, and, uh, we're walking back down race street down the middle of race street. Um, and, um, on the right hand side is the black community on the left hand side is the white community. Um, there are about three policemen and about 20 redneck, well, there are a hundred of us, so we're walking down the street, there are a hundred of us as 20 of them. So we're not too worried about it, unfortunately. Or I was at the end, the last four, we were about four abreast and I was at the last four and the line turned into the black community.

Speaker 6 (00:08:19):

So at one point there were 20 of them in the black community and 80 of them still on race street. And as you can imagine, the line got shorter and shorter people turned in. And when there was a, about the last 10 of us, the last two rows, the white, the rednecks broke, they threw us on the ground. They started kicking us a policeman, came by. I jumped up and ran into the long direct, which was on the corner there, which had a interest in the front for whites and on the side for blacks. And I ran into the black community, everybody on Eastern shore, you know, this is duck hunting country, and everybody in Eastern shore has a shotgun. And so, uh, I'm from, I'm from the city. I grew up in a row house in Philadelphia, and I spent the night there with a shotgun across my lap.

Speaker 6 (00:09:08):

And, uh, the next day, the governor calls out the national guard and, uh, Institute Marshall law in Cambridge, Maryland for the next, for the rest of the summer. I, I, I actually think that the, the, um, the people on the Baltimore side, um, they were trying to make themselves to be a Northern city and the people on the, uh, Eastern shore we're still country folks. And part of this, I think, was the people on the Eastern, on the, on the urbanites, um, one out over the country, folks about the direction, uh, that should take place in Maryland. And the governor did it by calling out the national are,

Speaker 1 (00:09:59):

You know, one, one of the things I remember distinctly about, uh, Cambridge is very interesting. Gloria Richardson, you know, the, uh, the city fathers passed a resolution, uh, where, where they were gonna just se desegregate a number of the facilities there. Uh, but, you know, they had a recall vote. And that was very interesting, which glory, as I recall, was very against that because if in fact, uh, people who are dispossessed become possessed and then another group of larger group of people decide to go to the fold and take that back away from you. And in fact, they did that. Matter of fact, uh, desegregation, Cambridge, as I recall, did not come until the 1964, uh, civil rights legislation, uh, because they recalled, uh, that decision to desegregate, uh, facilities in Cambridge. But Cambridge is a very, very interesting community. May I ask you wanna them to the mic and, and state your name when you go to the mic, please?

Speaker 7 (00:11:03):

That was just a joke,

Speaker 8 (00:11:05):

Just a joke,

Speaker 9 (00:11:07):

Carol Rogoff Halstrom. And after I completed my internship with the Northern student movement, uh, began as one of those Philadelphia of the area students, uh, visiting with some regularity, the Eastern shore. And I wanted to acknowledge the role of Morgan state university, a Myers in particular, because much of the work that we started to do, I was still in school then. So it was the classic weekend warrior kind of deal. Uh, but Augie Myers, uh, was a significant force and, and shaper of some of those early activities. Uh, I was one of those people who went to stay, I lived at, at Gloria's house with her mother and her kids. And, uh, and, and I just want to point out, I guess, yes, we were under martial law and yes, it was grim. And yes, there were people obviously, uh, being heard physically much of our work started out public accommodations, work, it moved into, uh, into certainly freedom schools and economic organizing and so on, but significant.

Speaker 9 (00:12:13):

And I think it needs to be noted that for a variety of complex reasons that Gloria's not here. And I think that we're, I think that we're diminished in part for all of those complex reasons, by the fact that she is not here and whether it was in part, uh, being a female at that point in time. And let's be honest, uh, it was not necessarily a friendly environment for female leadership in those stages of the movement. Um, certainly she, I will acknowledge myself too, can be a tad abrasive at times. Uh, there were challenges and being so close to DC had some benefits, uh, with the kind of support certainly that came out out of Howard. Uh, I suspect that it also had some, some, some difficult challenges as a result of issues of where the leadership vests and what some of the decision making authority is.

Speaker 9 (00:13:09):

And, and we don't need to explore it all in great length, but some of, I think of the triumphs and the ongoing challenges, uh, were as a result of some of the unresolved issues around, um, leadership and gender. Uh, during that period of time, I went on to work in the New York SNIC office, and then subsequently went down to south, um, Southwest Mississippi, lived with Ew Stepto and, and continued my in a career there, but certainly working with Reggie and with others was formative for me, but certainly much of the credit goes, I think, to the undersung Gloria Richardson.

Speaker 1 (00:13:46):

Okay. I want you to jot your questions down for whoever you might have. And, uh, so we can go through the panel and we talk about these three communities. Now, bill Hansen was in Arkansas and, um, SNCC secretary. And after the movement, he run off to Germany someplace. Is that right?

Speaker 3 (00:14:12):

I've been lots of places,

Speaker 1 (00:14:14):

Possibly lots of. Okay. Do you want to talk about, uh,

Speaker 3 (00:14:18):

I mean, I, I, uh, uh, I should, uh, I suppose, should say first in looking at this schedule here, uh, the, the, the program, uh, this is, uh, there is SNCC, uh, the SNCC is defined as Mississippi, south, west, Georgia and Alabama, and every place else. Uh, this panel right here is a residual category. Uh, we're all the ones who aren't the first three. Um, and, um, um, in many ways, uh, the, the, the, I was involved in, in Southwest Georgia for, uh, the, for a reasonably good while as well. In fact, I went to Southwest Georgia after I left Cambridge. I was in Cambridge about five

months, maybe six months. Uh, and, um, Cambridge was sort of incidental, um, as it began, let's put it that way. I'm talking about 1961, Cambridge was accidental. Um, and Arkansas was something the same, the same, the same thing.

Speaker 3 (00:15:23):

Um, and clearly neither one of them were neither Cambridge nor nor Arkansas were, or priorities from the point of view of SNCC, which in many ways was understandable, mean SNCC was a, uh, an organization beset from the beginning with, with, uh, you know, problems of, of, of money. I mean, there was the, there was, uh, you know, the standard civil rights organizations. There were the, um, the NA C P uh, much better known. Um, we were seen, as somebody said in the last panel, I think that I was somebody, somebody said it made reference to, to Martin Luther king and all of his, uh, you know, SNCC followers, uh, who, who, uh, which is, you know, for those of us who were or understand the inaccuracy of that. But that's the way it was appeared to the, uh, to the general public, um, uh, a woman, uh, that I know a German woman who spent a lot of time raising money in the 1960s and, uh, for, for students in the United States.

Speaker 3 (00:16:30):

And she would send it off to, uh, you know, the, this is not many, you know, thousands, several thousands of, of, of Deutsche mark in those days. And she would send it off to Martin Luther king, Atlanta, Georgia, and she was raising money for students. So again, I mean, this is off the topic of Arkansas and, and, and Cambridge, but it does say things about the, um, you know, uh, what was, what were priorities and, and, and, and, and funds and politics, and so on and so forth. Uh, in terms of Cambridge, again, that was, uh, something of an accident. I happened to meet Reggie Reggie, and I began talking Reggie thought for reasons that, that, uh, the gen woman who spoke a moment just a moment ago, um, um, um, underlined a bit is that they're, they're sort of two different Marylands. And certainly there were two different Marylands back in, in, uh, 19 61, 1 of which was on the Eastern shore, which was south.

Speaker 3 (00:17:30):

And one of which the, the Western shore, which is, you know, attempt thing to be as part of the Washington Baltimore congregation, and so on, was attempting to be north. And, and, uh, it, uh, Reggie wanted to go over there. So he thought it would be a, a good idea. And we did so. And, um, and I mentioned that I want, I want to, you know, repeat myself, but it was sort of accidental. And all of a sudden we were there and there wasn't anything foreman could do about it. Cuz there we were. And foreman of course, uh, you know, was the executive secretary of SNCC and the person in charge of allocating funds and personnel and so on and so forth. And may, if you will, tactical decisions. And uh, um, and, and from his point of view, uh, if, if you weren't in a priority situation, uh, these were, these were resources that weren't going to where he felt that they should go and, uh, which is, uh, you know, not, um, inappropriate given the position that he had as executive secretary.

Speaker 3 (00:18:35):

Um, the, uh, I went to Southwest Georgia. I mean, I'm gonna get Avon, I'll, I'll get to Arkansas in just a second. Uh, went to south, I went to Southwest Georgia and, uh, there was a, I spent about five months there. And again, this is again the accidental record of it. I, I, you know, had a, an accident, I'll put it that way. Uh, when I was in Southwest Georgia and ended up in the, in the hospital. And, uh, when I came, when I got out, I ended up in Atlanta and there was this guy from the Arkansas council in human relations who had been foreman to send somebody over there to Arkansas and foreman had been resisting it. So I walk into the office and, uh, uh, one day and foreman says, would you please go over and see this person, this guy named Sutton, uh, with the Arkansas council of human relations, would you, would you go over to, to Arkansas and see if you can get him to quiet the out and stopped bugging me cuz sending letters and so on and so forth.

Speaker 3 (00:19:34):

So I did and I went, uh, went to little rock and um, right during the missile crisis, I remember driving, I had an old foreman dug up a 1954 Pontiac somewhere and I was driving this thing across Alabama, Mississippi while and Arkansas while, um, uh, haw and Kennedy were jaw boning about whether or not, uh, to, uh, um, uh, vaporize the world. Um, I mean I think, I think, uh, most of the, most of the threats about vaporizing were coming from the Kennedy part of the, of that duo right there. And, um, the, uh, so I was wondering whether I'd get the little rock anyway, uh, because, uh, whether or not, uh, the, there would be bombs all over the place somewhere before, before I got there. Anyway, I, I got to got to little rock and, um, uh, met a couple of students and, and we began, I, there had been a, a brief flurry of sit-ins back in 1960, uh, that didn't get anywhere.

Speaker 3 (00:20:39):

It sort of faded out, uh, by the end of that, the spring of 1960. And, um, uh, they didn't get back going again and there was nothing there. And so I met some of the students who had been involved in that and, and, uh, we started a, uh, sit-ins in downtown little rock to, uh, rejuvenate, as it were rejuvenate, the, the movement that for those of you who were, uh, a bit older, you may, you know, certainly Arkansas had a particular reputation then. And of course the governor, when I got there, the governor was still one or Eugene favas of, uh, of, of note, if you will. And, uh, there was a little rock was sort of an odd place because it had a, had a reasonably liberal rural population or liberal liberal business class who didn't want to go through 1958 again. And, you know, consequently there was a, we were being played and SNCC was as sort of a good cop, bad cop.

Speaker 3 (00:21:42):

The Arkansas council on human relations, uh, was a good cop in SNCC, was a bad cop. So they imported these, this bad guy to come in there. And, um, uh, the, the, the immediately there were some negotiations and, uh, I met up with, uh, with a number of people there, one Ben Greenwich, uh, uh, in particular. And, uh, um, again, we didn't want to, I didn't want to come back. I didn't wanna go back to Atlanta. I was, I was interested. I wanted to stay in Arkansas and do some work. So, uh, uh, I went to Ben and I went south to pine bluff. And, uh, again, the rest, uh, foreman was in a position where he couldn't do anything about it. And we were there, we were, and, and the, the, the project got started and we began organized. Now, there are people here, uh, who were in the SNCC project, the SNCC project, I would point out by they existed was the third project.

Speaker 3 (00:22:35):

I mean, the, the Mississippi and Southwest Georgia, where they sort of started simultaneously right in the, in the summer of 1961, the SNCC project got started in what the, the fall of 19 E three, uh, and, and preceded Alabama as a matter of fact. But, uh, it was always sort of a, again, a residual project. It was something that was left over after the, after the big three. Um, there are lots of interesting things. I, I, we can ask questions. I'll, I'll sort of halt it there, but that's my, uh, that's how Ark. And so, again, it was sort of accidental as I,

Speaker 1 (00:23:14):

Now we're gonna talk about, um, Danville, Virginia, um, Danville Virginia was a very interesting community of community of about 50,000 people. Uh, two thirds white, one third, African American. Uh, I was in New York city in, uh, June of 1963 with, uh, Jim foreman. Uh, John Lewis with Nina Simone, the Hansbury and Thedo. Beque a number of others in terms of fundraising. We had a meeting and where we, the friends of SNIC in New York and what was in New York, we got this phone call from, uh, Reverend Campbell in Danville, Virginia, uh, saying that, uh, you couldn't get Dr. King to come to Danville, the S SCLC and all the problems they

was having. They were throwing young ladies down the stairs, laceration of the skulls and everything. So on the way back from New York, I said, I will stop off in Danville for a day or so.

Speaker 1 (00:24:18):

I arrived in Danville, I think on maybe June the eighth or seventh and York, some demonstrations for, uh, June the 10th. And initially I did not participate in the demonstrated them organized. And I was seated in, uh, Reverend Dunlap's car. And when the chief of police came and said, I was under arrest, and I said, hell, no, I'm not gonna go. And Reverend dun had just bought this brand new Cadillac and its very interesting. He said, if you don't come out of that car, we're gonna come in and get you Reverend dun lab said, just leave. We'll take care of you later home. Uh, and, and I was arrested with some, a local people important in civil rights and then all he broke a loose, uh, and Danville the, they turned the water holes and they arrested many, many people and, and a number of people came into Danville, uh, the snit contingency, uh, with Ivan hole Donaldson and my good friend, Matthew Jones, uh, for Knoxville, Tennessee and Knoxville, Tennessee played a very interesting part in the movement.

Speaker 1 (00:25:24):

And I'm proud to say I am a, uh, uh, Marion Barry Marion was, um, my godfather in the movement. You know, I learned a lot of things from Mary Barry. Mary has made a tremendous contribution to the station, uh, in terms of his involvement. Uh, we were all in school at the university of Tennessee when the, when the Danville thing exploded Ivan hole, uh, came. And it's very interesting. Uh, prior to Danville, we were really not talking about economic development kinds of issues and Danville who departed to be a very interest community. Like I said, it was a textile, uh, community, uh, with the headquarters of Dan RIL. And at that point I'm gonna let, uh, Ivan whole takeover and talk about the economic development aspect of, uh, the civil rights world and the evolution of SNCC into this area.

Speaker 10 (00:26:17):

The, um, SNCC, uh,

Speaker 2 (00:26:20):

It didn't have two official wings, but it sort of had unofficial wings. You had a group of people who were engaged in the registration in the deep black belt south. And you had a group of people who were engaged in direct action. And I was in a team of people who were in direct action. We would get called in and we would demonstrate and so forth. And so on. Um, rubbing Campbell had called up, talked to foreman. Avon went down to Danville and started to found himself as the project manager. Jim foreman asked, uh, Marion Barry myself to go down there. So we jumped in the car and we drove to Danville. And as I crossed the border, you know, Danville is right on the South Carolina border. I North Carolina border in Virginia. But as I crossed the city line, I got pulled over and arrested.

Speaker 2 (00:27:08):

And I officer said that you have a faulty hand break. So I said, well, how do you know, I have a faulty hand break from external to the car? You know, so he told me I was drawn too much and he immediately arrested me. Marion, went to the phone, booth the call, all to get me out. And um, so I was there for a couple of days. I got out and I went over to brown chapel and their Cordell and a group of us organized nonviolent demonstrations, which meant we had to run nonviolent workshops and Cordell and I in particular engaged in this every day in the, a young people at Browns chapel until Avon was ready to do a downtown March. And, uh, we, you know, so you had to get people into the discipline of it. Um, so we did a downtown March one day and I, and Andy pro Avery and someone else whose name I can't remember at the moment got arrested.

Speaker 2 (00:28:01):

And we were in court and judge Jacobs came into the courtroom with a gun and Annie pro saw this and she was outraged. She said, no, you can't have a gun in the courtroom. And the judge looked at her as if she was crazy. This was his courtroom. So Annie pro proceeded to do a sit-in a lay-in in the court. She laid down on the floor in front of the bench and you know, I didn't know what to do. So I got down there with Andy Pearl too, you know? And, uh, so we were haul off to jail. So I slept in, I woke up in the morning with someone sleeping in the bunk above me. And so I looked up to see who it was and it was Lynn ho. And I said, well, Lynn, you can't be in here. You're the lawyer. How are we going to get out?

Speaker 2 (00:28:40):

You know? And Lynn said, Lynn said, well, a pro laid in, you laid in, you didn't see me. They dragged you off. And I decided to lay in too, since lawyers was listening to me. So I said, well, how are we gonna get outta here if the lawyer's in jail? So that was a give and go and a give and take. So direct action, you know, had its quality and its values in Danville. Um, we had a staff meeting one day and, uh, were around and Avon got a call and he was talking to someone on the telephone and he was like really upset. He was, and he was sort of feeding us the information was getting it. And that was the day of the bombing in Birmingham. And Avon was talking to someone, either in the Atlanta SNCC office or someone in Birmingham. And they were saying how the, the church had been bombed, girls had been killed.

Speaker 2 (00:29:30):

And it was like, maybe we were 30 minutes behind the actual events in terms of this information. So in sympathy to that, not to say there weren't enough issues in Danville. We had a March, you know, um, and we had our own version of bloody Sunday, you know, uh, where put out the fire hoses. We did a downtown March at night to the city hall and the city hall had a rail that went up the steps in the middle. And there were these huge glass doors behind us. Now, one of the reasons that they called us into Danville of SNCC was because they couldn't get the kind of attention that they needed from S SCLC S SCLC had a sphere of influence in that community. They had a, an, a secretary or a field secretary or whatever that person was called, Reverend Reed or Reese or whatever it was over in Hopewell.

Speaker 2 (00:30:17):

And, um, you know, but S SCLC would mobile lies and then sort of disappear. Even in direct action. There is a lot of mobilizing, but we don't just disappear. You know, you kind of keep it going to you reach, you know, some crescendo that allows you to take the next step. So that night they pulled out the fire hoses. They turned them on the people on the steps. Jim foreman was there. Then Avon was there. Jim tried to talk to the police. He walked up to them. They had out these little Tommy guns they'd like to walk around with. And the guy was jabbing Jim in the chest. And in the meantime, they smashed in the windows of the city hall. So the glass went flying everywhere and we had people by the dozens. Um, thank you very much, uh, who were, um, taken to the hospital, you know, bloodied up stitches.

Speaker 2 (00:31:07):

It was, you know, a general mess. So, um, so we tried to figure out what were the other opportunities because Avon was trying to get the local community engaged in this. Well, this was in the summer in 63, well, in 62, not to defray, but to give you the reason that economics became important. We had a demonstration int house in Atlanta when OG visited. And so we wanted to show the state department was taking him around and we thought that they weren't doing a good job of showing him what Atlanta was really like. So we wanted to show him our Atlanta. So we took him to Tyler House and we had to sit in, and of course we all got busted and arrested and so forth. Well, Dick Gregory was in town that day. And what he did was he bought some shares in title house, and he gave them to three different SNCC people to go to these title, house, corporate board meetings.

Speaker 2 (00:31:57):

And I remember that, and we talked about that and Danville, so we went and bought sheer Dan river mills was the largest lawyer, uh, in Danville, Virginia. Um, and they were in the process of beginning to talk about automation, but this was in 1963. And, you know, they were not being very cooperative in terms of supporting the issues of desegregation, the issues of social justice, the issues of school and education for, uh, what's going on the black schools in the south. So we were gonna use these shares. I had two of them to go to their corporate board meeting, you know, which we actually did go to got up raised a lot of hell at the board meeting some of the shots, steer holders acted like they didn't know what was going on, not their company. You know, they were just investors, you know, innocent bystanders.

Speaker 2 (00:32:43):

And we said, well, no, you're not an innocent bystander. You know, we had this guy and next name's Jack men. And, you know, Jack would research the hell out anything. And when the group of Mississippi was doing organizing, he discovered that Harvard law, the Harvard university had invested in the power companies in miss be. So, you know, we had people up at Harvard demonstrating against the school to get their investment portfolio out of Mississippi, whatever the public utility was called. So we were trying to begin to expand that in Danville and in other projects to the next level. And so we were leveraging Danville Dan river mills to be more sympathetic, more empathetic to the political struggle that was going on in Danville, but Danville was parallel in Birmingham. So Birmingham started was the front news across the country. And Danville was the story on page 34, 2 paragraphs.

Speaker 2 (00:33:38):

But in Danville in to Virginia, it was big news. And in North Carolina it was big news. So it got covered very well, but the whole issue there of trying to, um, tap into the chamber of commerce and into the main businesses as a equity investor, uh, became a tool let's SNIC used. It was not a very successful tool, but it was a tool that did provide education, you know, advocacy within the corporate walls about who they were and how they were being treated and what they were being, what was going on. And also, um, it was in Danville that I met Matthew Jones, you know, who, um, came there, um, wrote a lot of great songs about Danville <inaudible>. One I always remember is to demonstrating GI, but, uh, he was there. And the other person that I met there, because I had been in Farmville Virginia earlier pre the March on Washington, organized in direct action about the closed schools in Farmville was Leon shards, younger brother, who was from Petersburg.

Speaker 2 (00:34:42):

And Leon was also in Danville. We came down together after the March, uh, to join this direct action. But Danville was a direct action project of SNCC, more than a settling down long term voter registration entrench, because there was local organization there. What they needed was energy and what we provided, huh? The international boy international boy cap, they needed energy, you know, and what the direct action and team did was it provided them energy and credibility. And Reverend, um, Campbell was just a fascinating person. He had this small church with a lot of energy and they provided us a lot of things and ended it was brown chapel, not brown, um, uh, street, high street Baptist, you know, uh, which was, uh, also very supportive of, of the movement. The movement always found homes, you know, uh, in these churches, in terms of mass meetings, uh, workshops and the people gathered and, you know, we would, you know, go there, motivate, preach, talk, you know, and go on our marches and it spiraled out.

Speaker 2 (00:35:48):

And, uh, it's, you know, that was, uh, you know, the experience there. I did wanna make a comment about Baltimore and hand instance comments and the other gentleman's comments, you know, Baltimore was a course, was a city that core had influence and a guy named Carter

headed Baltimore core. And, um, so there was action in core. And one of the Reggie Robinson's strengths in SNCC was that he had done voter registration in, in, in Baltimore. So that when Reggie, when SNCC went to McComb, Mississippi, they brought Reggie in because he was the only person in the organization that done voter registration. You know, it's just typical Snick. Well, you did in Baltimore, you can come down here and do it McComb Mississippi. Cause there was a big difference between McComb and Baltimore, but, uh, you know, there Reggie was, but what you have to remember was that in the summer of 61, you know what I had Morgan state and Howard, you know, uh, these schools, there was route 40 and people were demonstrating route 40 was this road that led up north of Baltimore, going towards New York on route one before the interstate was built.

Speaker 2 (00:36:51):

And the African diplomats used to travel this road from their embassies in DC to the UN and they weren't getting service, you know, uh, it was all segregated. So there was this stuff that someone talked about, Augie Meyer earlier. I think Carol did, you know, there was this constant demonstration on route 40, you know, which created, uh, uh, a huge, you know, um, statement about closing down these side, uh, serving places, you know, uh, then open them up to black folks and these African diplomats, in fact, Stanley wise, uh, who's no longer with the rest of the good brother once dressed up in an African Gar, a grand BBA and stuff, and went into on these places. And they served him, you know, and then Stanley took off all of his stuff and said, well, he was SN field set for Terry and he wanted all his Nick buddies to come here.

Speaker 2 (00:37:41):

And of course they arrested him, but <laugh>, you know, it, it was as ridiculous as that sounds, you know, there are these myths, so that Cambridge in that context was far more rural and far more tougher to deal with. And Gloria Richardson was among the few women, Nick, who actually was a field director of a major project. And Cambridge was a major project, you know, uh, in the south, uh, you had Ruby Roberts who of course was became executive director and Cynthia Washington, who was ran a project over in, uh, Alabama and, you know, was always concerns about as men, our responsibility to protect our female sisters, you know, given the whole legacy of slavery and where we were, there was a lot of contradiction going on and, you know, there were serious discussions and of course women felt that, you know, they had as much right to deal with these issues and confrontations as men did, but it was complex, but SNCC as usual probably spent thousands of hours invading this issue, you know, uh, off and on.

Speaker 2 (00:38:42):

But in the meantime, the real world was going on. People were out there demonstrating, and sisters were taking charge as they thought they needed to, you know, and, uh, keeping brothers in line. But Danville, you know, re really represented, um, for SNCC because it was such an urban city at the time, as opposed to all the rural cities that we were working in, you know, uh, a step for SNCC and taking a look at what urban struggle would actually look like, um, because it was downtown and cities and tall buildings and so forth. Um, in this little small south town on the North Carolina border,

Speaker 4 (00:39:18):

What

Speaker 1 (00:39:19):

I'm thinking had one of the oldest banks in America there that's correct. That's right. First state bank that was, was very interesting about, about Danville that I remember. So distinctly is the armored tank was submachine guns mounted on them and it's, uh, very interest foreman. And I, they pulled us over one night and I always had great respect for foreman. I said, if I'm with foreman, I'm safe. When they pulled us over with these armored tanks and submachine guns, uh, they told us to stand up against the wall. And I was, I was alright. I was with foreman and I

looked down at foreman's feet. I off some water dripping and all the, once my water just burst <laugh> I knew it was in trouble. For some reason, they told us get back in the damn car and come around the chains. But Dan was a very, uh, Bob Zel was another interesting thing is that we were at high street, uh, Baptist church, as we recording his book is that we did a film in Danville about, you know, the beatings.

Speaker 1 (00:40:22):

And matter of fact, they did a, a motion picture about our friend Ivanhoe called Ivanhoe. Uh, I know, right. Uh, but we were going to take the film of the beatings in Danville was gonna take it back to New York or whatever. So, so Bob Zel and I went out the back of the church and soon as we got outta the back of the church, the place just lit up like dead daylight. They just started shooting. Police were just shooting and firing every place. And they had the senders from the Stoker, the fire young people probably don't know what that is, but the senders was there and I was running and I step and fail. And when I got back inside the church and I pulled my coat off and I saw Bob Zelda's footprint on the back of my coat <laugh> cause when I slipped, he kept on running, uh, Don't care, what, okay. Okay. The last bus going to the hotel is at 6:00 PM or 6:00 PM. Now, you know, we are very fortunate before I turned over to Matthew. We're very fortunate to have somebody, you know, one of the things that we did in SNCC, we tried to involve and train, uh, local people to take over. Cause we were not gonna be there forever. And we're very fortunate to have, uh, Thomas hope with us. Thomas, come up a minute, come on up and just give Thomas a hand. Come on.

Speaker 1 (00:41:51):

Yeah. Thomas, wanna go to the mic? Thomas Thomas. You wanna go to the mic over here? I think. Oh, that's right. Talk about your experience in Danville. That's right. Young and innocent.

Speaker 11 (00:42:07):

Not the long. Um,

Speaker 11 (00:42:18):

Well actually my experience is a sort of composite, a lot of things you've been talking about. Um, I grew up not in Danville, but outside of Danville in a rural area. Um, and um, at the time of the movement in 63, I actually was a student at Howard university. And my first demonstrations actually were on route 40. Um, that, that Ivanhoe talked about, um, which involved at that time, simply say it ins. And then, um, I don't think any of us got arrested. Um, I was not involved at that time in Cambridge, but some of my classmates were, in fact, I remember them coming back to campus and many of them had been gased at one of the, uh, demonstrations, um, nighttime demonstrations. So the irony is that I got involved with SNCC and with the movement in Danville, um, again almost by accident, I was going home, uh, as I usually did in the summer, dropped my stuff to go somewhere, to work, to make money, to go back to school in the next fall.

Speaker 11 (00:43:40):

And when I was at home, there was the demonstration on June 10th and actually I was not involved. I was just there for a few days and was gonna leave, but I heard it on the radio. In fact, my mother not heard it on the radio. It was broadcast. Uh, I mean the beatings, the, um, the fire hoses. And so the next day I went over to high street Baptist church, uh, which was Reverend Chase's church. And there was the demonstration being organized to go back to the courthouse that day. And that's how I end up in the movement. Um, but there'd been these prior experiences, you know, with, uh, the non-violent action group and with, um, with Cambridge and route 40. Um, the Only thing I can add to this I think is, uh, which is often missed in accounts of how people get into this kind of, um, a movement, this kind of situation. And for myself,

Speaker 11 (00:44:54):

There was really the only way I can explain it is anger, anger at what I, you know, heard, saw, especially the next day as I saw people who were injured and, um, bandaged and some people very civilian injured, in fact, um, that made it impossible to turn away, made it impossible, not to become involved, even though it had not been my intent to do so. And I think, um, I've heard that from other people as well, other situations, um, you know, it was tremendous thing to, um, both in some cases, risk your life, certainly risk, uh, injury, um, risk, um, uh, giving up school or, um, um, the, you know, other things that you're doing, uh, to turn to, um, be involved certainly on a full-time basis in something like the movement and, uh, a good part of it was this feeling of simply being fed up and of, uh, being unable, turn away from what, you know, uh, from what you were facing.

Speaker 11 (00:46:18):

Um, I wanna add something though also about Cambridge, because I also worked in Cambridge, Maryland. Uh, some years later after I graduated, uh, from Howard in the summer of 65. Um, by that time, of course the spotlight had moved from Cambridge. Um, and I think it's of some significance because that was a moment which I heard some people, uh, referencing in other contexts, uh, this morning where by in SNCC and in the movement as a whole, there's a sense that, you know, there had been the March on Washington, there been the civil rights acts, even the voting rights act was, uh, imminent and that there was a need for the movement to move to other kinds of issues and other, uh, um, uh, venues. Um, what happened in Cambridge that summer was that a number of issues came up that I think were precursors to the kinds of, of, um, economic issues that were gonna be dominant in terms of, uh, shaping civil rights issues or human rights issues, uh, in the years to come.

Speaker 11 (00:47:43):

Uh, one of the move, one of the, uh, issues we got involved in was not so much in Cambridge, but in the surrounding area. Uh, um, I know mentioned that Cambridge is on the Eastern shore. It's a very rural area. Um, both whites and blacks in that area had been for decades, relatively isolated, uh, on the east shore until they built the, the bay bridge people. You know, it was very hard to move from there to get to, uh, Annapolis or, uh, or Washington or Baltimore. Um, and so, uh, it was an area that was very rural, uh, and a, you know, very farm oriented <affirmative>. And there were a lot of migrant workers who actually were the basis of the labor pool for the east insurer. And so one of the things we got involved in, uh, SNCC got involved in was trying to organize migrant workers, um, to, um, to better their they a lot.

Speaker 11 (00:48:52):

Um, another thing that was we got involved in was the fact that there was a, uh, a food distribution program. The federal government had put into place of, um, commodity distribution. Uh, it was being phased out and they were bringing in food amps, but much like what happened in Mississippi, as someone mentioned, um, in 63, in 64, there was, uh, the food stamp program was being used to discipline the local population that is, there were people, uh, being cut off of food stamps or, or not, not being given food stamps as a way of controlling the population. So that too was an issue that came up in Cambridge. Um, and so, and these various ways then, um, there were new issues that we were, uh, uh, gonna face, uh, and would have tot to that were being, um, um, um, involved here. Right.

Speaker 12 (00:49:57):

Okay.

Speaker 1 (00:49:59):

Thomas big hand.

Speaker 1 (00:50:04):

The next person on the program is Matthew at reus Jones Jr. You, me that, uh, some people refer to me as the great port of snake. Great songwriter was involved in Danville and other communities, uh, on your own way. Matthew, you wanna talk about Danville and yes, you might even give us a song, right? Yep. I'll get to that. <laugh> okay. Uh, when the movement started in 1960, put your mic up, Mike, when the movement started in 1960, can you hear me? Yeah. I was a student at Tennessee state university. And when no students in Greensboro, North Carolina set in, I said, this is it.

Speaker 1 (00:51:04):

Somebody has finally done something. So I thought that the president of Tennessee state and all our elders would come and lead the way. So I'm sitting up at Tennessee state there, nobody would lead. I couldn't believe it. They, nobody would get up and do anything. So president Ws, I still remember his name. He called all of us to come to the gymnasium. So I said, this is it. Our elders are going to lead us on the freedom. I go to the gymnasium and Ws Davis gets up and says, this is Dr. Ws Davis and governor governor. Beautiful EER says, if you students don't demonstrate, he'll give you two \$30,000 buses with water fountains on it. I step back. I said, this man is going uncle Thomas out. I could not believe that our elders were nothing. So I stood up in, in the crowd and walked to fi university.

Speaker 1 (00:52:24):

And when I walked into the room, there was CT, Vivian sending people to different places in, in Nashville to, uh, to sit in. I didn't know who he was, but he sent me to Kane stones and I was arrested and in jail in four hours, I was in jail, but I knew this was it. And I know I could fight white folks and live. You got to realize what it meant. When I found out that I could fight white folks and live, I could go down town, demonstrate and live through the process and be able to go back again. So I loved going to jail cause I found that's something I could do and, and, and I could make it. So they threw me in jail and, and we had a great movement there in, uh, Nashville, Tennessee. And, and I was there when the, the bun Lu's house in Nashville, we had our own money. We didn't have to send to the north to pick up no money. So we had a good, good, uh, uh, struggle there. Nashville, Tennessee. And I graduated from Tennessee state in 1960 And went to up upper, uh, east Tennessee

Speaker 1 (00:53:51):

And was working out there. And, uh, later on, they sent me to Macon, Georgia,

Speaker 4 (00:53:59):

And

Speaker 1 (00:54:00):

I told 'em I wasn't going to the army. And they drafted me a, it drafted me. But I went to, I went to UT and they told me, I said, you can go to school at UT. And they won't, we won't do anything to you. And, uh, you go to go to, uh, you can go to school and, and, and you won't have to, ain't no penalty. You can just go to school. I said, well, this is a good way for me to go to school. So that's what I did.

Speaker 4 (00:54:33):

You

Speaker 1 (00:54:33):

Gonna get to Danville? I'm gonna get to Danville in a few minutes. When I get through talking, I didn't bother you when you were talking, But I'm the moderator. Okay. Okay. So when I got to, when I got into school, I joined a group called the students for equal treatment, but man Barry, he had some students, uh, Philip bacon and Steven Wright, and had a first time I ever met some, uh, some white folks who were working right in the struggle with me. I couldn't believe how

many people were working in the struggle with me. So I go to school and we demonstrate that I get thrown in jail. Some 13 to 14 times Avon then left us and went to Danville.

Speaker 4 (00:55:30):

<laugh>

Speaker 1 (00:55:34):

We, we went to Danville while was, I was home one day and he wrote me a letter and said, man, I want you to come to Danville. It's very, very dangerous. He sent me a, a, a, uh, a I article from the offer, from the paper where they had broken open a woman's breast with a Billy club. And I couldn't believe that there were people who would break open women's breasts with Billy club. He one told me, I guess, you know, in a week I just went on to that Danville. I thought I'd come back In a week. But I was there for six years, Stayed in snake for six years. So I went to Danville and met Danville and began to work in Danville, Virginia, and never left. And I loved it. I loved going to jail Cause I know I could keep on living, but I know my life was in danger, but I never stopped. I didn't know what to do about that, but nothing I could do about it. It was just something that I would, would have to accept. And they threw me in jail And they had what they call little great food boxes were, which were made outta concrete. And you could have sit up and you could have stand up and, uh, but you could not be comfortable. And they later through me,

Speaker 1 (00:57:06):

Uh, uh, uh, into these concrete boxes where I couldn't sit up and I had to stay all day, have sitting up and standing up. And at the end of the day, the man, let me go to the restroom. And I started destr And this police me hit me with a, with a slap Jack On the side of my head. And I, I couldn't have walk after that man hit me. And man Barry was in man. Barry said,

Speaker 4 (00:57:40):

What? The

Speaker 1 (00:57:40):

Mar said, Marin said, you didn't have to hit him like that.

Speaker 4 (00:57:44):

<affirmative>

Speaker 1 (00:57:45):

So the, the gentle looked at me and said, what did you say? Man said, I ain't saying nothing.

Speaker 4 (00:57:52):

<laugh>

Speaker 1 (00:57:56):

He kept going. But he was right. Not to say anything. I mean, my head was just ringing. I didn't know what that man had done to me, but, uh, Uh, that was bad. I, I, I think it was that. And I didn't know that they could beat you like that and get away with it. But I decided I was gonna continue To fight. So I went on later on, I went to, to Danville With Avon Before then I gotta go back. Cause when I talk about getting hit in the head, I get memory loss

Speaker 4 (00:58:33):

<laugh>

Speaker 1 (00:58:35):

So I know that they threw me in jail. When I joined a group called students for equal treatment, they threw me in this jail and this man who I was a in jail, where they been in jail so long, he had his chest of drawers in jail, everything in the knife, he had any jails there. I said, you been telling

me a man could actually take up residence here. I just believe how long that man stayed in jail. So When, when, when, when, when it was asked me to go, the police said, say, look up at that wall. You see, see that wall say you were supposed to be hanging From those bars. He said, but you know why you're not there. I looked at the man and said, because you were right. And when we saw that you had done that, we knew we couldn't do anything to you. So I looked at those bars And so how close had come to just be enlist? They was gonna hang me from the ball, hang me, leave me up there. I couldn't believe that, man. That was something. When you find out that people would do you in, and that boy didn't get outta jail because he decided that he would not kill me in jail cell

Speaker 1 (01:00:01):

Stayed in jail. So, So Matthew, You want me to go on the, can I have the mic back? So I'm gonna give him a chance to ask some question And, and I let you close this out with a, with a song outwards. Uh, but it's did I gave you enough? Huh?

Speaker 4 (01:00:24):

Right.

Speaker 1 (01:00:25):

Okay. I got a song. Yeah, I can do. Okay. Okay. Uh, what about questions? I got any questions, any questions?

Speaker 1 (01:00:33):

Now, one thing about Matthew, Matthew was, uh, really good, a great songwriter. We traveled, I Matthew wake me up at two o'clock in the morning, banging on a piano. The unique thing about Danville was be Selma or Birmingham is that people put us up in their home. People who knew nothing about us. Right? But they took care of us, uh, because you know, the hotels were not available to us. Uh, so people in Danville and Selma, Birmingham and other community Greenwood Greenville, they put us up in their homes. They took care of us, took care of a took care of, uh, Matthew and Hanson and others, you know, was great. But Jim foreman is in Danville and we were talking and, and Matthew was a little older than most of us. Matthew was old, old,

Speaker 1 (01:01:24):

And his brother Marshall is old, old <laugh>. I think Marshall is 72 when I think years old. Right. <laugh> he don't like me to tell that. And Matthew was 73, I think, going on 74. Uh, but Jim foreman, I having a conversation in Dan Viola about the restructuring of the freedom singer. Matthew was a little older. He was in graduate school and had a music background and certain degree of maturity. So started the best for him to send him on back to Atlanta and to reconstitute the second way. He was a freedom singer and that's where he and Chuck and others got together and traveled across the country, raising money, uh, for the civil rights movement. Okay. Now who was the first question here? Okay. You wanna go to the mic? Sure. And give your name? Uh,

Speaker 13 (01:02:18):

Uh, my name's, uh, Jas Peron, and, uh, my, most of my, my mom's family is all from Charlotte county and my dad's family is all from Franklin county, Virginia. And like, as far back as anybody in the family knows we all from Virginia. And so I'm just real interested to hear what other kind of stuff was happening in Virginia. Cuz you mentioned Farmville and like, I I've never heard anything about anything other than like Danville and I just heard like SNCC was there. Like that's all I know. So just like What else was going on? Not like real detail but anything.

Speaker 1 (01:02:51):

Well, I know that we used to have, uh, the women worked in, in with the RJ Reynolds in, in the tobacco every six weeks or so they, they would work in those fields. So we had the field in what it was like to see women walk work in, in those, uh, tobacco fields. And damn Virginia was a very, very interesting place. A lot of things went on and we saw union, we sitting in a, a civil rights group and we see union activity. We see all kinds of things going on in Danville, Virginia, when those women would go to work and, and the tobacco fields, they would come back home. I mean, it was great to see that. And, and in Virginia, most of snakes really didn't have large cities. They said they didn't deal with too many large cities. And they, uh, really, uh, uh, those women really showed us a lot.

Speaker 4 (01:03:55):

Okay. Women,

Speaker 14 (01:04:04):

Hi, I'm Leah wise and good to see

Speaker 1 (01:04:07):

Leah wise, how you

Speaker 14 (01:04:08):

Doing? I'm good. I'm good. Um, I came here actually to really ask a question, um, about Arkansas, because I spent a lot of time. Yeah. Post the 68 interviewing people in Arkansas about what preceded the SNCC activities in the sixties and heard stories of people from the Southern tenant farmers union who had housed SNCC workers. And so Ivanhoe, when you told the story about being that there was organization in the community and that you all were bringing energy, I'm wondering with the time in which you spent in people's homes, did you learn about the struggles and what they had done prior to you coming? Cuz with conferences been about passing on the torch, but we haven't said much about what we reached back for and you know what we're bring me forward.

Speaker 3 (01:05:06):

I was gonna, I was that's exactly. I

Speaker 14 (01:05:08):

Agree with, was it Carrie deal? <laugh>

Speaker 4 (01:05:09):

Deal.

Speaker 15 (01:05:18):

Hi, my name is Laura phoner and I worked in Arkansas SNCC in 19 65, 9 66. And I lived in Gould, Arkansas in the home of Mrs. Car Gilworth and she was an organizer. She and there was also, there were Mr. Binum organizers in the Southern tenant farmers union in the 1930s. And she used to talk about those days <laugh>. So I was thinking about that. I, it was a point I wanted to make that, um, the people who housed us were people with histories and histories went way back. And a lot of those people have been organizers themselves for years. And actually Mrs. Carrie Dillworth invited SNCC to come to Gould because she wanted that energy that youthful you, that spark to help reignite what had been a long tradition. And, uh, so I mean, there's so much, I'm really disappointed that we haven't heard more <laugh> about Arkansas because there was a lot of organ organizing that went on in ours. There was some like four projects, four or five

Speaker 2 (01:06:41):

In Arkansas

Speaker 15 (01:06:42):

In Arkansas,

Speaker 3 (01:06:44):

I think at least

Speaker 15 (01:06:44):

Three I west Helen pine

Speaker 3 (01:06:47):

Bluff,

Speaker 15 (01:06:48):

Forest city, pine bluff, pine bluff go little rock. Is that correct anymore?

Speaker 3 (01:06:55):

Then there was some, uh, the Dwight was

Speaker 15 (01:06:58):

In west. Me,

Speaker 3 (01:06:58):

Dwight was in, in uh Stuttgart and Michael,

Speaker 15 (01:07:02):

Michael Stuard and Michael was in Maria was in Marianna. Right? So Arkansas was actually a very, uh, vibrant project with a tremendous amount of, uh, involvement of the local population and local leadership, lot of local leaders, a lot of which was women, strong women. There's not time to talk about it <laugh> but it was very strong. And I think there were, I'm just gonna say this really quickly, there were some advantages to being a little out of the main, um, glare and is sort of in the center of the organization because there was some benign neglect in a way which gave the project a certain amount of independence to determine, you know, have a lot of local, uh, leadership and local determination of the way the project was organized. There's a huge amount more to say, but I, I thank you for that. It's the history that went before us we're we are part of a huge wave and none of us does this without all of the people who came before us and hopefully the people who are coming after us.

Speaker 1 (01:08:23):

Okay. You know, I'd like to say this to you. Uh, all of us, especially most of us don't know anything about movements other than Mississippi, I don't know who it was and the government decided they would stick at Mississippi and wouldn't deal with the rest of the world. They don't deal with the, with SNCC in other parts of the country, we should do it. We, me and Avon stayed in people named Sylvester Walton, the Waltons. And they were very, very political. We stayed in our house, had had good relations with the, the wife and the daughter, very, very good people. And we stayed, uh, in touch with them until they, they died. And we still talked to their children. I mean, the relationships have not stopped up to now. Very, very great.

Speaker 2 (01:09:15):

Yeah. I think, uh, Leah, that, um, you know, there's a lot being squeezed into two, three days. Yeah. And you know, you could spend the whole conference talking about Arkansas or about Southwest Georgia. Yeah. There is a acknowledgement, I think in a lot of the workshops of those who've come before us. And I think you heard that by the keynote speaker at lunch today, you know, who, you know, articulated the, the, the history when Bob went to Mississippi, you know, there was Steptoe and, and, and Amey Moore and, and these voices when strive was in

Southwest Georgia, there was Slater, you know, and, you know, a whole world of people who were there who housed us, protected us, nurtured us, allowed the foundation to go to the next level. So I don't think that anybody in SNCC, you know, ever feels that we were original energy, you know, uh, in fact, it's why we talk about energizing because there were people who were there and needed it.

Speaker 2 (01:10:11):

Um, there were organizations, some dormant, some active, the black trade unionist movement it's throughout the south, you know, um, you know, from the thirties. And there were elements of that that were alive and strong when we arrived in the sixties and the parents of civil rights workers in the south, you know, were, I mean, they weren't, they didn't just like pop out the sky. I mean, they had a history, you know, of engagement. Some did some didn't, so you're right. I mean, it's there. And, you know, a lot more probably needs to be said, should be said, hope, some people will write about it. You know? Uh, um, when we came along, we didn't know a lot about our history. We sort of learned our history as we learned to organize and, um, which is sad in, in some ways, but there have been more voices today about recording that history. I mean, one of the great things about form was yours, tell everyone, pick up a paper and write, you used to say, oh, you gotta write this down. And, you know, um, and I think that, you know, that's so, and, and, uh, so yeah, you're right. We need to say more,

Speaker 1 (01:11:15):

But you know, other thing about Daniel is very interesting, but Matthew close us out. The song is that, uh, in Danville, you know, when we advised, you know, the population, again, it was so brutal. And we said that, Hey, if they did not change, blood was gonna floor the street and this time would not be our blood. And, you know, it's very interesting. That was before Mississippi and the black power that's I came along and again, is that as alluded that, you know, we went to the African embassy and the third world embassy asking them to boycott, uh, Dan river mill product. And I think that was one the first time in terms of SNAT got into the international arena in terms of economic, uh, impact on communities. And it was a, uh, turning point, I think, for other, uh, cities, in terms of the south, in terms of how we look and view, uh, Brun activities. Matthew, you have a song for

Speaker 2 (01:12:10):

Avon. I think Nancy

Speaker 1 (01:12:12):

Stole, I'm sorry. Come on.

Speaker 2 (01:12:13):

He was, uh, okay. Uh,

Speaker 16 (01:12:21):

I'll be really quick. I partly wanna respond to this, uh, young man who asked about Virginia. Uh, my name is Nancy Stoler. I was born in Virginia. I did work in Arkansas, but I wanna say something about prince Edward in Virginia, where I worked, uh, one summer with the prince Edward county Christian association led by a Reverend Griffin there. And as you may, big pardon?

Speaker 2 (01:12:44):

Head of the NAACP Mississippi state.

Speaker 16 (01:12:46):

Yes. Also <laugh> and, uh, prince Edward county was one of the counties that was involved in the brown decision and the schools were closed there for a number of years and, uh, an organization, the organization there that was a leading organization in that fight. The prince

Edward county Christian association worked together with the Northern student movement and other organizations to open, uh, freedom centers where students who had been out of school, uh, could come. And in that connection, I would also point out that we were trained at the Highlander center and how many people here were trained at the Highlander center. Probably a lot. I couldn't have been the only one, <laugh> a number. And so there were many projects going on and I just think that we should remember that one, uh, which was a fabulous and long struggle led by the local people. Thank you.

Speaker 2 (01:13:44):

Well, Nancy, don't forget Farmville. That's founding that's where SNCC was in Farmville and American friends, friends. I've,

Speaker 17 (01:13:55):

I've heard mention of the internationalization of the struggle from the perspective of thinking about struggles in other countries, but I wonder from the perspective of you, the participants, were you consciously aware of different people from different places? In my own research? You know, I came across the information that Ivan know had Jamaican connections and it's, it's one of the struggles we continue knew in my own work. For example, the question of, are we connected or are we disconnected? Are we different people from the Caribbean and those who are in the us? So were you conscious of it? And, and how did it relate?

Speaker 2 (01:14:46):

Um, yeah, I was conscious of it, but I mean, there are a lot of levels in organizing. I mean, there are people in SNCC who are Western Indian heritage and celebrated, you know, as an organizer, I didn't do that because, you know, I wanted to blend into the local community. So, you know, I was born in Harlem, but my parents were west Indian. And, uh, you know, it, it's a matter of where you are politically in terms of your gender or that era, that time, that moment. But there were international people who came into SNCC and worked in SNCC and SNCC, people went abroad, you know, spent lots of hours, uh, abroad months, years, uh, um, particularly on the, in the mother country, in Africa, uh, continent. But, um, yeah, we were aware of it. We had, uh, um, uh, what was the, the, I think he's here, you know, a photographer from, uh, Japan heritage, you know, uh, who, um, you know, I mean, there was that, as I said, some of it was just accidental. Some of it was conscious, um, but the motion was about the here and now and what we were doing, where we were going, but the recognition, you know, I mean, Bob Moses used to say that you had to stay in motion and you had to network and networking was from community to community and country to country. And, um, you know, we never got there, but we understood it. Or at least we had ideas about it.

Speaker 3 (01:16:09):

I think it was a, a, it was a growing realization at the beginning. It was, I, I, I suspect we were in, in 19 60, 61, we were rather, uh, um, um, parochial, um, I think as we grew, not only in age, but in experience, I, I think we, uh, I transformative experience for me was going to Africa. I mean, I, I went to, I went to Africa with 11 people. There were 10 or 11 of us, uh, uh, in what, 1963, um, the, the, uh, uh, you know, and I, I can, I was living in Arkansas. I can remember a, a young man by the name of Thomas Allen, who was at teenager school kid. We were working with. And, uh, you know, he, he ended up being, he ended up being pastor of a church where we used to have mass meetings, Allen temple, AME church, and pine bluff. But I remember him telling me is I was getting ready to go to Africa. And I was excited. I was, I don't know, 22 years old. Uh, I'd never been outta the country before. Uh, and, uh, you know, he told me not to get eaten by cannibals. When I got to Africa, this is a, uh, you know, 15, 16 year old black kid in, in Arkansas. I mean,

Speaker 1 (01:17:27):

Excuse me, had him a note that would've got to wrap it up. No.

Speaker 3 (01:17:31):

Okay. Anyway, it, it was an evolving sort of, we learned, uh, and

Speaker 1 (01:17:38):

Okay, ladies in general, give a big hand to the international claim, folk, singer, and freedom, singer Matthew, a Jones. That's gonna close it out for Yeah. When I got to Danville, soon as I got in town, I started right. Excuse me, singer song. It was a legend of Danville that I almost never, I never sang when I was in singers, but I sang the Danville

Speaker 1 (01:18:12):

In nine view on June the 10th in the year of 63 from Bible church to the courthouse. Some people March to be free. The night was gone and the journey land as we March to abreast and with the spirit of freedoms, all we didn't need. No rest, move on, move on, move on with the freedom. I'll give it to you. Move on, move on, move on. We're fighting for equal, right? Do that one more time. Move on, move on, move on, move on, move on with the freedom. Move on fighting. And as they fell out on their knees led by Reverend McGee who looked up and cried. Lord, please. We want to be, they heard the voice of chief McGann as they marched to abreast and with the spirit of freedoms of they didn't need no rest, move on, move on, move on with the freedom fight, move on, move on, move on. We're fighting.

Speaker 1 (01:20:08):

And as they heard those brutal words, they didn't turn around. And the water from the fire hose, knock them to the ground. And as they fell down brown, they were hit with big edge sticks. I'll never forget the terrible sound and the people's heads did split. Move on, move on, move on with the freedom. Move on, move on. We're fighting, right? Lord, brother. Don't your fault or mother Don. You, we unto our freedom of the road is move on. Move on, move on with the freedom fight. Move on, move on. We're fighting for right on June 13th. We marched again that led guys bombs. The grand jury ignited us on \$5,000 bomb and that Oh yeah. In Daniel towns now on June. Yeah. In Daniel towns, corrupted coach, we got no justice done. We were found guilty before. And the judge a gun move on, on, move on, move on, move on. Okay. Class leaves at six o'clock. And I have some things for you here on the counter for the whole, uh, SNCC stuff about 50 copies. If you wanna come and pick it up for yourself for.