



**Lucy Heidorn**  
**Sacred Harp Singing**  
**County Line Church, Blount County, Alabama**  
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Date: September 25, 2019  
Location: Mrs. Heidorn's home in Henagar, AL  
Interviewer: Michelle Little  
Transcription: Shelley M. Chance, Prodocs  
Length: One hour and nineteen minutes  
Project: Faith and Foodways

[Begin Lucy Heidorn Interview]

00:00:01

Michelle Little: All right; today is September 25, 2019, and this is Michelle Little interviewing Lucy Heidorn for the Southern Foodways Alliance, and we are at Lucy's home in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. To get us started, will you tell me your name and date of birth for the record?

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Lucy Heidorn: My name is Lucy Ryan Heidorn; my birth date was May 14, 1936.

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Michelle Little: And Lucy, where did you grow up?

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Lucy Heidorn: I grew up in Jefferson County, Alabama, in a community called Sayre. There was a mining camp nearby and my dad worked at the mines and I went to Corner High School.

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Michelle Little: And can you tell me a little bit about your parents and what all they did?

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Lucy Heidorn: My mother and dad— my dad, as I said worked at the mines, and my mother was a stay-at-home parent. My mother was Marie Creel Ryan then. We had— I had two brothers. I was the oldest child. I had two brothers and then my parents decided to foster some children for

the Welfare Department in Birmingham and so we— the first child we got was a special needs child. And she was at that time not really adoptable, and we were allowed to adopt her. So we adopted my sister at— she was probably 18 months old, and I was about 13.

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And then my two brothers, one was two years younger than I, and the other one was five years younger than I. My second brother still lives in Texas with his— all of his family live near Ft. Worth. My younger brother died when he was in his early 60s. He had cancer.

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Michelle Little: Hmm; so what was it like growing up around that mining community?

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Lucy Heidorn: It was— it was good. We— there was a school, junior high school nearby, and I don't know whether it was actually partly sponsored by the Republic Steel Company or not, but they were very supportive. And it was about a mile and a half from our house. So we walked to school most of the time and we had to walk across part of the Warrior River and the— back in the day those bridges had runners you know like the old bridges— had just runners, and so you could see between the cross-ties. And I got a bridge phobia from that so [Laughter] it took me a long time to get over it.

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But it was a good school. Most of the teachers came from— well, there were a few in the community, some ladies that taught and then several people came from Birmingham out and taught. So we actually got what I think, and some of my friends have said, too that we had a better education than some of the smaller schools like ours because the people that came from

out of the county area were a different— you know they had a different culture. So I remember my sixth grade teacher did a lot of things with us that I will never forget.

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She introduced us to classical music, choral reading, just a number of things. She was very special.

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Michelle Little: Hmm and that was your junior high?

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Lucy Heidorn: That was my junior high; that would have been my sixth grade teacher and the junior high went from— well, we didn't have kindergarten, but we went from first grade to the ninth and then from tenth grade we went to Corner High School, which was about 10, maybe 15 miles from us, and we rode a school bus. And you know we didn't run around too much. We lived in a community where there were a good many people, but we always had chores to do and we were busy and Mother didn't ever want us roaming away from home too far you know. So we pretty well stayed at home.

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And my brothers and I played together a lot. We had a big imagination. [Laughter] And we'd make all kinds of things. I was trying— I think of things all the time. We just thought— of course when we went to church, we went to a Primitive Baptist Church because our parents were Primitive Baptist so my grandparents were too, on both sides of Mother's family.

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But we mostly went to singings all the time, so we didn't go to church a lot. But my brothers and I played church and we would sing and one of them would just— you know if we found a dead mouse or a dead bird we'd have a funeral. And we just always— you know we did things like that all the time. And we just had to think of things to entertain ourselves because I mean, you know we had toys and all that but after a while you get tired of playing with toys and we had a cat that would let us dress her up and put her in a baby carriage and ride her around and we would do that.

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We just did all kinds of things. We made— we called them playhouses. We had a place over behind our house; we had about five acres where we had a big garden. That's why we didn't get to do much playing because we had to work. But we had pine trees in that area and we would make what we called playhouses with pine straw. We would arrange the furniture you know make sofas and chairs with pine straw and we did things like that; we were always busy.

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Michelle Little: And you said you went to the Primitive Baptist Church?

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Lucy Heidorn: Uh-huh.

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Michelle Little: What was the name?

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Lucy Heidorn: Well that was not— well there was— there was church at County Line, which is where I'll be going next— three weeks from now I think to a singing. Actually, the name of that church building is well, I have to think about it and I can't think of it right now but it's in the corner of Blount and Walker and Jefferson Counties and so most people just call it County Line.

[Interviewer's note: Church building is now New Zion Hill Primitive Baptist Church.]

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I don't remember going to church there because I think they stopped having regular church in the early [19]40s, so I wasn't very old. But we went to just various places. Now we went some to Liberty Church that we called McCormick's. It's just up the road from where we lived in— near Sumiton on Old 78.

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And it is still an active church, but I don't remember very much about going to church and— because we went to singings every Sunday. And so that was our church.

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Now when I became a teenager, occasionally I would go to church across the road from us. It was a Church of Christ. But then my husband and I joined the Methodist Church so— but we didn't really go to church enough for me to remember very much about it.

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Michelle Little: That is one thing I've wondered about the singings since they are every weekend, do a lot of people consider them—

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Lucy Heidorn: That's church.

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Michelle Little: —this is their— that's church?

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Lucy Heidorn: That's church for us; uh-huh that's the way we worship. Now I— the Primitive Baptist that I went to or went with my parents— used a book called *The Lloyd Hymnal*. It's— and I couldn't find mine. I've looked for it. It's a little book about, hmm, I would say three by five. No; it must be four by six— something like that. And it's only words; it's no notation. And I don't know if you're familiar with the country music person Ralph Stanley; Ralph Stanley was a Primitive Baptist and he— a few times I've heard him on various things on the radio or on TV— in fact I heard him on this program— line out hymns. See people back then couldn't read, and a lot of the people were not educated. My dad was— well neither of my parents had much education but they were— they were smart people. They knew how to do things, but anyway in lining out a hymn you would say the words and then the congregation would sing it after you.

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And it was very, very primitive and I have a couple of *The Lloyd Hymnals* but as I said, I couldn't find them. But what I think what they did is they would announce a tune or if they didn't, the director would just start singing and then the people that knew what he was singing would start. You know there were no instruments. And it was— it's interesting, but it's very, I don't know how to describe it; now it's classified as folklore, even Sacred Harp is classified as folklore in a lot of areas. But to us it's church.

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And unfortunately, for me a lot of it has become so not like church that you know, we would like it to be a little more formal—a not exactly formal but a little more—. I think people are sincere when they sing. But when I was growing up—I laugh now and tell people I had to learn to sing out of necessity because we had to go to church. We stayed all day, see, and then you couldn't leave for anything. You had to sit there and be quiet so you might as well learn to sing. [Laughter] So I did.

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And it was of course, born in us anyway because we have inherited this talent for singing from our grandparents on my mother's— both sides, both the Creel side and her mother's maiden name was Reid and so the Reids were all singers and the Creels were all singers. And so you know we just all knew how to sing. And so I started actually what we call leading a song when I was three. And I think it was probably at Liberty Church at what I just told you about.

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We called it McCormick's because there are a lot of McCormicks people that lived in the community and everybody called it McCormick's. And that church building had a little table. I guess it was where they probably put their—I don't know what it was used for, but it was what I'd call a kind of a side table. It wasn't very big, and it had a marble top. I remember that. You know how the old antiques a lot of times had a marble top?

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Michelle Little: Yes.

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Lucy Heidorn: And they would stand me on that to direct, and I didn't like it. But I do vaguely remember standing, and I think it was at Liberty. And I probably led *Murillo's Lesson* which is a song—I don't know the numbers anymore but I'm not sure about that. Unfortunately, I didn't—I thought when I was talking to my mother that I could remember everything that she ever told me and of course I can't. [Laughter]

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But then I got older of course and didn't have to stand on the table, and I was glad for that. [Laughter] And people were— sometimes older people would give the younger people like me, the children, money when they led. You know they'd give— and I didn't like that either, but I have been guilty of doing it myself so you know. [Laughter] Anyway so since then I— you know I just knew how to sing.

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And do you want me to go ahead and talk about our family now and more about the singing?

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Michelle Little: Sure; absolutely.

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Lucy Heidorn: Well my mother actually— my dad didn't sing. Now he could sing; the only times I ever heard him sing much was sometimes when he'd be out working and he would sing. But when we were fostering those children he was very good— we did later have babies to foster. And my dad would sit on the front porch in the swing with those babies and rock—

swinging them to go to sleep and he would sing from Sacred Harp. Now he didn't sing the notes but he would sing the words.

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And but he didn't ever participate in the singings with us. He went, but he didn't participate in the actual singing. And but mother on Saturdays, if we were going to a singing on Sunday which we usually were, if it didn't last two or three days [Laughter]— but some of them did back in the day. And they still do when they have a convention.

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But we would prepare whatever food we could on Saturday, something that would go in the refrigerator you know, like deviled eggs for example. And I don't remember if mother actually fixed any meals that had to be— or dishes that had to be cooked and keep them in the refrigerator overnight— I can't remember. But anyway, we'd do all that 'til lunch. And during all the time we were doing that she was preparing lunch because we usually ate what we called dinner in the middle of the day.

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And then we would— we children and— would get our baths and we'd go into the living room and she would teach us a song to sing the next— to lead the next day. My brothers led as well. My younger brother I don't think ever wanted to, and as he got older, he didn't like the singing. But my brother next to me still sings. They have singings in Texas and he goes. They have a lot of small afternoon singings.

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He was a truck driver so he— in his adult years, he didn't have a chance to go very much. But anyway, she would put us on the sofa and each one of us had to get up in front of her and lead and she would teach us you know—. And Mother had no training. But my mother was a

wonderful singer. She had a natural alto voice that when she was young— when I was young and she was younger in her time, she was probably one of the best alto singers in all of Sacred Harp.

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After she died, Mother was a charter member of the— one of these musical associations that we have. There are two or three of them. You'd have to ask David Ivey about those because I can't keep them separated. But anyway, after she died, they came to County Line and gave us a plaque and talked about Mother and the person that gave us the plaque said the first time he had heard Mother sing he said, "Who is this woman?" And they said well, "She's Jim Reid's granddaughter. Does that tell you anything?" My great-grandfather was well known in Sacred Harp. And although he was not an educated musician, he just had the talent and he taught singing schools. And you know, they were poor, everybody was poor, and he walked the area near where I grew up to singing schools and taught singing schools. And as I told you earlier, he— when we sing at County Line on the third Sunday in October this year, it will be the 100<sup>th</sup> session that was named for him when he died in 1919.

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And actually, he's buried in the cemetery at County Line, he and his wife. His wife was Margaret Jane Yarborough Reid and you know he was— he died when my mother was two years old. So none of us really, you know, ever knew him but we feel like his— he's with us because we got his talent. His wife didn't sing. I don't know if she could but—. I never heard anybody say that great-grandmother sang. But his oldest daughter Annie was my grandmother and she was mother's mother of course.

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Michelle Little: Uh-hm.

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Lucy Heidorn: And she could sing anything in that book, anything. She just did; you know, we sang all the time and we sang at home and we sang when we were working and we sang at singings every Sunday so it's just— it becomes part of one's life. I don't know how to describe it. But my grandmother was very stern, and I think a lot of my characteristics were from my grandmother. And it was a talent that I was glad I had when I was teaching school because I could be tough and [Laughter] you know it was easy.

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But my grandmother was very, very stern. And she wanted the kids to learn to sing the way it was written in the book, not the way they wanted to sing it. And mother told the story once that my grandmother had migraine headaches, and once she was in bed while the kids were young and they were walking around singing in the house you know and playing and Mama Creel—we called her Mama Creel— rose up and said that's not the way that song goes. You sing it this way. [Laughter]

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So she— you know they didn't put up with our just halfway singing. We had to sing it the way they thought it was supposed to be. And they really— none of us ever had any real training. Now I had a little bit of notation you know, in school and I was in the college— I mean in the high school chorus and I was in the college choir for a semester or two.

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But most of what we learned we just learned by sitting next to someone who could sing and you just— you just learned by reading the notes and you know picking up this and that and it was— it's kind of the way it is.

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Now a lot of the people now that sing are educated people in music, you know. And that's a good thing and but some of the older people— my granddaddy had a friend named Walter Parker, and Mr. Parker was an educated man. He was— I believe he was a teacher. And he and my granddaddy celebrated a birthday relatively close together. My granddaddy's birthday was October 1, 1890 I believe. And we'd have a singing at County Line on a Saturday for their birthdays.

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And so I also interviewed Mr. Parker when I was doing a paper on Sacred Harp. And he said several things, and I can't quote them but his indication was that people who had trained voices, it doesn't sound the same as the ones who don't have trained voices. And he was afraid even in his day that it was going to get to the point that it was going to be a lot more trained voices and it's still beautiful, but it's not the same.

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And I thought that was an interesting statement because he could see both sides, and I can too, and we appreciate the people who are talented and have— and know music. I have some cousins who are musical people and you know, they know. They can read music and they can just pick up. I can't do that. But I— when I had a voice I could still sing, and I didn't sing just Sacred Harp. I sang in my church choir for way over 30 years and sang solos and all sorts of things. But I always— well, I didn't go to the singings very much when— you know, when I was in college and my husband didn't like the singings, so we didn't ever go much except to County Line which was our— what we call our home church.

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And then after my mother moved in with me in 1989 we started going to singings again and went quite a lot. And so I got interested in it again and then I've lost my voice now so I can't sing at all, so—. [Laughter] But still— it's still music and I still enjoy it.

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Michelle Little: So when you were growing up your--mainly your church music experience was—

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Lucy Heidorn: Was Sacred Harp Singing.

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Michelle Little: — Sacred Harp. And then you did eventually go to different churches and— and—

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Lucy Heidorn: Right.

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Michelle Little: --branch out into different—. So how do you— if someone has never been to a Sacred Harp Singing, say they've just grown up in a denomination that had a traditional choir, how would you explain the difference? And you touched on it a little bit there with you know everyone being equal and coming together but how would you explain it to— ?

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Lucy Heidorn: Well I have tried to explain it to some people; it isn't easy because as a person who is not a musician, I can't describe dispersed harmony which is what it is. But you know I just tell them that for us that was church. We went; we had prayers and we sang and we visited with our friends you know, and we had recesses and that. But unless one learns to look at the book and you actually show them what you're singing, they have no clue about what it is.

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So I guess when I was younger— especially when I went to college and got away from you know the singings— I didn't really talk about it much because I didn't know anybody that knew what I was talking about. Now every once in a while, like when I finally got so I would talk about it in my choir at church— you know every once in a while we would sing something that was actually in the Sacred Harp Book and I would tell them— they would sort of know a little bit about it or they knew an ancestor that knew about it. And we've had a few programs in the area. The Art Center in Tuscumbia actually had David Ivey come a few years back and a group to sing and we had you know, an audience to come in.

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And so a few things like that have spread it around, but there's still not many people that I know in my area here that are interested. It's sort of a singing— a type of singing that you— one has to get interested in it, or you don't care about it. It's sort of— because it's not something you just pick up. It's you get— well, I think Mr. Parker kind of said something about that when I interviewed him. He said if you don't think that you're going to like this you need to get away from it because it'll take over, and it does.

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You can ask anybody. Young people or people that have come from other places you know and once you get started you just— it's something you just can't stop. I don't know how to describe it.

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Now my aunt, mother's older sister, moved to Michigan when she was married and lived up there all of her life. And she became involved with— I have forgotten which one of the colleges— but she helped get started some of the small singings back in the [19]70s. When the folk music got so popular in the [19]70s, Sacred Harp caught on some of the universities, and she was involved with helping get some small groups started there. And a lot of those people in Detroit and around Chicago and that area all knew her well because she would go, you know, and they'd sing in the afternoons or whatever. And she would sing with them.

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And mother had six brothers and sisters, three sisters and three brothers, and they all were very good singers. I'm prejudiced of course but I think my mother was the best of the women, and I think her second brother Harrison, who sang bass, was the best of the men. But they all could sing. And that's another story. Harrison's family still are the major part of our family that still sings because Harrison had three— four children and even though they didn't follow singing— well, I should go back.

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My mother was the only one in the family that stayed with Sacred Harp music her whole life and never changed to any other kind of music or any other church. She went with me to the Methodist Church, but she was still a Primitive Baptist. But Harrison, her brother, as I said, they sang gospel music, too, and so it was really after the children got almost grown 'til they all got back interested in Sacred Harp, but now they're the core of the music at County Line because

some of them live in the area and then they all are good singers. And so— but mother never— she didn't even get involved in any other kind of music. We didn't ever go to any— we called it little-book singings; that's gospel like what you'd call convention music now, gospel music. I mean we could sing gospel music but we just didn't ever go. We always went to Sacred Harp and so mother was well known.

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I have some recordings that mother helped to make in I don't know [19]50s and [19]60s. There were groups that would get together and make a recording. I don't know who was responsible, but she was well known. And Harrison, then, was in the years after I started going back with mother to the singings anybody could tell you that Harrison was the best bass singer there was anywhere.

00:27:28

Michelle Little: Hmm.

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Lucy Heidorn: They just had those voices. And we made two CDs of our family singing and I believe the first one we made in [19]84, and all of mother's brothers and sisters are singing on it except one. And anyway, it's good. And then the cousins decided to make one a few years back. I think it was in the early 2000s; I can't remember. And we have that one, so—. It's— those are of course, just priceless to us.

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Michelle Little: Uh-hm; absolutely.

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Lucy Heidorn: Uh-hm.

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Michelle Little: So on— going back to actually— to the events, the— the singings when you were younger, you said on Saturdays, you would do some of the food prep and learn the songs.

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Lucy Heidorn: Right; songs, uh-hm.

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Michelle Little: So then the singings were all day?

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Lucy Heidorn: All day.

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Michelle Little: On Sunday?

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Lucy Heidorn: They usually started— well, I can't remember back then; we start now about 9:30. Some of them start at 10:00 and they sing a while and then have a recess, and then we stop for an hour at lunch. The recesses are just brief, and then back years ago when I was growing up, we had a recess in the afternoon and usually sang 'til 3 o'clock. But now they don't do that as

much, primarily because a lot of people drive long distances to go to the singings and so they usually kind of stop about 2:30 or whatever.

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But then we would sing all day, and of course no air-conditioning, not comfortable places to sing because most of the churches were small country churches and they were really primitive, but when I was growing up you rarely went anywhere that there was an indoor bathroom, no electricity, sometimes no light— well, I said electricity. There was, you know, it was just very primitive. County Line of course, we have improved the buildings that— the ones that were able to have a family that cared, you know. But County Line is still rather primitive if you were there because it's back in the wooded area, but people love to go there because they love the setting because it's such a pretty place and but it's still just a fairly— we do have electricity and indoor plumbing [Laughter] but you know it's not used except for a singing or for our family gathering or whatever. It's not been a church as I said, since probably the early [19]40s. I can't remember. We had the church book but I think it was early [19]40s when they ceased to have church there.

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But now I do remember; I'm assuming this was a singing. It could have been a church because I can't remember it specifically. But the dinner on the ground, I think, part came actually from people putting their lunch on the ground. I vaguely remember at County Line stretching. They would put I guess a tablecloth or a quilt or something on the ground and they would actually put the food on top of that and then you just reached over and got—.

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When I interviewed my granddaddy, his name was Charlie Creel, he told me a little bit about that, and he said that when he was growing up people, just took mostly what we'd call finger foods today, you know things they could just pick up and eat because there were no paper

plates. There was no utensils. There was nothing and he said they— I think he told me they just used, maybe tin plates you know people had— and maybe they had some forks and things but he said they would take things like sausage in a biscuit or something that somebody could just pick up, and I guess they had maybe cookies. I don't really remember. He didn't say much about it.

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But I can't remember actually having anything to drink at singings when I was young. We may have, but I can't remember. Now this is when I was a little girl. As I got older, Daddy Creel was one of the first people I ever knew that took coffee to a singing and I don't— if there was not any electricity, I don't know how he did it. But I remember he would have coffee; maybe there was electricity at the singings by then. I don't know. He had a box that he had little white cups, washable cups that he took and there would be coffee available. And I'm sure there was water but you know I don't know. People drank out of buckets and dippers [Laughter] you know. I'm sure they had water available.

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Now mother said— and we have a picture— I believe it was in the 1920s. They had a lot of singings at County Line back in the day, way before I could remember because we had a community picture that was made at County Line when mother was probably I don't know two or three. You can kind of see who— she and Aunt Pauline are in the picture. And it was the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and they used to have 4<sup>th</sup> of July singings and various things and they would have watermelon and that kind of thing, too. You know, lemonade also. I guess they did have things to drink but see, I just can't remember exactly.

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But I do remember when we— I think I remember when we didn't have paper plates and we brought plates from home. And because mother would have my brothers and me to take

plates to special people because see that they— and especially people that were visitors; you know, we would have what we called the home crowd, people that lived in the area or the— were the hosts of the singing primarily, and that still kind of is the case today.

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But then of course, gradually, we had paper plates and utensils and that sort of thing and now we try to feed people like we're feeding them at home [Laughter]. You should see the bounteous meals that people put out— bountiful meals rather. But it's come a long way since you know the little that I can remember a long time ago.

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Michelle Little: Uh-hm; so you said your mom would— you remember her fixing deviled eggs and—?

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Lucy Heidorn: Yes. Mother primarily even after she lived here in the [19]80s she always wanted to make chicken and dressing. And she would make— well of course, when we were kids, we had our own chickens so we killed a hen and you would— we would boil the hen and take the meat off the bones you know and all this sort of thing, and then she made the dressing and she put the meat in the dressing and just kind of shredded it up and put it in with the— with the dressing.

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So she almost always took chicken and dressing. And I'm saying this to County Line. If you went to a singing when you had to drive a long way, sometimes you didn't take food because it was too hard to do. When mother made chicken and dressing when I was young, we

had an apple tree that was not far from our house. It was actually just outside our kitchen window up a little rise. And she would get those apples. I think it was probably a— delicious apple tree, the yellow delicious and she would cut them in half and peel them and put them in a casserole dish usually like a 9x12—13 or big— and just— and she made something kind of a sauce. It wasn't actually a sauce but she put red coloring in them because she wanted them to be red and that went with the dressing.

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And I guess that was our forerunner of cranberry sauce but, you know, we didn't think about cranberry sauce in those days.

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My mother wanted everything to be tasty, but she wanted it to be attractive. And she wanted also it to be healthful but she wanted those red apples to go with that— with that chicken and dressing and of course it did. [Laughter] And then we took vegetables. I'm sure that we had canned ourselves or then later as we had a freezer we had vegetables frozen because we prepared all of our winter food in the summer. And so she— we would take things like green beans and you know, whatever. And sometimes we made salads, potato salads and slaw and we always made desserts.

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My mother was an excellent cake and pie maker— well, all of our family was. She in later years when she lived with me— I don't know when she started— well, I guess she always made coconut cakes, but she was kind of well-known for her coconut layer cake. And mother did not do a two-layer cake. She didn't think that was a cake. It had to have three layers [Laughter]. And so she would make those three-layer coconut cakes and she made yellow layers and she would make a pudding that you— it was kind of like a vanilla pudding that you'd put the

coconut in the puddings and put it all— stir it up and then put that between the layers and then on top she'd put I guess seven-minute frosting with more coconut on top.

00:37:35

And we had to grate the coconut when we were children because you know you didn't buy frozen coconut or coconut in a bag. And so you bought fresh coconuts and grated them. Believe me; it'll take you and your fingers with it. [Laughter] But then mother was also very particular; she did not like the coconut in the bags. She wanted the frozen because it's very much like— well, I'm sure it is fresh coconut that's been frozen. So it's not as stringy and so she made her cakes with that. She was also known for her German chocolate cakes when German chocolate became famous. We didn't have that years and years ago.

00:38:18

When I was a child, we used to beg her to make just a layer cake with what we called cooked frosting. It was like fudge put on top, you know, and kind of hardens and you would cut it and it would crackle and it was so good. [Laughter] We would make--mother made a lot of lemon pies to take to singings and she bought the mix that was the little mix like Jell-O pudding is now but you had to cook it. And when we first started buying them, the pudding mix had a little capsule in it that was the lemon and you had to get it hot and stir it for that capsule to break and the lemon to get out in it. And mother— she's the only person I ever knew who made cornflake crusts instead of graham crackers. She used cornflakes and she'd crush them up and we'd put butter and you know make— and then make that pudding and put the— I mean yeah, lemon pudding and make lemon pie and put meringue on top.

00:39:26

It makes me want to start eating again [Laughter].

00:39:30

Michelle Little: Yes. [Laughter]

00:39:31

Lucy Heidorn: Those are things that I remember the most. We usually had— I don't guess we ever canned corn but after we had a freezer we did creamed corn. And you know, we had lima beans, we had green beans, we had everything you could think of frozen and we just made meals out of what we had. And we usually had chickens and you know we had deviled eggs and that— that kind of thing.

00:40:04

Now when I go to County Line now, like three weeks from now, I will take probably a large meatloaf. If I make my own meat, I take a meatloaf. Sometimes we buy ham or sometimes we buy chicken. But you know, already fried, and then I take creamed corn and either lima beans or some kind of vegetable, and I usually don't take a dessert anymore because it's a two-hour drive from here and I— my son comes and he goes with me. Otherwise, I couldn't go now and I can't handle the things to put the meals in, you know. It's heavy. And so what did I say— I take meatloaf or some kind of meat and I take creamed corn and a green vegetable and deviled eggs.

00:40:56

And if I'm going in October, I take a larger amount than I take in the spring singing because we usually have a larger crowd in October. There are a lot of singings going on all at the same time now. See, years ago it was not like that. But so that's— that's pretty— and we take drinks, you know. Tea and that sort of thing, plus when I was young we made our own tea. You know there was not tea bags [Laughter] so we kept gallon pickle jars or something you know, and by the way, they used to take pickles and homemade things you know, like just regular

pickles and beet pickles and things of that type. I mean people just took to singings what they— what they had, whatever it was.

00:41:51

Now we took fried chicken a lot, but that was a long time ago when we had our own chickens you know and we— I guess we had to get up and fry those before we went to the singings. [Laughter] But I mean you know, it wasn't an easy life. [Laughter] You know it's like I said, you had to learn to love it or you just you know—. And now, while we're talking about food, mother also made fried pies out of dried fruit you know. Most of the time it was fruit that she had dried herself and we actually dried fruit after she moved here; my neighbors used to have peach trees and we fried— we dried a lot of dried peaches and but we also had apples and so we dried apples.

00:42:41

But my grandmother, Mama Creel, always made chicken and dumplings. That was her specialty. And she had a set of, I think it's called probably hammered aluminum, heavy kind of. And it was a big container that had a bale on it and a lid. And she would make her chicken and dumplings in that pot and she always had probably it was a flour sack that she had kept and she wrapped it around that pail and tied it in a knot on top and then you could still get the pail you know.

00:43:22

So she usually took that and fried pies and other kinds of the same thing— vegetables. You know everybody just took the vegetables that they had canned or whatever it was. But I can't remember anything else but they were kind of known for those.

00:43:36

Now one of my first cousins has Mama Creel's pot and she makes dumplings and takes them to County Line.

00:43:43

Michelle Little: Oh wow.

00:43:45

Lucy Heidorn: So it's a tradition.

00:43:47

Michelle Little: That's one thing that fascinates me thinking about what all your mom made and even what you're making that back then how— you know how she transported all that without the modern—

00:44:00

Lucy Heidorn: Well, we had— she used a box and we also used these— what we called market baskets that you would see like at a food market, they're woven. I don't— and they have the metal little handles on them; we used those for carrying and of course everybody had those that they carried— that's what they gathered their vegetables in.

00:44:23

And so we used those, and if you had box you could put something in the box. I remember one time, we were going to County Line, and the road was not— the road was paved but where we left the road to go down just a little stretch to the church building was not. And when we turned to get off the pavement, mother had made a banana pudding and it turned over

[Laughter] in the back. I don't know what it was in, but I don't think it was completely destroyed and we had banana pudding. That was another thing that people liked to take because people loved banana pudding and you couldn't have enough to suit everybody. [Laughter]

00:45:07

I can't remember all the things that we took. But yeah; it was nothing about it that was easy. We had to work.

00:45:15

Michelle Little: Uh-hm; but was it worth it when you're there— ?

00:45:18

Lucy Heidorn: It was worth it.

00:45:19

Michelle Little: And everything like— ?

00:45:21

Lucy Heidorn: Especially after you got old enough to realize what you were doing. You know, I can remember now, I get to thinking about it sometimes, when I was a child I didn't know what I was saying. I didn't know what the words meant as far as the religious part of the music because it is all religious. And I get to thinking about one of the songs is called Long Sought Home, S-o-u-g-h-t; when I was a child I thought that was salt and I always wondered what a long salt home could be, but we never asked questions. I don't know why. We just took everything at face value.

00:46:04

But there are a lot of things like that. Now my uncle Harrison he was really a comic and mother would tell stories about Harry would take the music from the song when they'd be out in the fields working. And he'd make up his own lyrics and they weren't always things you want to sing in church. [Laughter] But he was very serious about his music but he was also funny. And they had to do something to laugh. Their lives were hard. I mean my life was kind of hard growing up but it was nothing compared to theirs. There were seven children and they all had to work. I tried to think sometimes about my grandmother getting up and having to make enough biscuits for *nine* people. And Mother said she started making biscuits when she was probably young, and I remember making biscuits when I was 10 because my daddy thought he had to have biscuits every morning.

00:46:59

And sometimes my mother didn't feel good and he'd come in and say you'd have to make biscuits this morning. So whether you knew how or not that's what you did. [Laughter]

00:47:09

Michelle Little: How did you make biscuits?

00:47:10

Lucy Heidorn: Well I haven't made any in a long, long time. But I made them like my mother. You would just use flour and you know some baking soda, a little salt; I'm not sure if we put soda in ours or not and now in the day, we used lard that we had rendered out ourselves from killing a hog and rendering out the fat, you know. And you had lard that you stored in a container and that's what you kept in the house to use in the winter.

00:47:40

And then we had cracklings that we used to make crackling cornbread which we thought was— and it is a delicacy today, but we thought it was poor man’s food. But then buttermilk and you’d stir it all together and then we would roll ours out and cut it with— well, we didn’t have a cutter when I was a kid, but mother would use— she’d save a can and made--or either a glass but cans were better because you could take the bottom out and then it wouldn’t tear the biscuits up.

00:48:11

And yeah; I learned to make biscuits. I learned to cook standing by mother because I mean I had to work in the kitchen. And you know, stirring this or stirring that and gradually just pick up what she does and my grandmother made biscuits in a wooden bowl, great big wooden bowl that was probably I don’t know, 14 inches across probably diameter-wise, maybe 12. But it was a big wooden bowl, and she kept flour in it all the time. And she would put the lard or whatever the shortening was and the milk and she used her hands and she just worked it all in there together. I’ve seen her—and she didn’t roll hers out; she pinched them off and flattened [Gestures] and put them in a container to cook.

00:49:07

Michelle Little: Whew.

00:49:08

Lucy Heidorn: She had a great big— I still have it— great big black kind of a pan like a casserole type size and that’s what she cooked her biscuits in.

00:49:20

Michelle Little: Hmm.

00:49:22

Lucy Heidorn: And of course, everything was good because you had homemade butter and all that to go with it and jellies that you'd made yourself and—. But the fried pies were— they still are my favorite and I make fried pies occasionally, but not very often. And I use biscuit dough; that's what my mother used. Now my aunts used pie crust and they liked to kind of deep fat fry theirs but we made ours with biscuit dough and after mother stopped using lard, she thought Crisco was the best thing in the world to cook with. So that's what we made our fried pies with, and after she moved here, we'd make our fried pies on Saturday. They're not as good on— if you don't make them fresh but we didn't want to get up early and then have to [Laughter] make them before we went to the singing. But you rarely would go to a singing that there weren't a lot of fried pies because people— as I said, they took to singings whatever they ate at home and that's what we ate.

00:50:25

And so even though we didn't have a lot of money, we had a lot of good food at our house. [Laughter] We always had good food.

00:50:35

Michelle Little: It sounds like it.

00:50:35

Lucy Heidorn: And my mother was a wonderful manager. She could take what we had and do a lot with it, and she was very creative when it came to cooking. And again, they had to be. My

grandmother actually managed a cafeteria at one of the schools at— not too far out of Birmingham. I can't think of the name of it now— during the— like 1943 I believe, during the war. And she used to tell us about— I don't think she did it very long, but she was there a while— things were rationed during World War II, and so we couldn't get bananas and we couldn't get sugar, we couldn't get a lot of things, and when she would get sugar and bananas, she would make banana pudding at the school and the kids would just be so happy because they had something that they didn't have all the time.

00:51:26

They just learned how to do with what they had and they knew how to make things taste good, so we had good food. We still do.

00:51:35

Michelle Little: Uh-hm.

00:51:36

Lucy Heidorn: [Laughter] Except for me.

00:51:39

Michelle Little: [Laughter]

00:51:39

Lucy Heidorn: My cousins are really good cooks and when we have singings at— well, they go now all the time like we used to and when we had singings— have singings at County Line, they are the ones that are sort of the hostesses and the host and they take a lot of food. A lot of people

fry okra. I think I left out the okra. We used to fry okra to take and squash if we had— of course we didn't have fresh squash in the fall but in the spring we might have— whatever we had in the garden you know we would have to. Of course we'd have to get up and cook that before you went. You can't fry okra the day before.

00:52:17

Michelle Little: No; you can't [Laughter]. What time would you have to get up?

00:52:20

Lucy Heidorn: I don't remember.

00:52:20

Michelle Little: The day of the singing?

00:52:21

Lucy Heidorn: It wasn't daylight; I know that. [Laughter]

00:52:23

Michelle Little: Right; so you all had— you had chicken and you had a full garden almost—

00:52:29

Lucy Heidorn: We had five— pretty much five acres of what we called over in the field, but we also had a kitchen garden near our house where we grew lettuce and onions and radishes and the early things that one would get in the spring. And then we had over in the big garden we had

beans and peas of every kind, potatoes, tomatoes, we had some berries, some kind of berries that grew on one of the terrace rows. We had apple trees. We had corn, we had field corn; this was before we had the yellow corn that you see in the stores now. And if you had never had any creamed field corn that's the best thing in the world; it is so good.

00:53:22

And we did a lot of that. And that's what people would call fried corn today because most of the time they fried it in an iron skillet. But mother made hers in a metal— a round metal aluminum pan, and you'd bake it. She baked hers in the oven I believe but we did sometimes fry it in an iron skillet. And it's not really fried; it's just creamed but you don't put cream in it. It just makes its own cream because field corn is mostly white, and it's very creamy and has a lot of starch in it and when you cook it with butter and good things to make it taste better it really creams up and it's so good. It was my favorite thing to eat when I was growing up.

00:54:10

Michelle Little: Oh wow; that sounds delicious.

00:54:12

Lucy Heidorn: It is. [Laughter] And unfortunately it's hard to find anymore.

00:54:17

Michelle Little: Uh-hm; wow. Hmm; well, so growing up you went almost every Sunday and then you said, you went to college and I know we talked about this at lunch, but where did you go to college?

00:54:36

Lucy Heidorn: I went to college at Florence State Teachers College in Florence, Alabama. Now it's UNA. I think it changed its name four times since I've— while I was there. [Laughter] It became Florence State College and then Florence— I forgot what the other one— and now it's University of North Alabama. I went there from 1955 until 1959, at which time we were having summer school at Coffee High School in Florence, and one of my professors helped me get a job in summer school so the first teaching experience I had was teaching summer school and these were students that had either failed or at that time they could go ahead and take a class in advance. They don't let them do that now, I don't think. And so I taught that summer. And then my husband was still in school and when he graduated in 1960, we moved to Walker County at Carbon Hill where he was a basketball coach for two years, and I taught one year there. And I taught— I believe I taught senior English but I'm not sure. I can't remember.

00:55:50

And then we found out a school was starting in Muscle Shoals and he became the first basketball coach at Muscle Shoals High School, and I took a job at Sheffield Junior High in Sheffield which is just nearby. And I taught seventh grade English for about nine or ten years there. And then I came out to Muscle Shoals because we lived right in front of the school, and I just thought it was a wise thing. It wasn't necessarily, but it worked out okay because my husband went into administration and sometimes we had some kind of difficult times you know, with people knowing I was working and he was working in the same school. It's pretty common now, but back then they didn't really like us to do that.

00:56:33

So I taught at the high school in Muscle Shoals for about I don't know, 15 or so years. And then I moved to the middle school in Muscle Shoals and taught the last eight years there so I

taught a total of 34 years in the public classroom. And then after— when I was retired, I was an adjunct at UNA for about 14 or so years, supervising student teachers, and I really enjoyed all of it. I loved teaching, but I enjoyed the student teaching because I could go to various schools. I wasn't isolated in the classroom all the time.

00:57:12

But I taught mostly— let's see; I taught ninth grade freshmen and then I taught eleventh grade juniors at Muscle Shoals, mostly. And at Sheffield I taught the seventh grade English.

00:57:27

Michelle Little: Hmm.

00:57:28

Lucy Heidorn: But yeah; I was in Sheffield Junior High when the schools integrated the schools. And it was relatively smooth. We had some wise people that were in charge and we had some incidents but not anything that one would consider. And there was a large African American community in Sheffield, so we had a lot of students. And it was just as difficult for them as it was for anybody else, you know. It was more difficult for them. But they were well-accepted and you know it just was pretty smooth. Muscle Shoals had a very small number of black people in the community. But some of the neighboring communities sent students to Muscle Shoals because it was a— well, it wasn't a better school necessarily. It was a bigger school and some of the county schools you know were not as well-rounded— didn't have as much money. And that kind of thing, so our first African American I remember at Muscle Shoals was a young man that came in to play football. And so, but you know in this area it was relatively smooth and still is. Everything— everybody works together and does whatever.

00:58:55

Michelle Little: Hmm; so did the schools remain fairly integrated after that? I've noticed in some communities you know—

00:59:02

Lucy Heidorn: No; they are now here. Sheffield especially is; it may have had the largest population. I really don't know, but as far as I know everything works well, you know. And there aren't any problems and—. Some of the students prefer to— because in order to come from like Leighton is not very far from here and it's a county school. Some of them you know went back to their, or stayed in their community and because the schools gradually grew and they had good programs and that sort of thing, but as far as I know there aren't any real problems around here. Of course I'm not as involved now.

00:59:45

Michelle Little: Sure; sure. Hmm and so which church did you and your husband attend here in Muscle Shoals?

00:59:54

Lucy Heidorn: Okay; we went to first United Methodist Church but it closed four years ago. I was a member there from 1962 until it closed in 2015. And I was in the choir, primarily. I worked as— I didn't teach Sunday School. A friend and I kept the nursery during Sunday School. And our son grew up in Sunday School and in church there and my husband was involved in the administrative part of the church. And we were very sad when it closed, but it's

just one of those things that happened. It gradually began to deteriorate numbers and that--that kind of thing.

01:00:43

So then when I left or when that church closed, I went to Tuscumbia First United Methodist Church, and I'm a member there now.

01:00:52

And since I can't go to singings that's where I go— Sunday School and church. If I could go to a singing, I would miss church occasionally [Laughter]— not as much as I did when I was growing up but—.

01:01:07

Michelle Little: Yeah; so quite a departure to start going to—

01:01:09

Lucy Heidorn: It is.

01:01:10

Michelle Little: — a different denomination with a different singing tradition.

01:01:13

Lucy Heidorn: Right but I guess--I suppose I--I didn't think about it at the time but thinking back I probably when I left home I sort of rebelled. I mean we all do, you know. I didn't look at it as a rebellion where I was waving my hands or anything but— I wanted what I thought was a normal church family and a— because Sacred Harp Singing people, when I was growing up it

was different because you couldn't go to church. You didn't go to Sunday School. Primitive Baptist people don't have Sunday School. I mean they may now; they didn't then— anybody that we knew.

01:01:55

And I just kind of thought I wanted to be different, and it was fine. And I've enjoyed attending church and as I said, when my mother came up here to live with me, she went with me to the Methodist Church when we were in town. But we went to singings a lot, and I had already gotten so I was not in the choir anymore. And so, you know, it worked out okay for me. But now looking back, I think about you know I had choices; I could have gone to the singings and left my husband at home. A lot of people do that. And I don't know; it works for some people. I don't think it would have worked for us. And so I didn't— I chose not to do that.

01:02:42

Now we would go home for County Line. He would go with me. He would go with me some places, but it just wasn't in him to go to a singing every Sunday. And now there were several community singings down there where my parents still lived, and they stayed in the Sayre area until my parents were divorced. And then my mother moved to Hamilton. And after a while, she remarried and she married DM Aldridge, and so he was a Sacred Harp singer. And so they traveled together for a long time.

01:03:17

And you know, I would go with them occasionally, but we had told mother that when she got ready to move in with us, to let, you know after he died, that we had room for her, so she decided it was time about three years after he died, and we had just moved her in and somewhat had gotten settled and my husband died. So mother and I lived together for 11 years 'til she died in 2000, and we had some really good times. We traveled some and we went to singings and we

went to church and we did you know that kind of thing. And it was— unfortunately, we didn't make a lot of tapes of us. We do have some tapes of us singing together but I— like I told you when we were eating lunch, I thought I'd remember everything that she ever told me and of course now I can't remember things like I'd like to.

01:04:17

Michelle Little: [Laughter] Right.

01:04:18

Lucy Heidorn: But she was a big influence on my life, she and my grandmother. We were kind of a matriarchal family, I think. The daddies were there, but you know, they had to work so hard that it put the children with the mama mostly. Although my grandmother worked in fields just like my granddaddy; I've walked behind my grandmother plowing a mule when I was a little girl. I always went to stay with her a week in the summers, and I loved going to her house but at night I cried myself to sleep because I liked— I wanted to be at home. [*Laughs*]

01:04:55

Michelle Little: Oh.

01:04:55

Lucy Heidorn: I'm a homebody. I still am. I want to be home in my bed.

01:05:01

Michelle Little: So when your mom moved in you sort of returned to— ?

01:05:05

Lucy Heidorn: We went back to—

01:05:07

Michelle Little: Went back to singing?

01:05:06

Lucy Heidorn: Yeah; we went back to going to singings and then when I— I was still working. And so when I didn't want to go to the singings because a lot of times I had paperwork to do, she started going with her sisters and brother. Harrison had a small van you know like people traveled in, and mother and my aunt from Michigan after her husband died, the women all became widows, and after the husbands were gone, they traveled a lot with him and his wife to other— to singings like out of town and out of state.

01:05:48

One of mother's sisters was not as involved but her older sister and the sister next to her younger, Edith, they were all together a lot. And they just kind of re-became the family they were when they were growing up and my uncle and his wife— his wife primarily— were very gracious because you know, they didn't have to take the sisters with them but they did and they— and lots of times they went to--I know they would always go to a singing in Texas in early August. And of course, you'd go out of town and you'd have to stay in a motel. It was a two-day singing. You couldn't really fix food, but Harrison's wife just— she didn't like to go anywhere without taking food, so she would bake a cake and, you know a pound cake, and take

it. And lots of times they would buy fruit and make a fruit salad or something they could do in a motel and fix it.

01:06:52

People just don't like to go to singings without taking a dish of food.

01:06:56

Michelle Little: Wow; even out of state.

01:06:58

Lucy Heidorn: Even out of state; yeah.

01:07:00

Michelle Little: Why do you think that is?

01:07:02

Lucy Heidorn: I think it's just part of what they think they're supposed to do. I don't know; I really don't know. I didn't have that feeling [Laughter] that they do. Of course I didn't go out of state much, but I think they— it's just because they've always fixed food they just feel like they've got to be a part of that as well. It's just a part of their tradition.

01:07:25

Michelle Little: Part of the day.

01:07:25

Lucy Heidorn: And Harrison's wife grew up in a singing family so that was part of her tradition.

01:07:33

Michelle Little: Okay; gotcha. So when you started going to the singings again what— were there any differences you could tell? You know over the years, singings now— singings and dinners on the ground now versus singings and dinner on the grounds when you were growing up?

01:07:51

Lucy Heidorn: Well of course back when I was growing up, there was some young people singing but it had to be someone— it was usually the young people were the children of some family you know that went to the singings. And I remember some of them; they were I guess pretty much like our family you know. They just taught each other and they learned to sing by going.

01:08:19

Now, when I go to a singing, like when we go to County Line in a few weeks, there will be my cousins, a lot— a large group of the family there and then there will be a lot of people from other areas. Some people come from Georgia, which is about a three-hour drive where they live, and some people come in from out of state occasionally, and they stay over in motels and they go to as many singings as they can in the area, you know if there's a lot going on.

01:08:49

But it's more like I don't know how to describe it; it's still Sacred Harp music, but it's just different because as music changes in any style, the younger people you know, are more educated about singings but they like— I found this out. They may be educated in music but if-- as we said, if we sang Sacred Harp you get into it and you can— you can separate it. I mean I

like all kinds of music well with the exception of some rock music [Laughter]— I don't care about it. But you know it--it doesn't bother me. Sacred Harp is separate because to me Sacred Harp is church.

01:09:35

And I guess the newer people, younger people are people that are a lot younger than I am— most people are that go to the singings now— it may or may not be church for them. You know, it depends. I could go to a Sacred Harp Singing and that was church, and then I could go to my Methodist church and that was church. It didn't bother me because it's all worship and it's just a different kind of worship. But as I said before, sometimes I think we aren't as reverent in the singings now than we were when I was growing up. Maybe that's just the point of view of a child and an adult, but it isn't that there's a lot of different things but it's still there is a difference and I can't quite put my finger on it.

01:10:27

Michelle Little: Hmm; well is there anything I haven't asked you that you would like to talk about?

01:10:34

Lucy Heidorn: Well let me tell you a little bit more about memories that I'm coming up while we're talking.

01:10:37

Michelle Little: Yes.

01:10:38

Lucy Heidorn: After--I know I jumped from one thing to the other but when we were talking about putting a dinner actually on the ground. I only remember that once and then after that, we started taking the pews, the church benches and you would take those outside. The men would start when you stopped singing for lunch and they would take enough benches outside and put them together so the backs were on the outside and the seats were inside and then you'd spread your tablecloths on that and you would put the food out. You know it wasn't always flat but you still managed.

01:11:19

So we did that and then that next thing I remember is we built outside tables. At County Line, we still have part of a concrete table that we built that was permanent. And some of the other places that we'd go have nice wooden— either wooden ones or most of them are concrete but primarily because they're out in the weather.

01:11:41

One place I go occasionally is Johnson School House down in Fayette County I think. My stepsister goes there, and they have built a cover over their table and it's very nice. It's in the woods. And then if it were raining when we stopped you know or had a bad day, we'd actually put the tables together in the church building and just turn them around and put the food there. Now most people have a— some sort of kitchen or you know and if— there's not enough room at County Line; we don't have enough room for everybody to sit down.

01:12:23

But if you can't sit at a table they just sit out in the church building while they eat. And you know we have coffee and snacks all the time, so we didn't snacks when I was growing up. A snack was not in our vocabulary. [Laughter] So we didn't have snacks at the singings. But now

most people do; they have coffee and snacks and various things because some people don't have time to eat breakfast, you know, and they have something to snack on when they get there.

01:12:53

This doesn't have anything to do with the food, but I remember mother telling stories about when they were growing up. See, they actually had to travel in a wagon, a mule and a wagon because they didn't have cars 'til later. And then it was a Model A or a Model something; I don't know what— but, and they would go for three-day conventions, places. I don't know where they went because I can't remember her— what she told me, but can you imagine taking seven children in a wagon to spend three days and you had to spend nights with somebody? There were no motels and I guess they just— wherever they could find a place that would take them in overnight. I really don't know.

01:13:43

Michelle Little: Hmm; wow. You think they brought food for those trips as well?

01:13:47

Lucy Heidorn: I'm sure they took something. Lots of times in the olden days, they would kill a hog or a beef or something and you know they'd have food. I don't know how they preserved it, but anyway, they had food I guess for several days. But I'm just supposing that. But that's you know— they just did what they had to. But I know mother has told me about riding in the wagon to a singing. Of course, you had to get up sometimes even after we had cars, you know before it was day, before— when you left because if you'd drove—. I mean you know when I was growing up driving 75 miles was a long way.

01:14:30

Michelle Little: Right.

01:14:30

Lucy Heidorn: Now we did go to some city singings. There were conventions. There was a— at least one convention in Birmingham at the courthouse and this summer we sang. I think it was the fourth Sunday in June. I'm not sure when that was but my son and I went. And it was to celebrate a gentleman that was big in the singing back— well more than— in the day and we had— I think we had close to 100 people there.

01:15:02

But we did have courthouse singings. We had one in Birmingham, and we had one in Cullman; there's still one in Cullman that meets two days in July. We had one in Jasper at their courthouse. And I don't believe I ever went to any others but there was a singing in nearly every courthouse in the county years and years ago. And that was a big special thing because see, big town courthouses we didn't get to go very often. [Laughter]

01:15:30

Michelle Little: Right.

01:15:31

Lucy Heidorn: And so, I remember I don't know if they actually provided food, but when we used to go to Cullman that was not too, too far from us where we grew up. So— and oh, we had one in Hamilton after Mother moved to Hamilton. I went there some. It was just a one-day singing. But most of the time they would go out in the community and ask for sponsors and they

would collect enough money from the city or whatever to feed the people at a café— a cafeteria or a café.

01:16:07

But in Birmingham I can't remember how we did that, but in Jasper, mother would prepare lunch and we would eat our lunch somewhere like in the car or you know we'd pull out somewhere where we could have what we call tailgating now. [Laughter] Tailgating to us— but that's what it was. And I don't remember whether everybody was on his own at lunch and in Cullman we sometimes had a ticket to eat in the café and sometimes we didn't. I can't remember how that was. But there were various ways that whoever was responsible for the singing helped to provide food.

01:16:49

But it was totally different; you know. It was so exciting as a child to get to go to one of the courthouse singings because your big-town, air-conditioning you know and comfort.

01:16:59

Michelle Little: Right. So it was actually inside— like in one of the courtrooms?

01:17:03

Lucy Heidorn: In one of the courtrooms; uh-huh. We sang in one of the courtrooms in Birmingham the other day. I can't remember whose courtroom it was. But it was very interesting.

01:17:12

Michelle Little: Hmm.

01:17:13

Lucy Heidorn: And this was another project. I don't remember who was responsible now. See, I don't remember things very well, but it was a project from one of these projects that the Sacred Harp people are involved in.

01:17:27

Michelle Little: Gotcha.

01:17:29

Lucy Heidorn: There— from what I can gather, Sacred Harp came to us primarily from Georgia. And so, there are a lot of people in the Georgia area that are really involved and there is a museum in I think it's near Carrollton, but I'm not sure. I haven't ever had a chance to go see it, but it's a Sacred Harp museum, and it has a collection of various things and I don't remember what. I've not had a chance to go there, so I don't know what all is in it but—. Some of the other singers could tell more about it. David Ivey for one person—.

01:18:14

Michelle Little: Right.

01:18:15

Lucy Heidorn: And it's possible that he may have told you about it. But I just— you know there are all kinds of things now that we didn't have like the summer camp groups that they have for the young people in the summer camp groups. But if they had had those when I was growing up we probably couldn't have— we might have gone one day, but you know we had to work in the

field in the summer, so I'm sure we wouldn't have been able to go. But those are good things because they teach the children but it's not like sitting down. I mean I don't know what it's like because I haven't been. I've been to the adult camp just for like a day; I've talked to them about my grandparents and about— my cousins still go one day and show how to prepare food for a singing— what they can do, you know.

01:19:12

But those are good but it's not like sitting down with your family and learning Sacred Harp that way— or any other kind of music you know.

01:19:22

Michelle Little: Uh-hm; all right. Well thank you so much.

01:19:26

Lucy Heidorn: Oh you're welcome.

[End of Interview]