

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Mary Helen Yokem

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Community Stories Rochester Community Oral History project

Interview # CR-A-L-2019-011

Mary Helen Yokem, a retired African-American woman whose Walker family lived in the Rochester Community from 1863 until 1991, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's Community Stories Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Mar 12, 2019 Location: E. Cass St., Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Carole Strick, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:03 + 0:41 / 1.05 + 0.68 = 1.73 hrs.

Session 1: Mary Yokem's personal story

Session 2: Mary shares stories about her family in Rochester

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on October 29, 2019.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2019 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Abstract

Mary Yokem, *Community Stories - Rochester*, CR-A-L-2019-011

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Mary Helen Yokem was born January 4, 1948 in Springfield, Illinois to William Oliver and Mary Lou Walker Yokem. She was the oldest of nine children. After graduating from Feitshans High School in 1966, she moved to Chicago to look for work. Since then she has pursued many careers in other cities across the United States. She has one son, two grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren. She is of the Baptist faith. She never married. After retiring, Mary has stayed active with many volunteer activities. She is a foster grandparent and enjoys her time tutoring children.

Mary is an avid researcher and has compiled volumes of books detailing her roots. Her family originally came to Rochester, Illinois in 1863 until the Walker Farm was sold to a Real Estate developer in 1991. In Session 2, Mary has shared many family stories about the Walker family and its time in Rochester.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Orange Judd Farmer Pictorial Community Album, 1918; Springfield, Illinois; Rochester, Illinois; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Malcolm X; Feitshans High School, Springfield, Illinois

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

COPYRIGHT

The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955