

Reneé D.: [00:00](#) ... not here.

Antwoine Geddis: [00:05](#) All right.

Speaker 3: [00:06](#) Okay. I am rolling, whenever you're ready.

Reneé D.: [00:06](#) All right, Mr. Geddis-

Antwoine Geddis: [00:06](#) Yes, ma'am.

Reneé D.: [00:07](#) ... thank you for coming here today.

Antwoine Geddis: [00:09](#) Not a problem

Reneé D.: [00:10](#) Would you be able to start off by sh- giving us your name and how you spell it?

Antwoine Geddis: [00:14](#) My name is Antwoine Geddis. That's A-N-T-W-O-I-N-E. Last name, G-E-D-D-I-S. And from my knowledge, it's supposed to be French, so. (laughs)

Reneé D.: [00:26](#) Okay. And are you from, uh, Johns Island?

Antwoine Geddis: [00:31](#) Yes, ma'am. Originally born and raised here. Um, at the age that I am now is 38.

Reneé D.: [00:38](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [00:39](#) And, um, always was from Johns Island. Uh, but it is Charleston, South Carolina also too.

Reneé D.: [00:45](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [00:46](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [00:46](#) And has your family been on Johns Island for as long as you know?

Antwoine Geddis: [00:50](#) Yes, ma'am, several generations, back to the... I'll say the middle 1800s.

Reneé D.: [00:55](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [00:57](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [00:58](#) And what part of Johns Island did you grow up on?

Antwoine Geddis: [01:04](#) Well, the place is called... Well, it's called Cane Slash Road but the community was better known as the Whaley Plantation where I still resides today, you know, as a resident with, um, family property that dates back to that, um, property that we live on today.

Reneé D.: [01:24](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [01:26](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [01:26](#) All righty. And then, um, what was life like growing up here on Johns Island? So you grew up here in the '80s and '90s

Antwoine Geddis: [01:37](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [01:37](#) ... or so. What was it like growing up here?

Antwoine Geddis: [01:41](#) Oh man, we had a awesome time. You know, which me, I'm a only child to my mother and the oldest to my father, so a lot of my cousins are like my siblings. And, uh, we all grew up together playing hide-and-go-seek. But we had to be in the house by time it got dark, you know-

Reneé D.: [01:41](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [01:57](#) ... 'cause we didn't want our parents to worry about us, you know, things like that. And we'd ride bicycle. We could go from neighborhoods and have little path to go, you know, to the next street out or over to the other side of Johns Island. So it was growing up, growing up here was a lovely time as a kid and still is today as an adult, you know?

Reneé D.: [02:22](#) And what school did you attend?

Antwoine Geddis: [02:26](#) Well, at first I at- attended, um, well, back then they had a Headstart Program, which my Headstart School is a place c- or, um, it's off of Bohicket Road but it's now serve as like a community center to the United Methodist Church.

Reneé D.: [02:43](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [02:44](#) And, um, and my first Headstart teacher's name was Ms. Shirley Johnson. She is 86 today.

Reneé D.: [02:49](#) Okay.

- Antwoine Geddis: [02:50](#) I mean, um, as of years and she is still in her right mind. That was my first teacher at Heads- Headstart. And then, my second school after we graduated from there was Mt. Zion Elementary located on River Road. And, um, after I left Mt. Zion in the fifth grade, went to Haut Gap right here off of Bohicket Road. And, um, after that was St. John's High School, which I serve, um, as Mr. Homecoming King.
- Reneé D.: [03:24](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [03:24](#) And that was, uh, that was something also and pretty much after that life was off, on to the person that I am today, you know?
- Reneé D.: [03:24](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [03:33](#) But going back to Haut Gap, now-
- Reneé D.: [03:33](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [03:35](#) ... but during Haut Gap, I can say in the seventh grade there was a project that we had to do. It was a group called Cultural Experience led by Miss Jackie Jefferson. And, um, it was like, you know, teaching us about our culture and heritage even from the practice Af- of African Americ- Africa ways or, you know? And then we'd learn about it in the language that they speak. And one of our project was to research our family genealogy.
- And so I, at that point in time, I had my great-grandparents living. So they could have told me who their grandparents were. And, um, and that project started me off in genealogy from middle school. And I mean, that was a continuous hobby that I mean, it inspired me 'cause I didn't know those, those things. But sitting down and t- being able to talk with three of my great-grandparents and my great-grandfather. And that really inspired with the stories that they could have told me about their parents and grandparents.
- And life growing up on the island like we are doing today, so that's the good part about Haut Gap that I almost forgot about. And I was featured in the news here at age 14 for tracing my family generation back to that 'cause I aced around, aced the project. Yeah, I aced the project and Mr. Representative Curtis Inabinett even gave me a frame being at, in the seventh grade for tracing my family generation back that far. So-

Reneé D.: [05:10](#) That's-

Antwoine Geddis: [05:12](#) ... yeah. So that was a awesome thing from my middle school. Like I knew I jumped on to, to high school before I talked about Mr. Homecoming but I had to come back to that. But-

Reneé D.: [05:21](#) You know-

Antwoine Geddis: [05:21](#) ... yeah.

Reneé D.: [05:21](#) ... that's awesome.

Antwoine Geddis: [05:21](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [05:24](#) And for that to be a middle school project that's-

Antwoine Geddis: [05:24](#) Yeah.

Reneé D.: [05:26](#) ... that's really impressive. Okay. So, uh, how did you get to these schools 'cause they're not necessarily ... Haut Gap and sant- j- St. John's are close to each other.

Antwoine Geddis: [05:42](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [05:43](#) Not necessarily Mt. Zion, so how'd you get to these schools?

Antwoine Geddis: [05:45](#) Well, we had, um, transportation such as bus transportation like we still have today, you know? And, um, the best thing you had to do was behave yourself on the bus 'cause if you didn't, um, if you got suspended, you know, you were out to hear mumble about going all the way to Mt. Zion, take you to school or on to Haut Gap, you know, when you could ride the bus for free. So the best thing was to do, behave yourself, get your schoolwork done. But we did have some days where we got suspended off the bus too, now, so, you know?

But my mother, I mean, my, uh, family made sure that transportation was provided for me to get back and forth to school too, you know? And even at Headstart we had a little bus that would pick us up early in the morning. And our bus driver Miss Mary Brown and she didn't play. And she still don't play today so-

Reneé D.: [05:45](#) (laughs)

Antwoine Geddis: [06:34](#) ... and that was the good thing about transportation, you know? We, they always looked out for that purpose with people on Johns Island and, and in Charleston County too, so.

Reneé D.: [06:49](#) Okay. And so you mentioned, uh, taking the bus and riding the bus. Was it rural here still when you were growing up or was it kind of not?

Antwoine Geddis: [06:49](#) No. It was always rural-

Reneé D.: [06:49](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [07:06](#) ... you know? All the houses that seeing now wasn't around. I mean, we could, uh, go hunting, fishing, little ponds and things like that. But, you know, like I tell everybody, "Development is gonna happen sooner or later. Things are not gonna stay the same forever."

Reneé D.: [07:21](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [07:22](#) So and I mean, like you'll hear some of my grandparents or aunts and uncles remember when the roads were d- uh, dirt roads on Johns Island.

Reneé D.: [07:22](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [07:32](#) And now, you look at the roads today, it's paved and things like that. So I mean, like main, these main roads like Main Bank and River Road used to be dirt roads, which people do say these roads are made for truck farming over here on the island and not everyday driving. But that's why we got to be careful drivers on these highways, you know, 'cause it was for truck farming, getting back and forth from the farms and things like that. And then when we were growing up, it was farms.

And we had to go on the farms and pick tomatoes. Uh, make a little change in the summertime or help our uncles, our family members that farmed. So that's a thing that I had to, thought I would never have to do again but being in the peanut business I have (laughs) to farm too, you know, and keep my local things going on, especially if you selling veggies and things to people. They like it locally so, so things are still rural and some things have changed. But like I said, I adapted with the changes 'cause I met a lot of people that moved to the island and they appreciate meeting me. And I appreciate meeting them too as a businessman on the island with a business, so.

Reneé D.: [08:44](#) What is the peanut business you speak of?

Antwoine Geddis: [08:47](#) Well, it's D.J. Sporty Mobile Sugar Shack, with snacks and I used to go around selling like little candy for the kids 'cause when we were growing up, when you the ice cream man coming, oh, man. That was a exciting time. You would make sure you got a little change to go with, to, um, the candy man or we had candy ladies around here too and things-

Reneé D.: [08:47](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [09:07](#) ... like that. And little stores that we could walk to s- um, corner, you know, you would get like things that I sell then, like pickles and hard sausage. And, you know, bubble gums and Air Heads, you know, 'cause that was a important thing of life, you know, being a kid, you know? If you be good, you can get a candy so and most times, now, that's why I had to try br- keep that rural heritage around, you know, here on Johns Island even after development has happened 'cause I have family members that did it. And it didn't hurt them and it benefit them pretty good so why not try it myself? So and that's a continuous legacy that I carry on that my great-grandfather and his brother did. But they went to the downtown market and sell their vegetables and-

Reneé D.: [09:07](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [09:54](#) ... things like that, you know, with no transportation or car. But people that had the vehicles around here would give them a ride and they always look out for each other like that to 'em. Make sure the family eat over here on the islands, sea islands regular.

Reneé D.: [10:10](#) That's nice.

Antwoine Geddis: [10:11](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [10:11](#) That's really cool. Um, so you mentioned how you had so much fun growing up here.

Antwoine Geddis: [10:18](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [10:19](#) What were some recreational things that you would do with your friends like say in high school?

Antwoine Geddis: [10:27](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [10:29](#) Where did the homecoming king hang out?

Antwoine Geddis: [10:31](#) Well, me it all started for me probably I'll say in the eighth grade, early ninth grade 'cause that's when I became a deejay.

Reneé D.: [10:31](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [10:40](#) And I started off charging people like \$50 dollars for a party with house speakers and a little CD player. So I always was the life of a party. And I try to still be the life of a party these days 'cause I like to see people have a good time and enjoy life. So that was one thing about people that came around me, you know, they always know when they see me, "Oh, we gonna have fun. We gonna have a good time." 'cause that's what I like to do, you know, enjoy myself and enjoy people, no matter what color, no matter what creed. A lot of people love me and I love people brag so, you know, I just do it with a smile even as a deejay for over 25 years 'cause I believe I started in the ninth grade-

Reneé D.: [11:20](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [11:21](#) ... weather permit. And so we always had a little spots to hang out at or little places. But a lot of places have already closed, you know-

Reneé D.: [11:21](#) When-

Antwoine Geddis: [11:30](#) ... as time went on, you know, on the island.

Reneé D.: [11:33](#) What are some of the places that have closed?

Antwoine Geddis: [11:35](#) Well, now before, before my time, y- you know, was a place off of, uh, let's see, uh, Thomas Jones. I had a cousin named Mr. Senior Jenkins. He had like a little pickle, little joint. And everybody talk about having a amazing time there. And the guy that lives there now, he's a good customer of mine and he always talks about how everybody talks about, "Man, uh, are you gonna build a club back and this and that?" He just, you know, and he just moved here recently.

He always hear about the stories about the property that he bought. And, you know, and he came, comes here all the time. And we talk about it all the time. And then was another one. And I know somebody probably already mentioned this but, um, Progressive Club was a good place for people. I never played there, you know, 'cause after the Hugo, you know, it kind of damaged the building. But I know if that building was still up and running, I would have a spot there playing music there too.

And also Johnson Lounge was a place that Mr. Frances Johnson and his wife, um, Miss Thomasina Johnson, Tom Johnson, ran also. And I deejayed there. And had several birthday parties there. And me and his grand kids and all of us, we grew up together. But that's unfortunately got closed right now, too. And, um-

- Reneé D.: [12:54](#) Where was this Johnson's-
- Antwoine Geddis: [12:55](#) Off of River Road.
- Reneé D.: [12:55](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [12:56](#) Most of these places I'm talking about is off of River Road. And, um, and then you have ser- several other clubs but most of 'em are closed now-
- Reneé D.: [13:06](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [13:06](#) ... doing, you know, due to the increase maybe in violence, uh, things like that. And, and, you know, people just don't come up to have a good time like that anymore. And as a deejay, I usually do functions. And by 11 o'clock I'm, I try to be home these days, i- instead of being up there two o'clock. And I remember being out till the sun come up sometime, you know, but like I tell 'em, I'm not getting no younger and I had my fun, you know?
- Reneé D.: [13:06](#) Mm-hmm.
- Antwoine Geddis: [13:30](#) And sometime you got to wise up and, you know, put things, other things first, especially, you know, your life and your family and things first. So back then, it probably was just like a hobby to me but now, I treat it as a business. And, you know, as a business relation see, not just a hobby and something doing to have fun, you know?
- Reneé D.: [13:30](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [13:30](#) Yeah.
- Reneé D.: [13:56](#) And were there any like baseball fields or football fields or sports fields-
- Antwoine Geddis: [14:02](#) Yeah.
- Reneé D.: [14:03](#) ... here?

- Antwoine Geddis: [14:03](#) Yeah. Well, um, right behind Haut Gap we used to play little league football. Um, Mt. Zion School at the football field there, that was like, um, a Saturday thing, which one of my uncles was a coach. Um, Mr. Thomas Geddis, you know, of the little league and several other guys from Johns Island were coaches too, you know? And, um, we always had the little league and they still trying to keep it going on as it goes on today, you know? But usually they'll play like a little, little league game here at Haut Gap in the front now, you know, instead of the back.
- Or sometime they go to North Charleston or West Ashley to a rec center, you know, and play with other teams. But it used to be like six to seven teams over here, you know, but now, it's just like one big team between Johns Island and Wadmalaw. But one time, Wadmalaw had a team and they could have played against Wadmalaw. And Johns Island could have played against Rantowles and things like that 'cause it was much, that much team. But now that I, you know, do little functions with the little league, it's just like one big team. You know, you got the guys from Wad- little kids from Wadmalaw. Got some on Johns Island, some that don't live on the island but they parents take the time to bring them back-
- Reneé D.: [14:03](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [15:21](#) ... to, you know, play little league and grew up like they did, you know? So that's one thing we try to keep going on and I try to help out as much as I can carrying the little store and giving them some music and things like that to encourage the young kids around here with something fun, you know and recreational-wise, you know?
- Reneé D.: [15:43](#) Okay. And was swimming was/is swimming out in the creeks and the-
- Antwoine Geddis: [15:43](#) Yeah.
- Reneé D.: [15:50](#) ... rivers and stuff--
- Antwoine Geddis: [15:50](#) Yeah, swimming that was something we could, uh, go in the creek and all of that but we had to be careful just like me 'cause I, I lived on Johns Island all my life but I'm not a swimmer.
- Reneé D.: [16:00](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [16:01](#) Yeah, but I can go in the water.

Reneé D.: [16:03](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [16:03](#) But you don't want nothing ... You don't want a tide to take you out and you can't swim. But as long as you go in there with a cousin that can save you. But it al- ... And it usually in the summertime, it usually be like that, you know, and most of us couldn't swim. But I glad to give, offer classes today 'cause my children learn, you know, at the summer camps and things like that. So they need to teach their daddy how to swim now-

Reneé D.: [16:24](#) (laughs)

Antwoine Geddis: [16:24](#) ... so but, you know, but like going fishing and things like that. You know, we do, do those things like that. But knowing how to swim, I mean, if you don't know how to swim you got to learn the idea if you fall over the bull, off the boat, you know?

Reneé D.: [16:38](#) Yes.

Antwoine Geddis: [16:39](#) So some people learn how to swim but, yeah. Swimming in creeks like that and things like that. But now, we so fortunate we got pools and things now so I usually just go and hang out at the pool or to the beach or something like that now, these days.

Reneé D.: [16:54](#) Okay. Um, and so you mentioned that you grew up in the old, Whaley Plantation-

Antwoine Geddis: [16:54](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [17:04](#) ... also known as the Cane Slash Road.

Antwoine Geddis: [17:06](#) Yes, ma'am.

Reneé D.: [17:07](#) Um, yeah. Do you know what the boundaries of the Cane Slash area are?

Antwoine Geddis: [17:15](#) Yeah. Well, my great-grandfather-

Reneé D.: [17:18](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [17:19](#) ... and his uncle were two of the big-times of the Whaley Plantation. My great-grandfather is a gentleman by the name of Caesar Geddis. And, um, and I do have his let's see ... This is his World War II draft registration card here. And, um, and I had him on, uh ... And this is his, yeah. When he registered in the Army, which he, uh, was the son of Mr. Archie Geddis. And, um, his mother was Miss Rose Green Geddis.

Reneé D.: [17:19](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [18:02](#) So that's why Cato who worked side by side with him was his uncle. So Cato might, you know, have showed him a way, you know, showed him the way-

Reneé D.: [18:13](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [18:14](#) ... as of coming up and just in case like when he died 'cause I believe Cato was older than my great-great-grandfather. And, um, and they worked for the Whaley family.

Reneé D.: [18:24](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [18:25](#) And, um, then after that my great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather he married a lady named Miss Sarah Chavis Geddis and they were from the island right here. Same area and, um, but when she married my great-grandfather, Great-great-grandfather Caesar Geddis, she was working for the Whaley family in the house 'cause my great-grandmother was a high yellow-

Reneé D.: [18:52](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [18:53](#) ... woman. So most people that were high yellow usually can work in the house. And usually when I ask people about her they say, "You know, she was a sporty woman and she dressed with style-

Reneé D.: [19:03](#) Hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [19:04](#) ... and everything." And, um, and I know, um, even when the Whaley family, they had a house on Johns Island. They also had a house in downtown Charleston. And my grandmother, Great-great-grandmother Sally would work for them also too. And then they was a article that a cousin of mine, you know, had found online where one of the Whaley sons came and checked on his father. And I believe his father' watch was missing. And my Great-grandmother Sally got accused for it, you know, and she did got arrested. But she bonded out of jail, you know?

How? I don't know. I don't know if the watch was ever found. The next thing I know, you know, we had all this property on Johns Island. You know, maybe it was granted from Mr. Whaley as good as my people, you know, worked with the family. And, um, and like I said, he was the one then and we still stay over there today. But if it wasn't for Caesar Geddis, you know, we

wouldn't have the property that we have today. And I'll say my Grandmother Sally, also too, 'cause they worked very hard with the, uh, Whaley family until the day they died, you know? And even after Mr. Whaley passed away, his daughter inherited, uh, the land over here on Johns Island. And she was pretty good to, you know, to the family also too, so. But-

- Reneé D.: [20:29](#) Do you know where it got the name Cane Slash from?
- Antwoine Geddis: [20:32](#) Cane Slash, no, 'cause it always was considered Whaley.
- Reneé D.: [20:32](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [20:36](#) Yeah, because I mean, if you talk about I mean, people will usually say, "Well, you live Whaley." Before they say, "Cane Slash Road." You know?
- Reneé D.: [20:36](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [20:45](#) That just became something modern after I probably was born, you know?
- Reneé D.: [20:45](#) Okay.
- Antwoine Geddis: [20:49](#) Yeah. But other than that it's, that neighborhood is still known as Whaley where the Geddis and the Greens and the Pinckneys stay over, over there. And Chisholms too. And we also have a historical cemetery there on our property, um, created by my great-grandfather, Mr. Caesar Geddis so and, and, um, graves are still there today. And it was preserved even after a development happened next to our property. And I believe who then paid my Great-grandfather Mr. Caesar Geddis's son.
- They went on that side. Wasn't on our property but then, um, who paid him I believe they'd been on the side where we owned, you know? But everything worked out and no graves were moved. None of it been touched, you know? And everything is still preserved today, you know, as my grandfather did, had started it out, Caesar Geddis.
- Reneé D.: [21:47](#) Do you, can you describe where that graveyard is and does it have a name or is it just like the Geddis Family?
- Antwoine Geddis: [21:53](#) Well, it's, it's used to be called the Whaley Family Cemetery.
- Reneé D.: [21:58](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [21:58](#) And, um, and it's d- it's two ways you can get there 'cause the road that we live on, which is Herman Road named after my ... Well, I call him my uncle 'cause my Great-grandmother Sally raised him. But Herman Geddis and that's, um, that if you drive that road, that'll take you in there but you will come into the bushes part of that, which it's still up, you know, with grass and everything. You know, covered up.

Reneé D.: [21:58](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [22:25](#) But you can still walk through the graves. But then there's another way on the developer side's an oak field on Colson Drive, which they cleaned that part off and fenced it off. And, um, and you can see a few graves right there.

Reneé D.: [22:39](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [22:40](#) Mm-hmm. And that's fenced off with a low walkway. And they did that and put up a sign, you know, describing the history of the Whaley Cemetery. So-

Reneé D.: [22:48](#) Awesome.

Antwoine Geddis: [22:49](#) ... and that was good that they did that, you know, with the help of the community and, and some county officials, you know?

Reneé D.: [23:01](#) Okay. And ... Mm-hmm. I'm so sorry.

Antwoine Geddis: [23:10](#) That's all right. (laughs)

Reneé D.: [23:11](#) All right. So do you know of any other historic neighborhoods? I know you saw that yesterday-

Antwoine Geddis: [23:18](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [23:19](#) ... and he said you were just like, "Oh, yeah. That's this, this, this-

Antwoine Geddis: [23:21](#) Oh, yeah.

Reneé D.: [23:21](#) ... and this." Um, and we can bring it to you-

Antwoine Geddis: [23:21](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [23:25](#) ... if you need it.

Antwoine Geddis: [23:26](#) Yeah, well, if y'all want to bring it but I can start with, um, the Cape.

Reneé D.: [23:26](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [23:32](#) The Cape and Stevens.

Reneé D.: [23:33](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [23:34](#) The Cape is where my grandmother's from and her name's Helen Springs Geddis. And, um, the Springs is a big fam- big part of the family over there on Plow Ground Road. And, um, which they came from Wadmalaw. My great-grandfather' father was To- ... His grandfather was Thomas Springs and Chloe Springs. And his mother was, um, Emma Singleton Springs. And, um, and Thomas Springs. Okay, so my grandfather, my great-grandfather' grandfather was Walter Springs, okay-

Reneé D.: [23:34](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [24:17](#) ... that had the son named Thomas Springs, which is my great-grandfather, Jack Springs' father.

Reneé D.: [24:22](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [24:22](#) That's the way it goes. And my great-grandfather's grandmother was Chloe Springs. And they had a big house out on Plow Ground. They say they was a nice big house and it set high up off the, um, off the land, you know, like with stilts. And people could have played, they could have played underneath the whole house like that. That's stories I heard about the big house that they had.

But, um, but like I said, they came from Wadmalaw to Johns Island as a new settlement. And they settled in a place called Cape Plantation. And that's the place they used to be called, Cape. And, um, and like my great-grandfather always say, his father had the, his grandfather had the cut light stump wood to have the property that we have today. And which is like 18 acres on one side and like eight, seven-something on the other side, which we still own today. And, um, and he was a great man, you know, my great-grandfather.

And he's lived to be about till 96 I believe, and my great-grandmother, his wife Daphne Gibbes Springs. And she was from Cape also too. When they got married, they ... Well, let's see. She was maybe 15. Grandad was 18 then 'cause they could

get married at the young age like that. And her father, my Great-grandmother Daphne Gibbes Springs' father was a gentleman by the name of Hector Gibbes. And Hector Gibbes was, um, one of the first carpenters on Johns Island responsible for building caskets, um, on Johns Island before anybody could go to the mortuaries downtown and things like that.

And, um, and he built, uh, a church called Wesley United Methodist Church. And that's, um, right off of River Road, when it was a board church. The church is brick right now but I don't, you know, know about. I don't hardly see that in historical records and things like that. But and also, um, Mt. Zion Holiness Church. That's off of Exchange Landing Road. He built that also too. And, um, and Hector Gibbes, this is, uh, an 1870 census. And, um, it said that my great-grandf- great-great-grandfather, he was born about 1849. And at the age right here, it says he's 21.

And, um, household members, um, he was living with, um, which his name was Hector Gibbes. And John Gibbes and Calvin Gibbes, Ben Frasier, some other people that I don't hardly know too well but then later on documents it showed him living in a boarding house with some Geddis, (laughs) you know? And, um, and but this was the Bible, um, that Hector Gibbes had. And also his wife, uh, Rebecca Gibbes. And I know it's a little tattered, you know, and I don't try to open it up too much.

And right here, uh, you can see this was, uh, a independent lodge that he was paying dues, you know, he would pay his dues. Like they would have a sick society. And this is, let me see. I don't know if it has a year on here. But it shows what my great-grandfather paid as his dues before they h- could have like insurance policy. They would put their money in things like this. And at the time, Mr. David Miller was the financial secretary. And I always heard of David Miller, which, um, in the church that I go to Cedar Spring on Plow Ground Road, which is in the Cape Plantation too.

Reneé D.: [28:14](#)

Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:15](#)

His name is, you know, listed in some records of the church and things like that. And, and also in this census record. So I, um, and the lodge was Kings of Glory Lodge, you know, and that was a free lodge. And I guess that's what they paid, you know? This was what they had money stored in when they didn't have insurance like, uh, we would pay insurance, you know? So his money went into that.

Reneé D.: [28:39](#) Question.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:40](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [28:40](#) Do we know where this Kings of Glory Lodge was?

Antwoine Geddis: [28:43](#) I never heard of it so I, I think I need to do something.

Reneé D.: [28:47](#) We'll look it up.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:48](#) Research, yeah, 'cause-

Reneé D.: [28:48](#) Yeah.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:49](#) ... you never know. It probably was a lodge in the Cape Plantation.

Reneé D.: [28:54](#) Uh-huh.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:55](#) You know, or it might have been, uh, you know, a church hall. Uh, a-

Reneé D.: [28:56](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [28:57](#) ... meeting house, you know, or a praise house rather too. Like the Moving Star Hall. The Moving Star Hall had a society just like this too, that my family members were a part too. You know, Hector Gibbes' daughter, Miss Julia, she was a part of a lodge, something like this too. And then in this here, it just names like the daughter like his children, which is Catherine Gibbes. And, um, they had a daughter Janie who died at a young age.

And Julia was, uh, who I just was talking about. And she married, um, she was Julia Frasier Gadsden. And my Aunt Mary, which we call her, um, Annie. And she was, uh, Mary Smalls. And my Great-grandfather Daphne. And we used to call her Gal Gibbes and, which she was married to a Springer. And these gives a date during the time they were born. They, they wrote this down in the Bible right here. And then he also his, um, wife, my grandmother, Rebecca Roper Gibbes, she have the death data for, um, father and her mother.

And I believe, um, grandfather' mother also too 'cause his m- I think the Gibbes' mother was named Mariah Gibbes and Hector Gibbes too. But Grandmother Rebecca, her f- her mother, her father was Jackie Roper. And, um, Diana Roper, which I heard Diana was a midwife responsible for, um, doing the, you know,

delivering babies. And, and that's how I'm related to, um, some of the people that was, uh, tragically killed in the Emanuel Nine through my Grandmother Rebecca' side. Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [30:51](#) No.

Speaker 3: [30:52](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [30:54](#) Yeah, it w- it-

Reneé D.: [30:54](#) Yeah. It's a-

Antwoine Geddis: [30:54](#) ... it was tragic.

Reneé D.: [30:55](#) I hate to talk so much when you're rustling paper.

Antwoine Geddis: [30:57](#) Rustling that paper, okay.

Reneé D.: [30:58](#) Yeah.

Antwoine Geddis: [30:58](#) So we got to go back on that part?

Reneé D.: [31:00](#) Yes, but-

Speaker 3: [31:00](#) Um, you can still hear it. It's just-

Antwoine Geddis: [31:00](#) You want to clear it up? Okay.

Reneé D.: [31:00](#) Yes.

Speaker 3: [31:00](#) Have some just-

Antwoine Geddis: [31:07](#) Yeah. We can put this down.

Speaker 3: [31:07](#) Yeah.

Reneé D.: [31:08](#) Yeah. And then you mentioned a mit- the Emanuel nine?

Antwoine Geddis: [31:16](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [31:16](#) What is that?

Antwoine Geddis: [31:17](#) Well, a tragic loss that happened at the church where the, um, people were killed in that-

Reneé D.: [31:23](#) The, um-

Antwoine Geddis: [31:24](#) Yeah. In that, yeah. But, yeah. With Dylann Roof and all this was related to my, um, Great-grandmother Rebecca Roper. My, Rebecca should be her, Miss Suzie's grand-aunt 'cause her father is, um, her grandfather is my Great-grandmother Rebecca's nephew. I know that sound pretty distant but, yeah. But if you look at it like my grandmother, my great-grandmother and Miss Suzie's father, Mr. Jackson is, um, first cousins.

Reneé D.: [31:24](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [31:59](#) Yeah. Just like I have first cousins, that's how I break it down, you know, just like that. And I just want to show you a picture of Rebecca 'cause we do have her. And like the kids that I showed you on the, uh, listed in the Bible. This is Catherine here. And this is my great-grandmother when she was a little younger. And the son, um, Henry Gibbes. And the sister Mary, right here. And this is the son right here also too. And this is Rebecca when she got a little older. She lived to be 100 and something.

But I got that, um, document, uh, right there. But this is her s-other daughter Lucille, my great-grandmother, Miss Rebecca Gibbes and my other great-grandmother right there. But this is Rebecca Gibbes when she died, which this was in 1976 when she passed away. And I believe she was born 1880 if I'm not mistaken 'cause I have that, um, right here 'cause this is where I put that, s- so you guys would see the information. And it was amazing how long she lived and how much great-grandkids that she had.

But I have the original obituary right here. And, you know, she was born January 1st, the New Years and, and, and if she wasn't, you know, that's was the best holiday most people celebrated, you know? And it was 1880 on Johns Island. And, um, her children are listed. And when she passed away, she had 57 grandchildren, 158 great-grandchildren and 54 great-great-grandchildren. And I wasn't even included in that yet 'cause I was born a couple years after that if I'm not mistaken, '76, yep. I was born in '84, so, yeah. So that's Miss Rebecca Gibbes right here, you know, and she lived, she lived a nice long life, you know? And she was married to my Great-grandfather Mr. Hector Gibbes the first carpenter on Johns Island in the Cape Plantation that we were, um, talking about places.

Reneé D.: [34:18](#) You said he used to build caskets?

Antwoine Geddis: [34:18](#) Yes, ma'am. He was the one that would build the caskets for people to be buried in. And there was a guy named Mr. Ben Simmons who was responsible for making the headstones after, um, people ... You know, after they buried if the family wanted to purchase them like a cement block headstone with the inscription on it, you know? It wasn't a fancy headstone like we have today. You know, just a block one but my great-great-grandfather was responsible for building the graves. I mean, not the graves, the caskets for the deceased.

Reneé D.: [34:52](#) Where did he build these caskets, out at his house-

Antwoine Geddis: [34:56](#) Yeah, his house-

Reneé D.: [34:56](#) Or did he have a shop?

Antwoine Geddis: [34:57](#) ... right there on Cape, um, up on Cape Road and there's still a road called Cape Road. But we in the family do live back there. And we have a name of the road called Hector Road in memory of Hector.

Reneé D.: [35:19](#) Okay. 150-some great-grandkids?

Antwoine Geddis: [35:26](#) Yeah.

Reneé D.: [35:26](#) Lots.

Antwoine Geddis: [35:28](#) Yeah. And that's what we ... I got a lot of cousins so and it is a big family. My grandmother has like a bunch of first cousins and that I have to call aunt so, you know, that's how close-knitted our family is, you know, and still is today. As, not as much as, um, my kids might, don't know some of my cousin kids so that's how big the family is now. So but we try to have reunions and things like that to keep the family together.

And especially me. With all the history I got, I try to teach them as much as they, who want to know. I try to teach them and you can't force history on everybody 'cause everybody can't take the truth. And then some things, you know, you got to keep to yourself. But the ones that want to learn and want to know, they always come to me. And I feel free to, you know, just to talk to them.

Reneé D.: [36:19](#) Where, so does your family have annual family reunions?

Antwoine Geddis: [36:25](#) Yes, ma'am. We usually do and we started that back in 2009. And the first one was a big success, you know, and that's on the

Gibbes' side of Hector Gibbes. And even on this past year, even the Geddis, we had one this year, you know, with shirts. And I said, well, I started to wear my shirt today, I while I saw the map with the Geddis on it, I said, "Well, you know what? I need to put my Geddis shirt on." But I, so I'll just bring it to show, you know, that we ... And this was the first one we had in several years, uh, probably since I was born. So we probably didn't have one. This was the first one in a while so it was nice, you know?

Reneé D.: [37:09](#)

Where do you guys host it?

Antwoine Geddis: [37:13](#)

Well, um, this one was at my great-grandmother's house. Um, Christina Johnson Geddis and, um, James Donnie Geddis 'cause James is the son of Caesar Geddis that, you know, who I was talking about earlier. And then, um, while I was talking about James and Caesar Geddis, I just want to hold this picture up 'cause I know it's a little tattered. But this is a picture of Sally, who I was talking about being a fancy woman. And this is a picture of her, which I could get it in color and get it a little better.

But I had it for several years and I was so amazed that they have a picture of her. And this is, um, my great-grandmother, Sarah Sally Chavis Geddis who was buried right here at Bethel Church next to Haut Gap, you know, and my Great-grandfather Caesar Geddis 'cause from my understanding, they established that church right there next to Haut Gap, so along with the Green family also too, so.

Reneé D.: [38:14](#)

And are there ... So you mentioned cemeteries where your family is buried.

Antwoine Geddis: [38:27](#)

Mm-hmm. Uh-

Reneé D.: [38:33](#)

Are there any cemeteries that ... And you might not know this but are there any cemeteries that have kind of become overgrown and people might not know where they are?

Antwoine Geddis: [38:41](#)

Yeah. But most of us know and they try to always let the youngest one know.

Reneé D.: [38:46](#)

Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [38:46](#)

So we do it, you know, always if you see something happening right there you need to open your mouth 'cause, um, you know, people are very dear. And we already had this I know happen before where people used to remove headstones just to build a

house and things like that. And that had to be stopped, you know, even when I, and I was a little bit too young to open my mouth about it.

But people spoke up about it and, you know, and told us, "Hey, you see this happening, you can't, you can't let them do that." 'cause it's, um, a burial is a sacred place. But I know of a few that's, um, growing up but it was already documented with pictures and things like that for some friends that I know. And they came and documented about two of 'em, um, that I knew of. And then, this happened about 10, maybe 15 years ago.

Reneé D.: [39:35](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [39:36](#) So I hold onto that booklet with those pictures of graves. And then they have the names of the graves that's all, in the cemetery. But I wouldn't point none of them now, you know, on, you know, but it's, it's, it's about one more that I really know about. And I think it's another grave that, that's a family cemetery. But I know some people bought the property. And but some people know that their great-grandmother's buried back there but, not able to go back there to that.

And, um, and I know, yeah. I know about two or three 'cause I have a grandfather buried in one on, on Wadmalaw. And, um, I wasn't able to, never will see him. And when I talked to my grandmother she usually, she says, she wasn't back then. Said, she buried him, which was a hard time for her at that time. So and one day I tried to ride and look and m- and see if I could find the grave. But I didn't find it but a cousin told me said he knows where it's at. Said he's gonna take me so we haven't did that yet, so hopefully I'll be able to make that one day.

Reneé D.: [40:49](#) Sorry.

Antwoine Geddis: [40:50](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [40:51](#) Can you, yes. Okay. Awesome. Okay. So, um, were there any big or annual festivals that used to take place or still taking place here on Johns Island?

Antwoine Geddis: [41:10](#) Yeah. One of 'em is the Sea Island Festival. And last year, it was right here in front of the nursing home or, yeah. I know this used to be called Hermina Traeye but Island Oaks, which, um, a Sea Island rest- it used to be, it used to be called. And we usually have that in September. And a lot of vendors and churches and schools and things like, uh, people like that usually

come out and sing or perform and things like that. And usually I used to be one of the deejays that set up. Me and Mr. Jenkins, um, um, who used to o- own Hot Spot Records.

Me and him I- used to set up and be able to play out there but over the years things had changed, you know? We got a little older but he passed away now so, you know, things gonna change. And you, and everybody don't want the same thing every year, you know? So we backed up a little bit and then, you know, and some change is done. But that's one big festival that we look forward to in September. And the other one is the homecoming. Yeah, the Homecoming of St. John's. Like that's like, you know, the big night of the game, football game.

And you'll have a lot of churches and people we'll have a parade that starts from Haut Gap to St. John's High School. And usually you'll have people like me, you know, I usually arrive with my store in there and, and be on the back of my truck doing a little music. And talking to the people, you know, and that's another big fun event that everyone look forward to also too. And, um, such as any other big events, you know, usually families like have like big events like that, you know?

And people know to go to like the, on the 4th of July, we'll go to the Chisholms or the Ropers or things like that. Or Christmastime, some of the families around here have big Christmas parties, you know? So it, it's usually, you know, people have their functions, you know, and things for all of us to get together, you know?

Reneé D.: [43:14](#) Okay. And ... I guess I would like to know when do you think Johns Island started to, to transition in development?

Antwoine Geddis: [43:39](#) I'll say probably in the early 2000s. Like 20 years ago. 20 years ago, you know, that's when we start seeing Johns Island getting a little bigger and roads start to get wider. And, you know, and things start to change a little bit when bridges start. You know, we had, used to have draw bridges and that changed. You know, we, and which was good. You know, 'cause the traffic usually will be horrible and sometime the bridge would get stuck. And you'd have to go all the way around, so that was a little ...

You know, that was a little upgrade to Johns Island but when some upgrades start, you know, it, it, it, more, more progress gonna come along with it too. And I know one thing that we were trying to fight for, against rather is the 526 coming to

Johns Island 'cause we felt like a lot of our development and our urban living would be, uh, damaged. So I'm one of those people, I'm not for it 'cause I'm used to, you know, the rural Johns Island. But it ain't too much of the rural Johns Island though, which I can go with, you know, with, um, development a little bit.

But, but taking away, you know, and tearing down people's houses. And taking land from people and not compensating. And that's something I can't go with, especially I know how hard my family fight for what we have today, you know, so I just can't let that happen. And I know it's a lot of people, you know, from Johns Island feel the same way also too, especially when it comes down to property or your home that you were living in. And, and some people were already forced out many years ago the same way with development.

So, so I mean, we don't want to see that happen again. So but I know 526 might be a little better for traffic in the flow to get to the island but I think, I can, I, I can pretty much live the way I am living with the traffic, you know? Only thing to do is put on a nice jam and flow through the, around traffic, you know? And take your time, you know? I know people are always into rushing. Why I say that but I see the rushers. I see ones not take any time and I mean, you know, the roads are rough but we can make it on Johns Island.

You know, if we've been, if we've come this far nows, ain't no need for us to try to eliminate it or feel like we need all of that, you know? So and it already happened to other places with development so we just don't want to see that here. But if it happen, I can't get mad, you know? I know we fight for a long time, you know, and still some fighters out here now but they're getting a little older. And somebody else got to take a stand, stand with it, you know? And it's costing us plenty of money to get that done, so.

Reneé D.: [46:42](#) Is there anything else you would like to add, um, anything that maybe my questions didn't go over?

Antwoine Geddis: [46:51](#) Well, I think we did talk a good bit. (laughs) Um, nothing too much, you know. But I'm just happy to take a part in this interview and, and feel free to talk about Johns Island and Wadmalaw Island. And, um, 'cause like my father is from Wadmalaw Island and my mother is from Johns Island so I got a big part of me on Wadmalaw Island also too. You know, with my great-grandfather being my great-great-grandfather being a

man named Reverend Jay Campbell. I don't know if ... I know if people heard of the Angel Oak Tree.

Reneé D.: [47:30](#)

Hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [47:31](#)

But there's a tree on Wadmalaw that was older than the Angel Oak Tree called Bull Hog Tree. And my great-great-grandfather was one of the caretakers of that tree along with his, um, wife Lavinia, which Lavinia was my step-great-great-grandmother. And, um, the story behind Jay Campbell, you know, he was a pastor. But he was working, you know, for whoever he was working with at that, uh, for that time. But it was the weather was bad. And they told my great-gran- great-grandfather that he had to go out and plow the fields.

And he did. Went out and obeyed the command that was sent to him but he was struck by lightning and got killed. You know, and that was my great-grandmother's father. And it's, um, it's in the death records and I looked at his death record. And it showed he was electrocuted. But the good thing about it, you know, my great-grandmother, she lived to be ... Her, her, his daughter, which is my great-grandmother, Lilia, Lydia Campbell Jackson, she lived to be 103.

So a long history of genes live in my family, you know, and, um, and that's the story behind the Campbell side, you know, on my father's side. That's a big story I always talk about in her long, my great-grandmother lived to be, you know? And it's amazing. I mean, when I heard that story but when you see the documents that states it, that'll really open your eye, you know? It's like, "Well, did granddaddy really get electrocuted? Is that a tale or a fib?" But it is the truth, you know, which people always had, my great-grandmother told me that herself, you know?

So but that's one of the stories I just wanted to touch on about my Wadmalaw family, you know, 'cause I just didn't want to talk about the Johns Island family so much and then, um, and I have family on James Island too. You know, the Chavis's over there, those are my cousins too. And that's my great-grandma. My great-grandmother, Sally has all of the aunts. You know, she was one of the first sisters and her two brothers left Johns Island. One moved on Grimball Plantation and the other one moved on Sol Legare.

So that's why you will hear me say, Chavis, you know, they was, uh, my cousins too. So the family just don't stop here on Johns Island. It's over there on James Island too and we all stay

connected. We had a big Chavis family reunion and hopefully we looking at planning another one, you know, pretty soon. And so and that's the goodness about my family. And I try to keep all of us connected. And even my children, I try to say ... I know some people get tired of that 'cause I used to get tired of that being around my great-grandparents like, "Oh, that's your cousin."

I'd be like, "Man, I must of can never find a girlfriend over here on the island 'cause everybody my cousin, you know?" But the good thing about it is, you know, life is good and I'm glad of the stories that they told me. And the history that they gave me that at 30, I better see that now to be the youngest one 'cause I ain't gonna be the youngest historian forever. Somebody gonna come and take my title one day but that's why I got to put these stories out here and let it be known, you know?

And I know people all around the world can hear, hear it, you know? And this is good when you can talk about your family and everything else, so especially the good. Everything gonna be good in every family and everything gonna be bad, you know? But you got to take the good, you know, and I try to be one of those good ones that keep it discreet. And I can't keep all discreet, you know, so and I don't think I can pull off a belt no more or cut nobody behind 'cause we used to get behind customer around here.

But it didn't hurt us, you know, and especially we, like you say, we're kind of r- ... Well, moving back is a little too, you know, but we are, um, we are that, you know? And like it didn't hurt me so, you know, and if anything else I need to talk about, just feel free to let me know. I see you got Stevens down there.

Reneé D.: [51:32](#) Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: [51:33](#) There's a place called Stevens, which, uh, Dr. Stevens is, um, the place why they n- called that Stevens is 'cause Dr. Stevens had a big house. And my great-grandmother, Christina Johnson Geddis, was born on Stevens' place. And, um, her father was Thomas Johnson. And her mother was Venus Deas Scott-Johnson. And, um, and she had brothers. I think I have her census record, the list that shows her brother and siblings while they were living on Dr. Stevens place, would be specific. Yeah. Let me make sure. I think this is it right here, if I'm not mistaken. But look-

Reneé D.: [52:21](#) Question.

Antwoine Geddis: [52:22](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [52:22](#) So this is listed together as kind of the same place. Or-

Antwoine Geddis: [52:26](#) Well-

Reneé D.: [52:26](#) ... they're not?

Antwoine Geddis: [52:27](#) ... no, they're not too much 'cause, um, Cape is on Plow Ground and Dr. Stevens' place is near River Road and where you find Johnson and Scott Road at. And I think j- uh, Dr. Stevens is on like a little, like most of that property right there before it got, you know, subdivided with other people. Like 'cause I know, um, there's another big place right there. So, um, but my family was, uh, my great-grandma was born there on Dr. Stevens' place. Yep. And she, even when she was in her 80s and at that time we all say going through the mansion.

You know, but her mind would come and go. And she always would say, she want to go home l- um, to Stevens. And I'd understand what she was talking about when I did the research and saw that, that the guy who owned the property was Dr. Stevens. And I think Dr. Stevens was a good guy the way they talk about him and, and everything else too. But, you know, and I wish I could have find that but they know, you know, I have so many documents I can't look for everything 'cause I would have showed you about that but, um, uh, 'cause it had them listed on living on Dr. Stevens' place. But like I said, I can't find everything right now, so but, yeah. But that's, um, and yeah. But that's pretty much where, um, the Stevens' Plantation was.

Reneé D.: [53:54](#) Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: [53:54](#) Mm-hmm.

Reneé D.: [53:56](#) Well, great. I think we're good.

Antwoine Geddis: [53:56](#) Yeah.