

Ross, James
April 12, 2010

Oral History Program
UNC-Charlotte Special Collections

James Ross II
Interviewed at The Ross Residence, Charlotte, North Carolina
April 12, 2010

Interviewer: Cox, Kyle

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Description: James “Bubba” Ross II was born in December 1934 in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Although he was not a resident of Revolution Park, he was and continues to be a frequent golfer at Revolution Park Golf Course. Because of his experience, he had a lot of information about urban renewal, the impact of I-77 on the neighborhoods of West Charlotte, and the importance of the golf course to the African-American community. Being an active member of the Mecklenburg Country Black Heritage Committee, his knowledge of the area is very useful to not only understanding the make-up of Revolution Park, but of West Charlotte as a whole.

Contributor: James Ross

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Interviewer: Kyle Cox

Recorder: Kyle Cox

Transcriber: Kyle Cox

Participant description:

Age: 76

Birth date: 1934

Birth location: Mecklenburg County

Residence: Charlotte, North Carolina

Education: Second Ward High School

Occupation:

Setting Description: The Ross Residence, Charlotte, North Carolina

KC: Kyle Cox

JR: James Ross

Track 1:

KC: My name is Kyle Cox. I will interviewing James Ross in the Ross residence on April 12, 2010 in Charlotte, North Carolina. This interview is for the Revolution Park project, oral history project.

Track 2:

JR: My daughter was born in 1960, so my first experience with the, with the complex, the Revolution Park complex. It was a golf course then. Across the street from the golf course was a city park, playground kind of thing. My daughter must have been like 18 months old, and friends of, of ours lived, we lived in the same apartment complex; and so this guy was a, was a, revolutionary. I mean, I only know the way to military revolutionary, so he said, "Ross, 4th of July, we going to take our families out to Revolution Park and have picnic." And I said, "You sure you want to do that?" "Yeah that's what we're going to do." So we packed up a lunch and drove out to, we, we, were in an apartment complex called Double Oaks, its being torn down now. But so we packed our lunch and went out to the, to the, to the, not to the golf course but to the playground, park playground area. And it was people out there picnicking. They had their lunches spreading, their blankets spreading all around, so we went over in the middle of the thing and spread our blankets down and got our baskets out and, and set up our stuff and within 15 minutes we were the only people there. Everybody else got up and left. So that was my first experience with; and I thought this is got to be crazy. Here folks just; forget about the holiday we driven from wherever was to have a picnic and then because these two African American families sat down in the midst of us, people just started packing their stuff and folding their things up and walk along. So after awhile, there was this big empty space around us. Now there was some people who were at the edge of the park who stayed, but the majority of people packed up their stuff and left. So, we stayed and had our picnic and ate our food and did everything else and the kids played. So that was my first experience with the--

KC: Do you remember what year that was?

JR: Nineteen six, my daughter was born in 1960, so it had to be 1961. 1961, yeah. By the time I started playing golf regularly, the course was integrated. I think the course must have been integrated in, I'm thinking '57.

KC: Yeah, I think that's what we came across, '57.

JR: Yeah, and before then I had, well I was in the military in the, during the, I went in the military in '54, and I didn't get out till '58, so at the time it was integrated I had already, I mean I was in the military when it was integrated. But by the time I got out we started, I started playing regular, regularly out there in the early '70s. And it was, even though the course was integrated it was still a, it was not a comfortable place to play because at the time the Mecklenburg County was still running the course, Mecklenburg Park and Recreation was still running the golf course, and the guy who ran the golf course was an employee. And he got paid the same amount of money whether one person played, a hundred people played; their salary was based on the fact that they were country employees rather than they were running the golf course.--

KC: Right.

JR: And so I didn't have to be, I remember him. I won't call his name because I don't remember his name, but I remember he was just arrogant. He did not like the idea that, that African Americans could play the golf course. Now here's the other thing that, there was just some, some really stupid things that happened. When, at the time, Revolution Park was the only municipal golf course in Charlotte. And now there's maybe four; there's Charles T. Myers, Renaissance, Tradition, and Sunset Hills at four. At that time, it was the only publically owned golf course in Charlotte. And when it opened back in the '40s or whatever, it was opened kind of as a country club for blue collar European American citizens of Charlotte. They had showers, locker rooms and some other amenities. When it was integrated, they, they, they closed the locker room and closed the showers. Now before it was like a country club, you could go in take a shower and have, you have a locker. Once blacks started going out there, no more shower, now ever though the shower room was still there with the shower heads all in it and that kind of thing and the lockers were still there, no one was allowed to use them--

JR: So that was a, that was a, that was a change. So later in probably the middle '70s I guess the county got out of the golf course business. And now they lease them to organizations and so that changed the whole feeling of, of, because these organizations are profit making organizations and they had to be nicer to people because they wanted to make some money. Whereas when you had county employees running it, they treated you any kind of way because they didn't care whether anybody played or not--

KC: Right, right.

JR: So that was the, that was the difference. [sigh] Once these organizations took over, we started pushing for recognition of people who had made contributions to golf. So one of the things happened when American Golf took over, American Golf was the first company that rented as a profit making organization, they, they named each one of the holes on the golf course was named after guys who had made a contribution to, to, to, to, to golf in the community and at Revolution. So each hole, Jim Richardson, James Black, Donald "Little" John, Phil Neelie (spelling unknown), Gums, I forgot Gums' first name, Mr. McKlure (spelling unknown), Ralph Alexander and I believe Charlie Sifford. The nine holes were named after them. So that's, that's, that's kind of my experience. Now there's some other things not just about Revolution Golf Course, but that whole neighborhood. In the first World War, that whole area was a Camp Green.

KC: Right.

JR: That whole area was a camp, and the reason the street that goes by the golf course is called Remount Rd. The reason it was called Remount Rd. was because they kept cavalry horses down there and that was, that was the remount, that was the place where they mounted—

JR: So that's where the word Remount Rd. came from. Now there's an organization in town that Camp Green Historic Association is out, off of. They have an old house out there that's been around since that time, and they meet I believe once a month. I don't remember the guy's

name but I've gone out and talk to him and so they can tell you all of the history of that area. Not of just the golf course, but of the history of the neighborhoods around—

JR: You might be interested in that. But that's kind of my experience of this thing. Now I did participate in 50th anniversary of the integration of Revolution Park. We had brought back guys who had played. Now what was interesting; tell me your first name again?

JR: Kyle, what was interesting, Kyle, was that while the golf course was rigidly segregated, [pause] there was a young man who was a golf phenom. I mean this guy was Tiger Woods before Tiger was; his name was James Black. And when he was 12, 13, 14 years old, he could flat play. And he was such a good golfer that he got to play out there, and the guys would gamble and want him on the team. Even though he was black he got to play because he was just so good. And, so he integrated the golf course. You know. The guy at the club house didn't care if, as long as Black was playing if some of those other guys took him out to play, so he integrated the golf course. What kind of started the whole thing of integration, oh one of the holes was named after him (Black), was a man named Ray Booton. And Ray was a member of the a, police force. And, and Ray, Ray, the way he tells the story he was either off on Mondays because they had to work Saturdays and Sundays, and I think Ray was off on Mondays and he had wanted to, he had played golf in the military, and he wanted to play golf when he was off on Mondays. And so he went out to Revolution because it was a country owned course and they told him he couldn't play. And so he and Reginald Hawkins and some others filed that suit. And it went around awhile, and in 1957, I don't know when Ray filed the suit, but in 1957 they won the suit. And then the golf course was a, integrated. So one of the holes was named after Ray Booton.

KC: Ok. You mentioned you're a, you took your family to the park--

JR: Yeah.

KC: Did you ever take them to the pool there? Did you ever use the pool?—

JR: No, no never used the pool. Now I'm not sure when the pool was integrated because [pause] even though the golf course was integrated, I think the pool came even after the golf course. Yeah.

KC: Yeah.

JR: Yeah.

KC: Ok. What about some of the guys you played with back in the '70s, do you still play with them now?

JR: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And in fact, [pause] we have a Senior Golf Group and there are probably ten or 15 guys in our group who played out there regularly even when they were younger or when they retired because most of the folk, well most of the folk in our golf group are retired now, and most of them took up golf after retirement. So, most of them started because it was a

nine hole course, it was, it wasn't that easy but you know it was nine holes, so they'd go out and play nine. Though I think that's when my wife started playing golf out there when she retired, was out at Revolution.

KC: Ok. Do they live in Revolution Park, most, some of them?

JR: None of the [pause], well that's a good question. As far as I know none of the people in our golf group live in Revolution Park, yeah.

KC: Ok. How do think urban renewal helped push the golf course into integrated, integration? Or if it even did.

JR: No. No, it. What, what urban, well let's see now. Urban renewal, no. What urban renewal really did was ruin [long pause] housing in the city of Charlotte. Now what do I mean by that? Urban renewal, there was a section in Charlotte called Brooklyn and Blue Heaven that was roughly from Brevard St. over to, almost over to Morehead over to Boundary St., now it no longer exists, over to Boundary St. And from 4th and Brevard down to [pause] the Sugar Creek that runs, the little creek that runs around by the outlet, whatever its called, Metropolitan, down there where the Target, the Best Buy—

JR: There's a little creek that runs, the creek use to sort of be the border of Brooklyn and Blue Heaven. There were two neighborhoods, one was called Brooklyn, the other was Blue Heaven. It was really Second Ward. At the time the city was divided into four wards. You had First Ward, Second Ward, Third Ward and Fourth Ward. Second Ward was pretty much African American, and then First Ward was mixed. Third Ward was mixed, and Fourth Ward was pretty much European American. Now, Second Ward was the [pause] urban African American neighborhood. It had the library, the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, the McCrorey YMCA, Elk's Club, two movie theaters, beauty college, a junior college, the first African American high school in town, it was called Second Ward High School, funeral homes, the A.M.E. Zion, two, two, two newspapers. I mean this was a, it was a vibrant, thriving neighborhood.

KC: A city within a city?

JR: A city within a city, yes a city within a city. And what we now called, a urban renewal, was really a way of breaking the backs of African American owned businesses that was close to downtown; whether we are talking about Memphis, Cincinnati, Charlotte, it didn't make a difference. Any place where there was a thriving African American downtown, urban renewal. Now there was no question that some of the worst slums in Charlotte was located in Brooklyn and Blue Heaven, no question about that, but also some of the finest homes and businesses were located there.

JR: So we could have taken care of the slums without throwing out. It was like throwing out all of the good stuff with the bad stuff, so the idea was we will eliminate slums. Well that was not true, what you were doing was eliminating African American owned businesses. So what happened, then, there must have been about somewhere in the neighborhood of six to seven

thousand families that lived in Brooklyn and Blue Heaven. And when you tear down that many homes and don't build any homes, then where do those seven thousand people go?

JR: They, they, they went to predominantly African American neighborhoods that was old established neighborhoods. And now these new folks who were coming in were strangers and they were putting stands on places like Grier Heights, Cherry, Biddleville, Washington Heights, Southside. They had to absorb all of these folks that was uprooted out of First Ward, Third Ward, no, not Third Ward, First Ward, Brooklyn and Blue Heaven. All these folks was uprooted they had to absorb them. Then you had something else that was going on. This is significant about, about. At that time Revolution Park was all white.

JR: You had no African Americans living in Revolution Park. So when this, when you, when you, when you scatter those seven thousand people, all at once you had those folks looking to buy homes, and so these unscrupulous real estate folks would go to places like Revolution Park, Smallwood, [pause] Revolution Park, Smallwood, Belvedere and they would say, "black folks are coming to your neighborhood, you better sell out now." And so whites would sell their house at a cheap price, running, and then they would jack the price up for black folks. And so, the way Revolution, so it did have an impact. I'm sorry, urban renewal did have an impact on, on, on, on a Revolution. It started blockbusting.

JR: Before urban renewal, there was no such thing as blockbusting in Charlotte, because you never had many larger groups of folks moving at the same time. And so, and so it was a very unscrupulous in real estate, unscrupulous real estate folks took full advantage of it. So you had Revolution Park, Smallwood, which is across from Johnson C. Smith—

JR: Smallwood, then there were two neighborhoods over there, one was called Smallwood, the other was called Belvedere. And then, you had, you probably had four neighborhoods that was all white. After urban renewal, they became all black. So it have an, have a—

KC: You mentioned Brooklyn and Blue Heaven?

JR: Yeah

KC: They had African American businesses. Do you know if any of those businesses, during urban renewal, moved to West Charlotte?

JR: Yeah, yeah. For instance, the, the Queen City Pharmacy was on 2nd St., Queen City Pharmacy. The, the Y, the YWCA went out of business, that was the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. But the YMCA is up on Beatties Ford Rd., the McCrorey branch Y, see it was in Brooklyn. Now all of the churches, The House of Prayer, Friendship Baptist Church, East Stonewall all of those churches moved to the west side.

KC: Right.

JR: All of the bug, all of the large African American churches that are in Charlotte now, that was in Brooklyn, except St. Paul, came to the west side. St. Paul went north. They went to

North Charlotte, but the rest of them. Businesses, yeah businesses, a lot of the businesses relocated to, to a, to a. The theaters, they were gone.

KC: Do you know of any that relocated to Revolution Park? I know you didn't live there, so I didn't know if you knew--

JR: There may have been. There was some little, what do you call them?, little café kind of things that may have been, down there at the bottom of the hill on Berringer Dr. there may have been some small businesses like cafes or restaurant kinds of things or beer joints, but no, no other kind of businesses relocated to. Well let's see. There was some businesses on South Tryon St., they would have been restaurants. May have been barber shops or some restaurants—

KC: So they really, even though the people moved the businesses didn't stay. They didn't commute from West Charlotte back to the businesses?

JR: No, no, no they would let any businesses stay when urban renewal came through, I mean it was scorched earth, even the church. They said that, that churches couldn't stay because it was all going to be for business, but they let a white church. All the black churches had to move, but the white church is still there, right across from City Hall. White church is still there, yeah.

[pause]

KC: How did. The, do you remember the building of I-77?

JR: Yeah, yeah.

KC: How did that change Revolution Park or West Charlotte as a whole and--

JR: Well what it did for West Charlotte, was that it split two viable neighborhoods, Greenville and McCrorey Heights and Oaklawn Park. McCrorey Heights was the [pause] elite African American neighborhood. It's right, about four blocks around from Johnson C. Smith. In fact the president of Johnson C. Smith lived in McCrorey Heights. McCrorey Heights, in fact it was named after one of the presidents of Johnson C. Smith. McCrorey Heights was the elite African American neighborhood. And then Greenville which was one of the oldest African American neighborhoods and then Double Oaks where we were living when we went out to the. You could walk from McCrorey Heights over to Greenville. Now Greenville had the Fairview Homes which was a public housing project. So the kids who lived in public housing and went to school there, they could walk through the neighborhoods going up to, to Oaklawn Elementary School they had to walk through Oaklawn Park or through McCrorey Heights. So these poor kids walked through a rich African American neighborhood on their way to school. So they could see their teachers and this kind of thing. When 77 came through, there was a bridge across 77, is there a bridge across? Yeah, on Oaklawn Ave. there's a bridge across 77, but it cut off foot traffic. So that's what it did to that. Now what it did to the golf course was it, it, it, it, it changed the golf course from 18 holes to nine holes because it came right through part of the golf course, but it also cut off Southside homes from Revolution Park. Southside homes was the African American neighborhoods and it was also. You had Brookhills Village, which was privately

owned, and Southside homes, which was public housing, these were apartment complexes. Now, and when came across from the golf course, you had Revolution Park. [pause] The 77 cut off any walking traffic between those. It separated, they were, they were separated on the basis of ethnicity, whatever that means, or, but there was some interaction. But once 77 came through, you know, you still have Remount Rd. that goes across but it was not, I mean there was not foot traffic.

KC: Right.

JR: So, so 77 had a major impact on Revolution Park and on the golf course because it went from 18 hole golf course to nine hole golf course.

KC: Did, did less people start golfing there because it changed to a nine hole?

JR: Yeah. It just changed the whole feeling of the golf course because it went to a nine hole. Of course now some people don't play, I mean they don't want to play a nine hole because its not a quote "regulation golf course."

KC: Right. We had, our class actually had interview a resident of Revolution Park and he said as a kid, they played around on the golf course and they drove their bicycles. Do you ever remember hearing any stories?—

JR: Oh yeah.—

KC: Pranks on the golf course?

JR: Any what?

KC: Pranks. Or childhood stories?

JR: Before 77 came through, the golf course went across what is now 77, and that was the back nine. And the kids who lived in Brookhills Village and Southside homes, Brookhills was the private place and Southside was the public course, they could sneak out and play maybe three holes back there, and they could be seen from the club house. So a lot of the guys, some of the best golfers in Charlotte, that's where they learned how to play golf on those three holes back there, because they would come out in the afternoon and play the three holes, and if somebody saw them, they would just run back into the woods, and they'd come out and find balls--

KC: [laughter]

JR: And they also got to caddy down there. York Rd. York Rd. was not a high school at that time, it was a junior high. [pause] Yeah it was York Rd. Junior High at the time. And some of the guys who went to the, they would sneak up to the golf course and caddy. And of course they would be playing hooky from school.

KC: Right.

JR: And so the principal, Mr., Mr. Moreland (spelling unknown) the principal, went up and had a talk with the, with the guy who was the head pro at the golf course. He said, "look, some of these kids need money, and I know that, but they also need to be in school. So here's what we want to do. We're going to start what is called the Caddy's Club. If a kid shows up here at the golf course without my permission, I want you to call me. If you need some caddies, call me and tell me how many caddies you need and I'll send you some caddies up there to play." And they had to, had to take 25 cents out of whatever money they made and put it in the Caddy Club back at the school. But, so he would, so his choice was, "I don't want you playing hooky, but I know you have to make some money, so if you come to school first, and I'll let you go up and caddy." Course now they'd put you in jail for that.

KC: [laughter]

JR: But at the time Mr. Moreland had the deal and so he had the Caddy's Club. And so those guys would go up and caddy and come back to school, and that way if some kid would play hooky from school and show up at the golf course, the pro would call Mr. Moreland, and he would come pick you, pick them up. So it was one of those real common sense kinds of things that, that worked. So that was one of the things that guys made money up at the golf course was caddying and they also got to play free on those last three holes because they could sneak out there and play. And of course when the golf course was closed at night, they would go out there, and the afternoon you know nobody would be playing after six o'clock, the golf course closed, they would sneak over the fence and they would go out there and play like that. Yeah.

KC: We also got some feedback that there was ghost stories from the golf course? Did, do you ever hear about—

JR: No, never heard about that.

KC: In some of the newspaper clippings we looked at, there's a, we found that there was a murder that happened on the golf course in the early '70s. Do you recall that happening?

JR: Vaguely. Well people got robbed for a long time, and then finally, they put the fence around the golf course. Because there were a lot of, because number one went away from the clubhouse and, and down and that was really a rough little. There was a little convenient store, little café and some other little stuff there on Barringer Dr. and some no good nicks, if you want to call them.

KC: [laughter]

JR: If they would see people get away from the clubhouse, see now at the time they didn't have golf carts, so a lot of people would be walking playing golf, you would have the pull carts.

KC: Right.

JR: And so, they would just come out of the woods and take your balls, your clubs, well they would literally rob you. So they finally had to put a fence. If you go down now, down, I guess that's Barringer Dr. That goes around, I think that fence may be still there. But it was dangerous, especially if you were, well I started to say European American, but it didn't make a difference, they'd rob black folk too, it didn't make a difference. It was kind of dangerous, but I don't remember any ghost stories.

KC: Other than the NAACP case for integrating the golf course, was there any other active [pause] I don't know, meetings at the golf course or the rec area from the NAACP? I know they had a big impact in integrating the, the golf course and the pool, but do you remember if they did anything else for Revolution Park?

JR: No I don't remember. Now you had individuals who, you had individuals who demanded to be treated with respect and dignity. And so you had incidents where people would go out to play and they would be, you know, called names or be treated in a disrespectful manner. And so that was, there was incidents, a lot of incidents. I don't remember any actual fights but I remember some confrontations between the people who ran the golf course and individuals who went out. This is a municipal golf course, it was tax payer supported and so I have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. So I remember some of those back and forth things, yeah. Because, because again even after it was integrated, you had folks who, they only integrated because the law said they had to. They didn't change their mind, they just had to go by the law, so they would harass you when you came in and they just really still didn't want you out there. And I remember folks who, you know, you can't treat me that way. So you had, you had confrontations for years after integration, you still had confrontation.

KC: I forgot to press record on the recorder, so could you restate the, the, how the golf course became integrated.

JR: How it became integrated? I don't know that any individuals had really tried to integrate the course because you know segregation was the law of the land, and it was [pause] I don't want to say it, well pretty much accepted by everybody. That's the way it is. And Ray Booton, who had played golf while he was in the military, Ray was a police officer, and if I remember the story correctly, Ray, they worked on Saturdays and Sundays, because at that time, that's when all of the; at that time African American police could not arrest white people, they could only arrest African American. They didn't even have a car. They just—

KC: Right.

JR: They patrolled Brooklyn and Blue Heaven, they patrolled Brooklyn and if some got out of line, they had to call the police to come pick them up in the car. So anyway they worked Saturday and Sunday, and they were off on Monday. And Ray had played while he was in the military if I remember correctly. And so he wanted to play golf, so he went down one Monday to play and they said, no you, you, you can't play. And Ray's family, you know his family is one of the leading families in this community. And he, "What do you mean I can't play?" "Well you can't play." And so Ray and Reginald Hawkins and some other people filed a lawsuit. And the, the a, the a North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that you could not have restricted covenants

based on race as part of your, as part of your deed process. And the guy, his name was [pause] I believe his name was Elmer Barringer (meant Osmond), Barringer Dr. is named after. () This guy Barringer was a land, had a bunch of land and he had given land along Barringer Dr. to the Mecklenburg County for, for a golf course and for a park. But he put in there that it was for whites only. And, and, and the ruling by the Supreme Court was that you cannot do that. You cannot put in restrictive covenants based on race. And Susie Sharpe was the Supreme Court Justice at that time, and everybody thought Susie Sharpe was this enlightened person but she said in her memoirs that she, it was a decision that she regretted and she tried to get them the, the, the choice that they had, they being Mecklenburg County, if you close the golf course you won't have to integrate it, but if you keep it open, you're going to have to integrate it. Her choice was to close it, but the county choose not to close it, and so in 1957, James, I've forgotten he name now, but he was the first one to, in fact they had his picture about it down there for awhile he got to play a round of golf in 1957. So that's how it got integrated. But Ray Booton, Reginald Hawkins and I don't know who else, maybe there was three people in the suit but they sued the golf course to play.—

KC: James Otis Wilson (meant Williams)?

JR: James Otis Wilson, yeah. James Otis. Now I don't know if James Otis was part of the suit, he may have been I don't know. But he was the first to play.

KC: Ok. What was your fondest memory of the, of the golf course?

JR: [long pause] The camaraderie at the golf course. There were some guys who, and right now it's being renovated, and because of some changes they're to move some holes around. But my fondest memory of the golf course was the camaraderie. I know some guys that every day for years, that was the first place to stop after work, they stopped at the golf course. I mean if they wives were looking for them—

KC: [laughter]

JR: alls they had to do was call the golf course, and you know, “tell Howard to come home” or “tell George to come home” or whatever, and for years. So it kind of became a blue collar country club for African Americans. Now, the golf course integrated you always had whites who came to play out there. It never did become a quote an all black golf course, but the guys kind of took it as their kind of golf course. So there in the afternoons, everyday in the afternoons these guys would come, and a lot of times they didn't play golf, they would come out to the club house because they knew it was the place to hang out. And so guys would hang out and drink beer and, and, and, and camaraderie. And so it was a favorite place for me. I've, you know, been involved in politics through my life and one of the places, one of the things that I liked about it was I could go out there and find out kind of what's happening in the blue collar community just by talking to those guys. So it was a place that I visited often, not just to play golf but just to go out and, because the guys, you know, were plumbers, and electricians and lawn. A lot of guys out there had their own businesses. And so it was a good place for me to go and kind of find out what was going on with the blue collar guys. Because I can remember a lot of time they would say to me, “Mr. Ross you the only politician that comes out here and, and talks to use. The rest

of these politicians you never see them out here. But you always talk to us.” I said “Yeah, I’m out here because I want to know. This is a place where I can get information and find out what’s going on and I can tell you all what I’m involved in.” And so my fondest memory is the fellowship and the camaraderie at the golf course, yeah. And its, and it’s really missed. Right now the guys go out to Sunset Hills, but it’s not the same thing, because, you know, it’s not in the neighborhood—

KC: Yeah.

JR: At that time, you were right in the neighborhood. So the camaraderie is the thing I miss, yeah.

KC: Is there anything else you would like to add to? About Revolution.

JR: There’s some guys who grow up on the golf course that I was telling you about, that caddied. [pause] What is interesting is James Black, who played on the PGA Tour, Charlie Sifford, who not only played on the PGA Tour but was inducted into the Hall of Fame, Curtis Sifford, who played on the PGA Tour; so you had three guys that played golf at, three African Americans that played golf at Revolution Park who also played on the PGA Tour. I don’t know that there’s a country club or any other golf course in Charlotte, I know there’s not another golf course in Charlotte that said a Hall of Fame, there’s no Hall of Fame guys from none of the country clubs, that learned, pretty much learned, well Charlie Sifford didn’t really learn how to play at Revolution, but he, he did play out there. But, it produced some outstanding African American golfers, yeah.

KC: So, so it’s a unique, unique place?

JR: Unique, it was a unique, yeah, unique place, in terms of some of the guys who played there. And you, you really got to interview James Black, because he was the kid who was a phenom. And so he got to play when it was still rigidly segregated, he got to play out there because he was just so good. I mean he shot 27, 28 out there on a regular basis. I mean--

JR: He could, you just can’t believe how well that man could play, yeah, yeah.

KC: Well—

JR: He was so good until those white guys would pick him on the team, because they knew they could make money off of him, yeah.

KC: Um-hum. Well, thank you very much.

JR: Ok.

END OF INTERVIEW

Approx. 37 minutes

Ross, James
April 12, 2010

Oral History Program
UNC-Charlotte Special Collections