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SHIRLEY HASLEY

**An Oral History Interview
Conducted by Carolyn Krauss in 2007**

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In this oral history interview, beloved elementary school teacher Shirley Hasley discusses not only her 38-year career in Mill Valley, but the people, experiences and attitudes that helped shape her steadfast convictions. Shirley (née Andrews) moved with her family from Oklahoma to California in 1943. Growing up in a farm-like environment on the edge of Bakersfield, Shirley learned to work hard and take pride in what she did. Shirley tells how, even with 13 of their own children, her parents created a foster home for around 250 boys, girls and adults over the course of their lifetimes – their generosity partially a product of the family’s strong religious faith. This same faith taught Shirley to “turn the other cheek” in response to negativity, a behavior she employed in the face of prejudice throughout her life, and particularly as the first African American teacher in Mill Valley in the 1960s.

Shirley’s initial move to the Bay Area was precipitated by Willie Brown, who awarded her a scholarship to San Francisco State University and presented her to the city as a debutante. The beginning of Shirley’s career at Park Elementary School was no less eventful: in her first year, Shirley took part in the school district’s desegregation program as a teacher in Marin City and faced resistance from both the Marin City and the Mill Valley communities. Alongside the resistance came support from some, and throughout her oral history, Shirley traces her gradual acceptance into the Mill Valley community and its glowing recognition of her dedication to teaching. Shirley recounts how some of this acceptance initially arose from a surprising offer to appear in a Coca-Cola ad, but came to encompass her classroom abilities and teaching philosophy. After retiring from her position at Edna Maguire Elementary School, Shirley continued to give back by promoting affordable housing and building a women’s shelter with characteristic verve and energy.

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Oral History of Shirley Hasley
May 9th, 2007

Carolyn Krauss: This is Carolyn Kraus talking with Shirley Hasley in Mill Valley, California, on May 9th, 2007. Let's start from the beginning before getting to your teaching. Where were you born? Were you born in the Bay Area?

Shirley Hasley: I was born, actually, in Oklahoma, and didn't stay there very long because my father was lured to California with a job opportunity. So we moved to Bakersfield.

Carolyn Krauss: When was that?

Shirley Hasley: That was 1943. I lived there until I came to educate at San Francisco State.

Carolyn Krauss: How old were you when you guys moved from Oklahoma?

Shirley Hasley: Less than 2 years. It was a short stay in Oklahoma.

Carolyn Krauss: No big vivid memories of Oklahoma.

Shirley Hasley: No.

Carolyn Krauss: How about Bakersfield?

Shirley Hasley: Bakersfield.

Carolyn Krauss: Growing up there.

Shirley Hasley: Growing up there — *very* hot. I remember hot, hot, hot. And it was very interesting because my parents always believed in having a well-rounded person. So when we grew up we were taught almost every single part of how to exist. I remember one of the things that we had to do when we were — maybe 5 years old — was to make a cake, a birthday cake. And my mother would say — when we were creaming the butter and the sugar, because we didn't have a mixer back then — she would say, "Nope, that's not quite. Go back. More, more, more." And she said, "You like good things, and I want you to know what it takes to have this delicious cake, and it's not easy." So my brothers and sisters all had the same experience of making the cake and going through the whole process without having that mixer.

Carolyn Krauss: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Shirley Hasley: I have 12 brothers and sisters. Yes, I do. I'm the second of 13. And my dad at one point was issuing license plates when they became popular for the personalizing, and so my plate is "2ndof13."

Carolyn Krauss: So you have an older sibling.

Shirley Hasley: I have an older brother.

Carolyn Krauss: Okay. And what's the breakdown going —?

Shirley Hasley: Well, they just go almost every year, and there are three siblings that sort of — they were very close. Dolly's birthday is May 27th, so she's the same age as Violet, whose birthday is in June, and then Violet is the same age as Walter, whose birthday is in August.

Carolyn Krauss: So what was it like being in such a large family?

Shirley Hasley: Well, it was very interesting. We learned, of course, early how to do chores, and when I was very young until I started high school, we lived on a farm which was way out on the outskirts of Bakersfield going toward the Grapevine. It was a large farm, so we had our animals. We've always had our animals and my parents would sort-of rotate. I know that a lot of people will go, "Ewwwww" — and first we didn't really know, but we would raise our pig, and it was almost like a pet, but we knew that the time would come when that was going to become bacon and whatever. And then all of our chickens — we collected the eggs, and my dad milked every morning. So I grew up with this whole taste of the natural. I mean, it's very in vogue now, but we always had organic and lived actually the good life.

Carolyn Krauss: Was that the family business?

Shirley Hasley: No, it wasn't. My dad was hired out. He was a farmer, and he did farm work for the Anton di Giovanni Brothers. Whenever the crops would come into season, very often we would help my father, and so we learned to weed cotton. Because they had — I don't remember exactly how many acres — but acres of cotton. And so when we were old enough we would weed the cotton, and that means that.

Carolyn Krauss: So you were working as well?

Shirley Hasley: Yes — with my father. Well, sometimes my father would be doing something else, but he would show us how to do it and then that would be our job, to help make money.

Carolyn Krauss: Name the brothers again?

Shirley Hasley: Anton di Giovanni — their farm in Bakersfield. We would go out to weed the cotton and that means that when they sow the seeds, they sow them very thickly, and in order for them to produce the best cotton, you have to thin it. And so we would go through, and there's a certain amount of space that is to be left between each cotton stalk. So we would do that.

Carolyn Krauss: Were you in school?

Shirley Hasley: Yes. But we would do that on weekends, and sometimes the summer. There were times during the summer when certain parts of the crop would need to be done — during the summer, picking cotton. We learned how to pick cotton and my dad taught us. He would assign three rows and so he would take one row. There would be a row in between and then we would have the other row. So then he would teach us how to pick properly and not put leaves. And it was hard work, it was hard work.

Carolyn Krauss: Backbreaking, right?

Shirley Hasley: It was.

Carolyn Krauss: And your fingers —

Shirley Hasley: Oh, the fingers were just down to the quick. It was very hard work. But we learned what work was. My parents always said, "You never know." So if you're a well-rounded person, whatever comes up, you will be able to do it. So we were taught that.

Carolyn Krauss: I wanted to back up for a second, because I'm thinking the '40s — that your family moved from Oklahoma. It's a little past the Dust Bowl, but is it part of that wave of people who looked for work in the West?

Shirley Hasley: I suppose so. All I know is that my parents were enticed by either friends or someone to come out, because they knew that there were opportunities for employment. So that's why.

Carolyn Krauss: I don't want to spend a lot of time, but let's hear a little bit about your parents. Where did your dad come from, and your mother?

Shirley Hasley: It's a little bit sketchy. My parents never talked too much about that. My dad was born in Oklahoma — no. Dad was born in Philadelphia. My mom was born in Oklahoma. My father's family I think eventually lived in Texas for a while, but then moved to Oklahoma and that's where they met. I know a little bit about my grandmother on my mother's side and my grandfather, but they lived in Oklahoma and we didn't visit them very often. I think my mom felt a little bit displaced in her family. They had a large family as well and I believe there were 11 siblings in her family. Because she wanted more than just living in Oklahoma and doing the day work and whatever, that she was

labeled [unintelligible] or something like that. It was a term that her mom and siblings gave her. So when she met my father, it was sort of love at first sight, and that opportunity to get married and move out was very appealing.

Carolyn Krauss: And it sounds like they both shared a thing about developing pride in your work.

Shirley Hasley: They did — and also within themselves. Whatever was done was done to perfection, in a way. Giving an honest day's work was always the thing. When my parents moved out here, my mom was already starting to have the family and they came rather quickly, so there wasn't the opportunity for her to go back and educate until much later in her life.

Carolyn Krauss: Did she?

Shirley Hasley: She did. She went back. She got her nursing credential, and we ended up having foster children, even though there were 13 of us. When my mom passed away in '95, we sort of went back and we looked at all the boys and girls and adults that had lived with us, and there were about 250, beside our family. My parents were honored at one point as "Parents of the Year" when Reagan was the governor of California.

Carolyn Krauss: Was he the person who bestowed the honor?

Shirley Hasley: Yes, he did. So that was kind of interesting.

Carolyn Krauss: Tell me about that event.

Shirley Hasley: Well, actually, my parents were selected and they went to Sacramento and received the award.

Carolyn Krauss: Were votes made?

Shirley Hasley: Well, I don't know. I really don't know the process, but I just know that it ended up that my parents were designated the place where any child who came into the foster system and couldn't make it at other places would be sent out to the Andrews.' My maiden name is Andrews. So they'd send them out to the Andrews'. That was the reputation, and eventually my mom had this huge — which still is in Bakersfield today — a sign that says "The House of Others." We always had boys and girls coming in and out, and adults.

This one story is just fantastic. There was a lady who came from Guyana with two children, and no one would give her help. So they said, "Go to the Andrews'. They'll help you." Well, in the interim — my siblings and I, most of us had grown up and had left the area — but my parents built a nine-bedroom house. So there's this huge house in Bakersfield. We were actually out into the country, but the city came to us, so it's out

near Cal State Bakersfield area. Anytime there was an extra room, there were students from the college who would come and stay and so forth.

But this lady from Guyana came and no one would help her. So, well — “Go see the Andrewses.” My mom said, “We’ve got one extra bedroom and you can stay there with your children. It’s too bad we don’t have more, but we have the one bedroom. You can stay there as long as you need to, to get yourself together.” And the lady from Guyana said, “You know, I’ve always wanted to be a nurse.” So my parents said, “Fine. We’ll help you.” They helped her get her nursing credential. She stayed there until she got her credential. Well, when my mom passed away, or when she was getting close to, she had breast cancer, and we needed hospice. So we called, and it was instantaneous. Everything that you would ever need arrived. And we kept getting all these things and we kept saying, “But we didn’t order. We didn’t ask for this.”

We didn’t know this until the day of my mom’s service: this lady, her name was Ann, she got up and she said, “When I first came to this country,” she said, “nobody would help me. And the Andrewses did.” All of us have had this really strong faith in God, and I think that that’s part of what has really sustained and helped us get through a lot. And she said, “They came, they helped me.” She said, “I got my nursing credential and I’m the director of hospice.” It was incredible. But she didn’t tell us beforehand because she knew there might have been hesitation on receiving or getting things. So there was just this hush in the service, because she said how God places people in your life at certain times for a reason. The reason was that she was to get her credential so that she could take care of my mom in the end.

The reason we know that there were approximately 250 is because all of these kids that were still alive or that knew my parents wrote in, and we had a lot of, “What can we do as a tribute to your mom?” So the tribute was, after the service, they said, “There’s a little surprise down at the gravesite.” Everybody meandered down, and there were things that were draped, and we didn’t know what it was. But when they started undrapping, there were cages of doves. And the first cage that they opened, there were two adult doves, and they fluttered out, and they said that represented my mom and my dad. Then the second cage that they opened — there were 13 little ones — and that was for our family. And then they opened cages of 25 until they had opened 250 doves that just sort of whirled around. If you’ve never heard the whirling of the wings of the doves, it’s just incredible. It’s this sound that you just never will forget. And they did their little — it was like an exercise, back and forth — and then all of a sudden they just sort of swooped right down over the gravesite, and then went straight up into the air. It was like they’d been trained but I don’t think that. I know that they weren’t. Everyone on the lawn was just standing a-gaze at all of these doves that just went straight up into the heavens.

It was absolutely incredible. So that was something that made us realize, I think, and me particularly, that there’s always room for one more in whatever you’re doing, or to take time for one more. I always tried to do that in my teaching. That was a lesson that I learned, to always go the extra, do for one more. Take the time. You never know where it will take you.

Carolyn Krauss: That’s incredible. Let’s go back to the seeds of that teaching career. In Bakersfield you went to Cal State?

Shirley Hasley: No, I started out at Panama Elementary. There wasn't kindergarten at the time that I started school, so I started in first grade and went through eighth grade — graduated from Panama Union School. Then they opened a new high school near me. It was called South High; I was the first full class to graduate from South High. Actually, I had a couple of honors from that school. They had a contest to choose the school colors. So I got to choose the school colors. I didn't think of it then, but later, thinking back on it — the Confederates and the rebels. Whoa. But anyway, the colors were blue and gray, and then I also got to name — my suggestion for the yearbook, the Merrimac, was chosen. So I have a couple of honors there, which was nice. Then I went to Bakersfield Junior College, and then transferred from there to San Francisco State.

Carolyn Krauss: Were your experiences — would it have been in the late '40s at Panama and into the '50s for high school? You were probably facing segregation.

Shirley Hasley: It's interesting you mention that. Our family was the only black family in the area for a long time. So I went to Panama from first grade to eighth grade being basically the only black. It was hard in a way. Well, I say hard, but it wasn't hard until I was a little bit older and knew what was happening. But when I was young there was this saying, "Oh, Shirley is sooo lucky because she gets to keep her tan the year round."

Carolyn Krauss: The teachers would say that?

Shirley Hasley: No — the kids. And I think because of their parents. But we were never in my family taught the word "nigger" or things like that.

Carolyn Krauss: Did you hear that word?

Shirley Hasley: I didn't hear it a lot, or I didn't recognize what was being said until I was a little bit older.

Carolyn Krauss: Like teenage?

Shirley Hasley: No. I remember fifth grade. At that time the principal would come in and introduce a new student to us at the school. So this little girl came in and she said, "Whoa. I can't go in that room." So the principal said, "Why not?" And she said, "Because there's a nigger in the room." And everybody's looking at me. And it didn't dawn on me. So she was so insistent that the principal said, "The other classes are full and you have to go into this classroom." She tried to talk friends that I had from first grade — because at that time they used to just send classes on as a class, so if you were in the first grade, your group of friends, you were also in second grade, third grade, fourth grade. You just went all the way. They just sent you as a class. So my friends were, "No. Shirley is our friend." "Well, you can't play with her because —." You know, all sorts of things went on. Well, it turned out that she ended up being one of my best friends later,

which was really interesting. I really didn't go to school with other blacks until I started high school.

Carolyn Krauss: Did your siblings, at home, would people talk about having negative encounters or did your parents suffer from that kind of thing?

Shirley Hasley: No — because I think, as I mentioned before, our faith. And we were always taught, you know, turn the other cheek, kind of. So it was almost, I think, said to us that there was ignorance in that kind of [derogatory] remark, or whatever. They don't really know when they're saying things, but mostly the people that I went to school with — those families — there was never anything said. It was always someone who was coming in new or from the outside that would make a remark that would be the buzz.

Carolyn Krauss: So the foster people who came in, who were not part of your family, were they white?

Shirley Hasley: They were all.

Carolyn Krauss: They were all white.

Shirley Hasley: Well, mostly white. There were some blacks, but mostly white. There were a lot of Spanish or Mexicans that would be in that area because of the migrant status, but mostly white. Because the kids that were incorrigible were teenagers — I think when I was growing up, most of the black families that I knew, the parents really stayed on top of their children. It was like you didn't have the opportunities because of not having the monetary source. They didn't have their own car. So there were a lot of amenities and perks that the white kids had that the blacks didn't. So most of the blacks when I grew up lived in a particular section of town, and it reminds me a little bit of Marin City. I mean, where the blacks migrated or whatever and made their own little city or part of town.

Carolyn Krauss: And you didn't live in that part?

Shirley Hasley: No, we lived out on the farm. We lived way out. It was wayyy out. Wayyyy out.

Carolyn Krauss: So high school. Was it a long distance?

Shirley Hasley: It was. And we had to walk quite a distance, because the paved roads stopped at a certain point. The bus would not go on unpaved road. So we had to either get a ride up to where the bus stop was, or walk. I was thinking about that the other night, how I really have to go back and measure the distance, because it seemed like it was *such* a long way. And it *was* a long walk. But probably not as long as I thought it was.

Carolyn Krauss: Did you walk with your brothers and sisters?

Shirley Hasley: Walked with my brothers and sisters? Yes. It was early rising and early to bed as well.

Carolyn Krauss: In high school, was that the first chance you had where there were students who were also black in the class?

Shirley Hasley: The high school was very close to the black part of town. So it's nothing new for me to be called the Uncle Tom. That was part of what happened when I came to Mill Valley. But in high school, it was because I stuck with the friends that I'd had.

Carolyn Krauss: So having friends who were white was the way that you would be called Uncle Tom?

Shirley Hasley: Well, if I associated predominately with them and not with the blacks. But they were my friends. I wanted an education, and we were always taught that that's why you went to school. So going to school wasn't to look pretty, per se — to have the best dress or the hair or the lips and that kind of thing. But it was there to study. So my job was to get an education.

Carolyn Krauss: Did you already have feelings that you might be interested in teaching?

Shirley Hasley: No. I was fascinated when I was young with the word "bacteriology." And for some reason, when I heard that word, it had a ring and a rhythm. So I thought, "I like the sound of that word, and that's what I think I want to do." Because growing up with all the siblings and foster children and all, to me teaching was taking care of, and being next to the oldest I'd done a lot of taking care of. So I really didn't think that I wanted to do teaching because that would be taking care of. So, no. Bacteriology it was.

Carolyn Krauss: Were sciences tough in high school?

Shirley Hasley: Well, at that time there wasn't a major or a minor, but you were placed in a track. You either had college prep or the regular — I'm trying to think of the word. There was bookkeeping and the trades kind of track. So I had the college prep track and so there were certain things that you had to do — the algebra, geometry, advanced trig. Those were all part of that track. The hardest thing for me was to select a language at that time. There was Spanish offered, and Russian. To me Russian was so far out. I thought, "Russian! When would you ever use Russian?" And then there was French and whatever. But my parents suggested Spanish, because being in that area, probably Spanish would be the language that you'd use more often. So I chose Spanish. And that sort of labeled me "Uncle Tom," being in the college track. There were very, very few — maybe one or two — other blacks that ever did the college prep.

Carolyn Krauss: Did your brothers and sisters also?

Shirley Hasley: They all did. Yeah. Most of my brothers, all but two — I have seven brothers — graduated from USC. So we were all actually — most of our family was involved in sports, so they ran track. I ran track. In high school, I was on the tennis team, and in fact I'm going to meet my — I played first at doubles with a gal that I'm going to meet next Monday, after about, what? 35 years. That's going to be fun — my tennis partner. But matriculating was the thing for our family. So for me, being in the student government as well — I graduated valedictorian of my class.

Carolyn Krauss: In high school.

Shirley Hasley: In high school. Yes.

Carolyn Krauss: College?

Shirley Hasley: You know, it was difficult because — at that time, it was difficult to go away. I sort-of wanted to stay at home, because it was a time in I think my parents' life too that if I didn't have the full scholarship and all, would have put a real strain.

Carolyn Krauss: Strain.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Because I was the second. I was near the top, and to go away — Bakersfield College had a wonderful reputation, so I could go there and still be close at home. So I did go to Bakersfield Junior College and loved every bit of that. I also, in high school, loved speech, and so I was on the forensic team and we traveled all over with our team. So when I started Bakersfield Junior College, there was an opening, and I ended up having a radio program during my two years at Bakersfield College. And it was called Collegiate Close-Up. So I would interview different students around campus, and it was aired. That was fun.

Carolyn Krauss: That was great! Your own radio show!

Shirley Hasley: I did. It was called Collegiate Close-Up. And then when I graduated from Bakersfield Junior College, Willie Brown, our local Willie Brown, had a law partner in Bakersfield, Gabe Solomon. So I received their scholarship, so that's how I ended up coming to San Francisco State, because of Willie Brown. Then he and his partner sponsored me as a debutante, so I was introduced to society.

Carolyn Krauss: Isn't that something. So, a ball?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah, a ball. Yes. I had to take lessons on how to curtsy and walk down the stairs without looking down, and the gown, and so forth. So that was fun.

Carolyn Krauss: Willie Brown was not mayor yet. Or was he?

Shirley Hasley: No, he wasn't. Oh, no, no, no, no. He was just an attorney and he hadn't even gone to Sacramento yet. Those were in the heydays.

Carolyn Krauss: He singled you out.

Shirley Hasley: Well, it was because I guess I had the grades and all. And because, I think, my family's — there were so many of us that getting the scholarship was really a good thing. I kind of laugh because when I came to San Francisco, Divisadero at that time was really jumping and it was the spot to be. So I remember Willie Brown, and I can't remember the car. It was a red. I want to say maybe it was a Corvette. I don't know. But anyway, he took me to a couple of spots, and introduced me to Nancy Wilson and Ella Fitzgerald.

Carolyn Krauss: Was Nancy Wilson in the Supremes? No, Nancy Wilson in her own right.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Nancy Wilson. And Ella Fitzgerald.

Carolyn Krauss: Right there.

Shirley Hasley: Well, there was this little place called — I think it was called The Playpen. It was a club. So a lot of well-known —

Carolyn Krauss: You met Ella Fitzgerald.

Shirley Hasley: Yes. So that was interesting. And then I went to San Francisco State. When I graduated, the times were starting with the protests and all.

Carolyn Krauss: In the '60s?

Shirley Hasley: The '60s. Yeah. It was '63, when I came.

Carolyn Krauss: Really heating up then, wasn't it?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Then I graduated in '65. I remember being on campus when the word had come that President Kennedy had been shot. That really got a lot of people's attention and so forth. But the opportunities I think for blacks were a lot more open, because of the awareness. I had never been into Marin County before that time, but a couple of my classmates said, "Well, you know, there's some really wonderful schools across the Golden Gate Bridge, and you should go over there." So I did. The first place that I stopped was in Mill Valley. To me, it was paradise. I mean, coming through the bridge, and at that time there was a rainbow I think painted on the tunnel, and above the tunnel you could see the deer and the hillsides were lush. It was before the drought.

Everything was lush and whatever. And then once you got through the tunnel there was Sausalito. It was like paradise. And I thought, “Oooh. This is quite nice.”

So I stopped in at the district office, and the superintendent at that time was Bob McConnell, I believe, and he said, “I think we’re going to be hiring, and I’d like for you to go to Park School.” Glenn Skelton was the principal at Park School, and he said, “Do an interview with him.” They called right away and I went to Park School. It was interesting because my parents had always said to do your best, to not cave in just because everybody else is doing it. Just be genuine. Be yourself. So when I interviewed with Doctor — but I don’t think he was a doctor then, but he later became a doctor — Skelton, Glenn Skelton, I said, “I really want to be hired for me and what I can offer, what I can do, and not as a token. I don’t want to be the token.” So he was very impressed with my résumé and he said, “We’d like to hire you.” Yes! So my first interview, I was hired.

Carolyn Krauss: Were you still in college?

Shirley Hasley: I was ready to graduate from San Francisco State. So what happened was that, before I could — well, I actually didn’t teach at Park School my first year, because Mill Valley at that time was prepping for a desegregation program. So that was that they had parents who were willing to have their children bused into Marin City, and there was an exchange program. Dr. Miles, Logan Miles, was the principal, and then there was the head teacher, Jim Martin, who represented Mill Valley. So the kids were bused. There were fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth graders bused from Mill Valley into Marin City.

Carolyn Krauss: And vice versa.

Shirley Hasley: No. The white kids were bused into Marin City. No black kids came into Mill Valley. No. It wasn’t.

Carolyn Krauss: What year was this, roughly?

Shirley Hasley: 1965, ’66. But before I went to Marin City, there were rumblings that there was this black teacher that had been hired by Mill Valley, and so the word was out. “Well, we don’t know if she’s smart enough. We don’t know if her speech is proper enough to teach our children. You know how those blacks are.” So there were some parents who began sort-of a protest, that they didn’t want their children in my classroom. Well, the superintendent said, “You know, she is hired. She has a contract, and so she will be teaching.”

Carolyn Krauss: What grade were they?

Shirley Hasley: Actually, I was going to teach second grade. It was going to be second grade. But before that happened, they thought, well, because of the rumblings that had begun, that they should put me with the boys and girls that were going to Marin City, and

that would really make everything okay. But it didn't. Because when I got to Marin City to teach, sort-of the same thing that happened, I remember, from my high school, that, here's an Uncle Tom. She's hired by Mill Valley and coming over as a do-gooder. So it was tension.

Carolyn Krauss: Were you living in San Francisco at the time?

Shirley Hasley: I was living in San Francisco at the time.

Carolyn Krauss: So you were driving over the bridge to Marin City.

Shirley Hasley: I would drive over every day. Actually, I think a lot of it was part of the age gap. I mean, I was very close — because I was just hired, I was just out of college — and you've got eighth grade girls. And so there was a lot of tension between me and the eighth grade girls, because at that time of their lives, you know, they're interested in the older guys and maybe a little bit of jealousy. "Oh, I have Miss Andrews, I have Miss —." You know, it was that kind-of attitude. And then they would do little things like, everybody would cough at quarter after. Or whatever. But they were, even at that time in their education, not really interested in being educated. It was there to look good for the boys or to whatever, and to just be out.

Carolyn Krauss: Is that the grade you were teaching? Eighth grade?

Shirley Hasley: Well, actually, when I went to Richardson Bay School [in Marin City] at the time — and they really hadn't prepared anything for me. So I was sort-of thrust into this doing everything. My first year of teaching, I taught fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth. I taught fifth grade drama, sixth grade literature — I think it was — seventh grade creative writing, and eighth grade girls' PE. I did those my first year of teaching. But you know what? It was a prepping ground for me, because having done that, it prepared me even more to face anything that I was going to face.

Carolyn Krauss: These classes were integrated then?

Shirley Hasley: They were integrated with the kids from Mill Valley.

Carolyn Krauss: How did that seem, from your perspective?

Shirley Hasley: Well, you know, most kids are color-blind. Unless they're taught, they don't — so I think the kids that came from Mill Valley, their parents were already the good guys, so there were not kids who were, you could say the word, prejudiced. There were parents who had agreed to let their children go, and so that part of it was wonderful. Because if you'd had kids that were prejudiced or their parents or whatever, it would have, I think, been a whole different [experience]. But the black kids had no choice. I mean, they weren't selected to come to. So there was kind of an invasion of their privacy

and being on their turf, and so forth. But toward the end, it did work out. I was told at one point not to be in Marin City after dark if I knew what was good for me.

Carolyn Krauss: Who were?

Shirley Hasley: These were blacks, saying it. Because they thought that — because I was young and maybe a threat to picking up a black man or guy. And I wasn't married at the time. I don't know. It was very difficult. So there was just two — all they could see was, here I was coming with the whites. No matter what I did, coming with the whites was not a good thing. I ended up getting the tires on my car slashed, and there was sugar in the gas tank.

Carolyn Krauss: This was while you were at the Richardson School?

Shirley Hasley: Yes. This was while I was at Richardson Bay.

Carolyn Krauss: With the sugar in the gas tank, doesn't that cause a potential explosion?

Shirley Hasley: Well, it just ruins your car. I mean, it goes through the, you know. So I ended up having to have a little bit of — I call it police protection, because they would kind-of keep an eye on my car.

Carolyn Krauss: The police in Marin City?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. So it ended up I got a Volkswagen, because the gas tank and all was underneath the front. I mean, back then, you know, the little Bug? So I ended up getting a little Bug that was kind of to make sure that that wasn't going to happen again.

Carolyn Krauss: I want to imagine the scenes here. The first thing that happened was your tires were slashed. So you came out of school at the end of the day, and they're all flat.

Shirley Hasley: Flat.

Carolyn Krauss: And you probably had been teaching three months?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. It had been a while.

Carolyn Krauss: And was your reaction to want to scream or just weep or —?

Shirley Hasley: You know what? We were always taught to turn the other cheek.

Carolyn Krauss: Just call and get it fixed?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah.

Carolyn Krauss: Did you try to pursue who had done it?

Shirley Hasley: Not really, because I didn't want to — I've always been the quiet person who just sort-of persists and whatever and *not* caused the scene or *not* caused the problem. So trying to discover who had done that just puts you more in the spotlight, which I didn't want to be. And then when the car was, you know — of course it was hard, because I had just started teaching. I didn't have very much money and so forth. And so it did put a hardship on me. But again, turn the other cheek.

Carolyn Krauss: Were your colleagues supportive?

Shirley Hasley: They were. They were, but I think the colleagues that were with me in Marin City, not Mill Valley — not Mill Valley.

Carolyn Krauss: And the sugar in the gas tank, you started your car and you started driving then.

Shirley Hasley: No. It just sputtered.

Carolyn Krauss: Nothing started.

Shirley Hasley: It just sputtered. So I was told that sugar or something was put in the gas tank.

Carolyn Krauss: Did you fear for your safety?

Shirley Hasley: At one point, but again, we were always told that God would protect us. And if we were killed or we were whatever it was, it was God's will.

Carolyn Krauss: Because at the same time, just thinking about what's going on in the country — you have the Freedom Riders, you have the black students being killed, and white students were — I mean, the tension in the country was high.

Shirley Hasley: It was. But there wasn't really the fear. I don't know why. I just felt that when I crossed that Golden Gate Bridge and was offered the contract, that [unintelligible]. I think too, part of the training that we had was that there are no mistakes, and so sometimes it seems like a mistake, but it really isn't because it's preparing you for what else is to come or whatever. And so to me there were not mistakes. They were stepping stones for what was to come. My job was to teach and that's what I tried to do.

Carolyn Krauss: So how did Marin City then turn into Mill Valley?

Shirley Hasley: It only ended up being a year in Marin City. There were too many problems with the busing — I think the administrative part of it. I think at the beginning it was thought to be a good idea, but in reality it wasn't the ebb and flow. As you mentioned, the Marin City kids were not coming into Mill Valley and so forth. And the Marin City kids, their only entry into Mill Valley was at the high school, basically. So they only came to Mill Valley when they started Tam High. So because of not having thought through the entire process, it was very short-lived. But for me, I look back at it as being the rock, for me, because it got me grounded in a way that I never would have probably gotten grounded anywhere else.

Then the next year I came back into Mill Valley to teach. I was going to teach second grade. That was open. I had worked most of the summer to get ready for second grade, and then somebody came back from leave and wanted second grade, and because they had seniority, I ended up teaching fourth grade. So that was kind of a little quirk, because there's a whole different prep for that. But again, there are no mistakes, and it turned out that some of my fondest memories of students came in that first year.

Carolyn Krauss: At Park School?

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Clifford Waldeck was in my class, who ended up being the mayor of Mill Valley. Other students — but it was a very interesting time. Even when I came back, having taught that one year in Marin City, there were parents who *still* were not convinced that I was smart enough to teach their children. There were a couple of parents that really wanted to get something going but they didn't get the kind of support that they wanted, and so it didn't snowball as much.

Carolyn Krauss: You mean going against you?

Shirley Hasley: Yes. Yes. So I started that year. I wanted to move to Mill Valley, and so there was a place available. It was on East Manor. Whoever was either showing or taking care of the property said, "Well, we don't know what neighbors will think. We don't know." I said, "For God's sake, I'm teaching here at Park School and I would really like to get into this area so I don't have to commute." Well, it went back and forth, back and forth, and finally they decided that they would rent to me. But before I could move in some windows were broken at the house, and I was told that there would be a cross burned on the lawn if I moved in.

Carolyn Krauss: That's horrendous.

Shirley Hasley: That frightened me. That was one of the first things I think that really frightened me because that was really the kind of threat that was unnerving. So I decided not to even pursue it. I could have. I could have gone to the agencies who were at that time fighting for equality and so forth, but I decided, again, because we were taught that you weren't to ruffle the feathers. You turned the other cheek. So I lived in the city.

Carolyn Krauss: That must have been a very bitter pill to swallow.

Shirley Hasley: It was hard.

Carolyn Krauss: Because you're teaching the children of whites.

Shirley Hasley: But I had some really good support. There were some parents in there that were just delightful. Every time we see each other we still hug or whatever and reminisce about the first year that I taught at Park School.

Carolyn Krauss: Well it also seems like it would be a very proud time. You're pioneering something.

Shirley Hasley: But I didn't know at the time. I never even thought of being the first black teacher for a long time. It never even dawned on me that I was doing this. It was a job, and I was at the right place at the right time. Or the wrong time. So that first year, actually, I met a young man when I was teaching in Marin City, and the next year, when I came back to Park, we decided to get married. My first class at Park, oh, they were so excited, because Miss Andrews was going to get married. So they planned the wedding and so forth. But in the interim, when I was leaving school one afternoon, I was stopped and was asked if I wanted to participate in a commercial that was being made. And I said, "Oh, I don't know. I'm getting married." This was December. I said, "I'm getting married December 17th and I just don't know." And they said, "If you *do*, you can come to New York for your honeymoon."

Carolyn Krauss: How were you selected for this?

Shirley Hasley: Well, I was just walking. I was leaving school. And what they wanted was — it was for Coca Cola, and it was their campaign "If you don't believe Coke has the taste you never get tired of, then ask a —." They chose different people from different professions. So Don Cherry, who was one of the executive directors in Coca-Cola, lived here in Mill Valley. He said, "Perfect! A teacher! We'll have a teacher as one of our occupations."

Carolyn Krauss: And did he know you?

Shirley Hasley: No, he didn't. He just asked if I would be interested. And so I said, "I'm getting married. I can't." And he said, "Well, let me take a Polaroid shot of you and I'll send it to New York, and if they like you then we'll talk further." So that was on a Friday. Well, on Monday when I got to school, they called from New York and they said, "We like you. Would you participate in this campaign?" Of course everybody *then* thought that they were going to use the kids in my class and all, and to me I used that part of my teaching as acceptance in a most unusual way — how acceptance came. Because then *everybody* wanted me because they thought that their kids would be in the commercial and whatever — they were going to use Park School.

But there was a little bit of, I call it trickery, in there, because they didn't use the Mill Valley scene. It would cost more to do the commercial here because all of the kids that would be used, unless they were already in the system, would have to have the parental release, the payments, the whatever, and it was easier to just fly me to New York and do the commercial.

So that's what happened. They flew me to New York. I was photographed by a very famous photographer, Richard Avedon.

Carolyn Krauss: Really? Wow! Do you have the picture?

Shirley Hasley: I do. It's in the — yeah. It was on the tape.

Carolyn Krauss: Yes. Actually, I do remember that, which I meant to bring but I forgot.

Shirley Hasley: So anyway, I was photographed by Richard Avedon.

Carolyn Krauss: Wow! Richard Avedon.

Shirley Hasley: Yes, it was quite something.

Carolyn Krauss: In his studio?

Shirley Hasley: In his studio. My husband, he loved horses, and so he didn't go with me because he [unintelligible].

Carolyn Krauss: You were still engaged at this point. Or had you —

Shirley Hasley: I had gotten married. I got married and it was right after I got married December 17th, and then it was the 21st or something. Because I wanted to do this and get back because we had the break, the Christmas break. So they put me up at the Plaza Hotel — it was the Plaza Hotel then. So I stayed at the Plaza Hotel. They got a horse for me and I did part of the commercial riding in Central Park with my horse, and then we went to Dalton High School and photographed there. So it was this whirlwind, you know, flying into New York, having a taxi to pick me up.

It was wonderful. And then Richard Avedon asked me if I was interested — because he was doing a spread for Vogue magazine — if I was interested. “But,” he said, “You know, you've got to lose weight, because you photograph a lot heavier than you are.” And that was kind of a point that I wasn't quite sold on. But anyway, that didn't work out, but the Coca-Cola commercial was sort of the beginning of being accepted into —

Carolyn Krauss: A little glamour associated with you.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. So then every time then after — there were several other commercials that I did that the kids or the parents were hoping that they were going to use the class. I did a Kodak one, and they used Park School auditorium for that. And McLean's toothpaste.

Carolyn Krauss: Now these other ones. How did they come to you?

Shirley Hasley: Well, once you do a commercial, if you want to, you can get an agent. So Ogilvie and Mather were representing me. I could have done more, but then you have to join the union. It's a whole process, and when you're teaching it's not so easy just when they call you at eleven o'clock and say, "Can you be here at 1?" It's not so easy. So I had to make a choice. And I decided that that was not really what I wanted to do, because actually doing the commercials was a lot harder than teaching. Because in the commercial, they're only interested in their product, so the bottle had to be spritzed with the glycerin or whatever, so that it sparkled. And then they had special bottles. They have one that only has the Coke insignia on it so that when you're photographing you see only the Coke. If Coca-Cola is behind, then the image is not — they've got the special bottles that are made especially for the commercial. One bottle has only Coke, the other has Coca-Cola. Then you switch back and forth for that. Coke at that time really wasn't dark enough to photograph well, so they put a little color in it to make it darker. And you're on, and when they go, "Retake. Retake," or whatever — and the lights. It's very difficult work. So I was happy to get back to teaching full time.

Carolyn Krauss: It must be a nice thing. The students must have just thought that was very glamorous.

Shirley Hasley: They did — "Oh, my teacher, my teacher, my teacher —." Yes. So that was how acceptance, I think, came for me.

Carolyn Krauss: So it was fourth grade, and then the commercial happened. Did you stay in the fourth grade?

Shirley Hasley: I stayed in fourth grade for a couple of years, I think, and then went down to first grade. I taught first grade for a while, and second grade, and first grade, and then basically the rest of my teaching was either first, second or third.

Carolyn Krauss: And all at Park School?

Shirley Hasley: No. I was at Park School for 26 years. I don't know if I should say this on tape. We had a principal. Our principal retired. We got a new principal. And then I was told that I wasn't going to fit in to the new wave of teaching. I had always been taught that reading — the fundamentals of reading — were paramount, along with math skills and so forth. But there was this new whole language coming in. Not that I didn't embrace that, but I knew from experience that when kids were taught some phonics, the basic reading elements, that no matter where or what they picked up, they would be able

to read. So the new whole language was that there was a lot more memory. It was memorizing easy predictable books and so forth. And so a heavy emphasis on phonics wasn't where it was at.

So I was transferred. I really thought that my world had come to an end, because for me I had always envisioned that I would retire from Park School. That's where I began. Again, remember that there are no mistakes. And blessings come in disguises in many ways. Well, this person didn't know that they were really doing me a wonderful favor. Because moving to Edna Maguire School was opening up this wonderful door that I had never been privy to before, because I had been at Park School all of those years and I think I had one or two black children that had gone through Park School. It was basically white. Going to Edna Maguire School, there was this rainbow that awaited me. So although I loved Park School, I got to Edna Maguire School. My classroom at Park was on Blithedale, right on Blithedale, so the noise, the pollution that was in our classroom because of the backup from the traffic — because they put the light there at Park School. Going to Edna Maguire School — Horse Hill behind us — no traffic noise — garden. It was heaven! Plus there were kids who weren't the [unintelligible]. Well, when I was at Park School the kids would say this: "Well, the hill dwellers and the flatlands —" or whatever. I mean, they made distinctions as well. So here, coming to Edna Maguire, it was sort-of snubbed at the beginning, I think, that they were the flatlands and the whatever. But it was this wonderful mix for me. So having had the opportunity to be moved in a way that wasn't pleasant turned out to be a wonderful experience.

Carolyn Krauss: Yeah. What grade were you moved to?

Shirley Hasley: I was teaching first at the time but I was moved to second. Which was okay, because it's actually much easier to teach than first; in first grade you're teaching the basics in every area — almost. I consider first grade one of the most difficult to teach because in kindergarten, they're still the center of the universe. Everything revolves around them. When you come to first grade you've got to step out of that and start assuming some responsibilities — real sharing. Not "me me me" for every occasion. So teaching second was just a wonderful experience. Although I hadn't really taught it in a while, I could easily move up to it. But before I actually started that summer, the stress was such that I got very ill. My first year that I transferred to Edna I didn't teach, because I was sick. I ended up having surgery the first day of school, and then they said, "Well, it'll be four to six weeks," and it turned into almost the entire year.

Carolyn Krauss: Well, after 26 years it probably was a real shock to have that.

Shirley Hasley: Well, it was. And to be told that you weren't valuable — I had been contemplating, because I watched a lot of my colleagues and other friends work too long. There's a time when you have to say goodbye. So I had been monitoring, and I knew that it wasn't time for me to say goodbye, and that I still had a lot of offer. So again, I think the faith kept me focused. And then there was this wonderful friend of mine, Bonnie Frieberg, who stepped in, and because I was not going to be able to start that year as

planned, helped set up my classroom and got it going for me. To her I will ever be grateful for stepping in and helping me.

Carolyn Krauss: Was there a reaction among parents at Park School, the Park School community?

Shirley Hasley: Well, a lot of them were so shocked and mostly, I think it was done right at the end of the year and there wasn't time later. A lot of the parents and people involved in the arts said, "If we had known, we would have liked to give you a proper goodbye." But as I said, there are no mistakes. I think the agony would have been intensified had I had more time to think about the move. So it came at the very ending of the school year and so it was. That was the one time, though. I had always said that I didn't want to fight or I didn't want to whatever, but I questioned the way that it was done. When I talked to the union, they said, "Well, it's within the guidelines, the timeframe." And so by choosing the beginning of June to say goodbye, there's July and August. So the transfer was made; it was thought out. It was thought through before. But the thing that I questioned for a long time is that — here in Mill Valley there's the whole idea of self esteem and that's what we were encouraged to have boys and girls have: self esteem. And here, the way I was being moved, was not giving me the self esteem. So it was very difficult.

Carolyn Krauss: It's an interesting element of that — this idea of the whole language changing in teaching. I wasn't aware of it. When you got to Edna Maguire was that still enforced?

Shirley Hasley: Not really. I did both. I always did both. But I think when there are a lot of new trends that come and they go, very often the baby is thrown out with the bath water. So for me, there are just certain parts. In fact, today, almost any child that was ever in my classroom, if you meet them and you ask them what they remember, they'll say, "Oh, those little Super Books that Mrs. Hasley did." And they were phonics based, but you learn so that if you have the A-N, "an," immediately you can put the C on, and have "can," "pan," "man," whatever. So kids would say, "I can't read, I can't read," and you look at that and you say, "An, can." You're reading! So for me it was teaching that reading wasn't just picking up the book and per se reading, but if you can read colors, you can read — you know, that's "red." You read it! You can read if you're sad. Reading comes in so many different formats and forms. It's not always just in the book. But by having, I think, little ways of having kids have immediate success was very important. And so by sort-of throwing that out with the bath water — I couldn't do that. I couldn't do it.

I felt that I was strong enough and I'd been in the district long enough that I could still do some of those things, and so when I got to Edna Maguire it was embraced as, "Remember when I was little and my parents were talking about well-rounded and you have to have all." To me, that's well-rounded, because you've got the basic foundation to attack any word.

I told the kids the little things. I said, “When I was in second grade I remember my second grade teacher saying, you know, ‘I before E except after C’ and a lot of those things aren’t taught any more but they’re little.” And I said, “Even when I’m writing today — receive, receipt — I do that in my head, those little things.” So combining that with — and we were very fortunate in Mill Valley to have our IMC. It’s the Instructional Materials Center. So there was just an abundance of literature titles that the teacher could check out, and they made sure that there were enough copies for every student in the classroom to have. So we could do that. Having a rich literature experience was possible, so that’s what I used to supplement my phonics.

Carolyn Krauss: I wanted to talk a little bit too about the town of Mill Valley. You moved here at some point.

Shirley Hasley: I did. Here in Tam Valley.

Carolyn Krauss: Tam Valley. So when did that happen? When did you leave San Francisco and then become part of Mill Valley?

Shirley Hasley: Well, actually I didn’t. I’ve lived several places. When I left San Francisco, I came to Fairfax. I lived in Fairfax for a while.

Carolyn Krauss: With your husband? Was this after you were married?

Shirley Hasley: Yes. Fairfax, and then he was store manager for Mayfair Markets at that time.

Carolyn Krauss: And what’s his name?

Shirley Hasley: Jim.

Carolyn Krauss: Jim. Jim Hasley.

Shirley Hasley: Jim Hasley. And we moved several places, and eventually we divorced. We had moved to San Francisco but then I came back to Marin, and rented in Tiburon. So I lived in Tiburon for many years. And then finally at Shelter Bay and then I met my husband now, Frederick, and he owned the house here in Tam Valley which he bought in 1965. But on the teacher’s salary it was very difficult at that time to buy. If I had bought early, that would have been possible, but later on in my career, to buy a house in Mill Valley was not.

Carolyn Krauss: I was going to say — what was the — because right now it’s just outrageous. But when you moved here, is there sort of a general sense of how Marin and Mill Valley have changed? Are there major changes that you’ve noticed?

Shirley Hasley: Yes and no. Do you mean as far as the attitude?

Carolyn Krauss: Maybe. I think I heard that it was sort of a bohemian place, more in the '60s and '70s.

Shirley Hasley: When I first came, there were still a lot of — sort of — Mill Valley was the country home.

Carolyn Krauss: Yeah. That's where your country home — that you lived in the city and then you came on the weekends.

Shirley Hasley: Yes, to Mill Valley. And then the changes. I guess I missed a lot of that because I didn't live in Mill Valley. When you're young the city is *very* appealing. So I didn't actually move back to Mill Valley until, let's see — it was in the '80s, I guess. And then Frederick and I got married early '90s, and I've then been here since — here in Tam Valley since '90. But the city itself has changed tremendously with Mega. Everything has to be Mega — the Mega homes, the Mega cars, the Mega whatever — is kind of overriding the original intent of Mill Valley. And I think it's aptly put that it's not Mill Valley anymore, it's "Me" Valley. I don't know if you've heard that term: "Me" Valley, because of the affluence that's here. Even when I was teaching. I retired in 2003. But the travel opportunities — all kinds of opportunities — that the children have here are just mind boggling. And so even by second grade they've traveled way more than a lot of — certainly me — have traveled in my lifetime. So, in just, experiences.

But I think the one goal that I had when I was teaching was to make sure that I always gave 100 percent to whatever I was doing. And a lot of times — well, actually, most of the time — I felt that I had to be better than most teachers even to be recognized. I've had a lot of comments. "Oh, you left early," or, "You came late," and it's really easy to be recognized when you're the only black. So if you come late to a meeting, it's easy to know that you came late. Or if I left early, it was easy to know that I left early.

Carolyn Krauss: You felt you stood out.

Shirley Hasley: I did. So being like in that fishbowl, to make sure that every child was — I mean, I think I would have done it anyway, but it seemed like always a burden on me to have the best bulletin board. And I guess there's a certain perfection — I lean toward the perfectionist spectrum — and that made, I think, teaching for me a little bit harder. Because that's part of me, but also being black added to that, and so there was a certain stress level that was always there. But toward the end at Edna, there were just some wonderful things that happened. I kind of look at my teaching as, there's this cyclical nature of how it went around to the beginning of the circle again. I was hired at Park School. The night of the board meeting when I announced that I was going to retire was at Park School, and the board meetings go around. And it wasn't planned that way, but it's like, no mistakes, and so having the announcement at Park School was quite emotional.

I remember my first day at Park School. There was this little boy that said, "Oh, when my mom sees you, is she going to be mad!" And I'm thinking, "Oh, it's true!"

“Why do you say that?” “Because my mom worked all summer to get brown and she’s not nearly as brown as you!” So that was cute. But it turned out to be actually a really good year at Park. And then one of my last days at Edna — Edna Maguire School has pods, and the pod that I was teaching in was quite a distance from the office. The teachers just used the bathrooms that were at the end, so that the kids and teachers were using the same facility. I hear this little, “Hello, Mrs. Hasley.” And I said, “How did you know it was me?” “Well, because I see your chocolate legs.” So it sort-of has been this struggle at the beginning, but at the end — the acceptance. Whereas at the beginning there was the protest, kind of, “We don’t want, we don’t want” and at the end, “Please teach one more year. I wanted my little one to have you. I want it.” It turned out that coming to Mill Valley was no mistake. A lot of people ask me, “What are you going to do? You know, retire?”

But I’ve been busier now than I had been. One of the things that I’m working on is on the affordable housing committee, because I realize that teachers, on their salary, can’t afford to buy here. But also my parents were so giving in their lifetime that we’ve converted our family home into — we call it Aunt Cora’s Home. My mother’s name was Cora. And it’s a haven for battered women.

Carolyn Krauss: Oh, good for you.

Shirley Hasley: So I will be spending a lot of my time and energy.

Carolyn Krauss: Is that just starting up?

Shirley Hasley: It’s just starting up. We’ll have an open house the week of June 10th, I believe.

Carolyn Krauss: Wow. You have a lot to be proud of. Really. It’s a privilege to get to hear about this.

Shirley Hasley: Anyway, that’s my story.

Carolyn Krauss: That’s fabulous. I think this is beyond even our wildest hopes. Aside from our wonderful conversation is there anything that I’ve neglected to ask?

Shirley Hasley: I don’t know. I was just going to ask *you* that, if there’s anything —

Carolyn Krauss: These were just the points I didn’t want to miss, and I think we’ve covered the basic ones on my list.

Shirley Hasley: Oh, I was thinking of one of the things that I didn’t — I didn’t think of this at the beginning, but toward the waning years of teaching, there was one sort of prize that I always wanted, and that was to be Number One on the seniority list. And there were a couple of teachers, boy, who just hung in there and wouldn’t retire. And I’m looking at my clock and saying “Nnnnnnnnononono, you can’t be here too long, Shirley.”

So finally that prize was awarded me. I was Number One on the seniority list. I don't know if that's an honor, but I taught 38 years. It was 38 years in Mill Valley. It was an honor, really, to be able to hang in there for that many years and be Number One on the seniority list. I know a lot of teachers who have had the opportunity of generational teaching, and that was the other thing, to be there long enough that you had the child and then you teach *their* child.

Carolyn Krauss: You got to do that.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Those were two things that, once you get into it, you kind of look forward to, I think.

Carolyn Krauss: Rewards.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Yeah.

Carolyn Krauss: Speaking of children, I neglected to ask, but were you raising a family at the same time? Or were the students your children?

Shirley Hasley: They were, and I have one daughter.

Carolyn Krauss: And your daughter's name is?

Shirley Hasley: Johle.

Carolyn Krauss: And what's her —?

Shirley Hasley: Well, she has always — not been totally happy with me. Not happy because I have 12 brothers and sisters and she's an only child. So she's, "You always have somebody to talk to and you always have somebody to, whatever, and I don't have anybody." She would have liked to have had a sibling. But for us, there are 13 of us and we only have 13 children among us. So we didn't go there. Some didn't have any, but some had three or four. Among our immediate family there are 13 grandchildren. But now the grandchildren are replenishing the earth.

Carolyn Krauss: It just continues on.

Shirley Hasley: Yeah. Yeah. One of the things that I always did in my classroom was to do a quilt, and so there are some really spectacular quilts. The two that really stand out are — one is called "Mill Valleyopoly." We got a grant from Kiddo! and went to all the businesses in Mill Valley, and then the children made a playing board of the different businesses. They made their own money, their own pieces, and so forth. I'm really thinking of donating that to the History Room. The other one is a dragon quilt. It was the year 2000, and it was the 100th birthday of Mill Valley. I was teaching a two-three combo. I did combo classes for a long time too. I did the one-two and the two-three, but

this was a two-three combo. And it turned out wonderfully because I had 10 third graders and 10 second graders, and the third graders — for their Mill Valley history project — we designed a dragon quilt. They traced their hands for the scales and it's displayed in the district office. I don't know if you've ever been there. You need to go see this quilt. Each of the children took a decade from Mill Valley history and so under the large scales on the dragon, as you lift them up, you will find facts — the sixties, the seventies, the eighties, the nineties. It was wonderful. I think one of the things that the kids really enjoyed was the facts that kept coming up. And they go, "Oh, well, Ms. Hasley was the first black teacher" — because they put that in. And then, "Oh, Ms. Hasley got the Terwilliger Award" — and put that. It's interesting when you're a part of the history that the kids are.

Carolyn Krauss: What's the Terwilliger Award?

Shirley Hasley: Well, there's an award given every year to a teacher through the Terwilliger Foundation. You've done something that either has contributed to conservation of nature — you know, Mrs. Terwilliger was a wonderful person who fought to keep the wetlands — the marshes — and taught children for many years in Mill Valley. And they give the Golden Bell Award each year to a teacher. I got that before I retired.

Carolyn Krauss: It's been a rich career. That's continuing on now.

Shirley Hasley: Still going on. Well, as long as you live, I think, you continue to find ways that maybe you can still contribute or that were not so easily done when you were working full-time. So now's the time to do that. And I enjoy the Outdoor Art Club because that also helps with maintaining the history of Mill Valley.

Carolyn Krauss: The Mill Valley Outdoor Art Club?

Shirley Hasley: Yes. So that's about it.

Carolyn Krauss: Well, thank you again. I'm really inspired, and I think the people who read this will also be.

Shirley Hasley: Thank you.