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Salters, Donna collection

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Havana History and Heritage Society

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Summary Information

Repository:	Havana History and Heritage Society
Title:	Donna Salters collection
ID:	21.0003
Date [inclusive]:	1961-2021
Physical Description:	1 Files 1 file
Language of the Material:	English .
Mixed Materials [Box]:	Single Folder Collections - 2021 Box 1
[Folder]:	21.0003-Folder 1

Preferred Citation

Donna Salters Collection, Havana History and Heritage Society, Havana, FL.

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Biographical / Historical

Donna Salters grew up in Havana, Florida in one of the many communities that make up the city. She was born on January 23, 1961. She grew up on "the other side", in the uptown area, which she describes as the better-off of the poor people. Salters is one of 9 children: 5 boys followed by 4 girls, all less than 2 years apart in age. Salters was a cheerleader and all of her siblings were athletes: playing football, basketball, and baseball. Their mother was a housekeeper in Havana then in Tallahassee who raised her children almost by herself. Their father was not as involved or supportive as their mother was. Salters' parents were moving to South Florida when they stopped to visit her father's parents in Quincy and never left Havana. Some of Salters' older brothers eventually joined the military and were able to send money back home, while the rest of the kids followed a list of chores that their mother would leave.

Growing up, Salters did not fully understand the rampant racism that ran through the United States. Her mother protected them and avoided bringing it into the house. However, the topic

was not entirely avoidable: Salters was in high school in the early 1970s, very shortly after integration. While in high school, Salters and her siblings were not wonderful students because they did not realize the importance of education. One of the more important things Salters was able to learn at school was family and consumer science. Home demonstration programs, along with HBCUs, are something Salters is passionate about. These programs - like home economics - have led to women carrying the home with the important skills they learn.

The community that Salters grew up in was extremely tight-knit and entertaining. The camaraderie of the community and not knowing anything else meant, for Salters at least, that she had a good time working in the tobacco fields. Different characters of the community were heavily involved in everyone else's lives, such as Mr. David and Hubert Davis. Mr. David was the foreman of the tobacco field that Salters and her family worked on during the weekdays, but on the weekends would be one of the town drunks- though Salters still describes him as a good man. Hubert Davis was the owner of the Busy Bee Lounge, which was across the street from the Salters' house, and he financed the city's intramural youth sports. Davis put a lot of money into the young people from the neighborhood.

Life in Gadsden county was about the tobacco-based economy. Schools got out in May to start the tobacco cropping season. Salters begged to work in the fields and most of her siblings worked on a tobacco plantation at some point. The boys would string up tobacco and be primers until they reached a certain height, and typically worked longer during the season. The girls were luggers, often getting picked on by their brothers while working, and were usually finished for the season once the tobacco went up in the barn. Donna learned to string tobacco on the machines inside the barn and began to be able to work in that position. For Donna Salters, life working in the tobacco industry was not as bad for her as others - she had fun with it and was happy in her community.

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Content Description

This collection relates to Donna Salters, who grew up in Havana, Florida, and worked on tobacco farms growing up. This collection contains an interview registration form and a digital video disc interview of Salters.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Havana History and Heritage Society

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open to all researchers.

Conditions Governing Use

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Controlled Access Headings

- Tobacco farmers
- Tobacco farms
- Havana (Fla.)
- Tobacco industry -- United States
- Gadsden County (Fla.)