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Interview with Horace Goggins

Horace Goggins

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**LOUISE PETTUS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**Interview OH #132
GOGGINS, Horace**

GOGGINS, Horace

Interviewed: April 29, 1981

Interviewer: Viola Sherrill

Index by: Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard

Length: 00:15:08

Abstract: In his April 29, 1981 interview with Viola Sherrill, Horace Goggins shares the story of how he became a dentist, his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, and how he supports his wife's political career. This interview was conducted for inclusion into the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections Oral History Program.

Keywords: NAACP, Dentistry, Juanita Goggins, Winthrop University, Friendship College, Sit Ins, politics

Interview Session (April 21, 1981): Digital File

Time Keywords

00:00:00 *Start of Interview/Interviewer's Introduction*

00:00:15 [no question] My name is Dr. Horace Goggins. I was born in Greenwood County on May the 14th 1929. My parents were Maddie and Ulysses S. Goggins. I have one brother and two sisters. My brother's name Gene W. Goggins and he lives in Chester, South Carolina. One of my sisters is named Eunice Bayden and she lives in Greenwood, South Carolina. My other sisters is named Mary Miles and she lives in Washington, D.C. I finished Brewer High School in Greenwood, South Carolina in 1947. I entered South Carolina State College in 1946 and finished in June 1950 with a bachelors in Chemistry. I also got a commission in the U.S. Army Infantry as a Second Lieutenant. [Pauses] I entered Howard University in the fall of 1950 in Washington, D.C., and I graduated with the doctoral dental surgery in 1964. I was drafted by the U.S. Army and I went to Frankfurt, Germany for two years, and I served as a dental surgeon with the United Second Medical Detachment. After getting out of the Army, I came to Rock Hill to practice dentistry. I have been in private practice in dentistry since 1958 until the present. I am a member of the National Dental Association, the Palmetto Medical and Dental Association. I was the president of this group from 1974-1975. I'm a member of the Southeast Analgesics Society, member of the Tri-county Dental Society, member of the Piedmont Medical Dental Society, Beta Kappa Chi Scientific Society, former member of the Rock Hill Planning

Commission, the NAACP Council on Human Relations; I'm a member of Mount Prospect Baptist Church, where I serve on the Deacon Board. I'm a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. I'm a member of Sigma Pi Phi fraternity, South Carolina Democratic Party. I'm also listed in Personalities in the South and Southwest from 1978-79, Who's Who in the South 1973-74. I'm a retired Major in the U.S. Army Reserves, and my office is 427 Dave Lyle Boulevard, Rock Hill.

00:03:12 *Question:* Okay. Tell me about your work on the plan, Rock Hill Planning Commission. *Answer:* The Rock Hill Planning Commission was established in 1965 under the auspices of our former mayor, David Lyle and I was, I served on the, on the um, Planning Commission as the minority representative. And I went to different parts of the city of Rock Hill and I got pictures and types of material on the substandard housing of our city. And from this report and research, we got the Housing Authority to build the low-rent housing project here in Rock Hill. Some of them are down on, um, down on South Wilson Street today.

00:04:10 *Question:* Okay, when you were in college at Howard, did you meet any of your fellow students that became prominent? Did any of them become prominent black figures? *Answer:* Well I don't whether they became any more prominent [both laugh] than I am or not. I don't want to be um, bragging or anything. But yes, um, some of them really have turned out to be quite prominent. Um, in respect to Mr. Stokie Carmichael, if you want to call him prominent, he was in the undergrad department when I was there as in the professional school at Howard.

00:04:50 *Question:* Okay, um, tell me how you met your wife, when you were married? *Answer:* Oh yes. I met my wife as a, through my dental practice. She came in as a patient and I met her. She was teaching over in York, Jefferson High School over in York, South Carolina and I met her as a patient. And from then on that's where we established our relationship.

00:05:15 *Question:* Okay. Okay, you've lived in Rock Hill how many years? *Answer:* This, I'm going on the 24th year.

00:05:20 *Question:* How did um, in class we're talking about Civil Rights and stuff. How do you feel about Civil Rights in the South and Rock Hill? *Answer:* Well I was one of the Crusaders of the Civil Rights Movement here in Rock Hill. Um, on February the 12th 1960, the sit-in demonstrations started here in Rock Hill. Rock Hill was the first city in the state of South Carolina that had sit-in demonstrations. And I was the Secretary of the NAACP at that time, so we took active parts in the planning and the strategy of the civil movement, and we gave guidance to the students. So I've been very active in the Civil Rights Movement in Rock Hill. I was also one of the first ones to go out to integrate the bowling alleys in 1965.

- 00:06:10 *Question:* Okay, how did, how, what was your reaction to um, the first black lady at Winthrop College? *Answer:* Oh, my reaction was positive because when the late Reverend C. A. Ivory was the president of the NAACP here, um, two car loads of us took some students up to Winthrop College, I believe it was around 1959, and the officials there heard that we were coming, so they put the, the chain across the driveway to keep us from getting in there, and the policemen were there to stop us. So I was all for integrating Winthrop even before the, um, the Supreme Court told them they had to integrate them.
- 00:06:58 *Question:* Do you feel that now that the school is integrated, it's headed in a positive direction? *Answer:* Yes. Yes, I do. Um, it should have been integrated a long time ago and made co-ed much earlier also. I think Winthrop was one of the last schools to become co-educational, because Clemson started around 1960 or 61, but I do think that it would be positive from now on if we could just get more black faculty members on the faculty at Winthrop. I think they're doing very well so far as the student body.
- 00:07:40 *Question:* How do you think they should go about getting more black faculty members? *Answer:* It may be rather hard for them to get any from this area. Sometimes they may have to go out and search and seek for good um, people who are smart and capable of being professors and things. We can get capable blacks um, but you just have to go out and look for them. The NAACP played a prominent role in the integration of the lunch counters and other facilities here in Rock Hill, especially back in 1958 and 1960, under the leadership of the late C. A. Ivory. He was a profound leader and although he was in a wheelchair, it was amazing how all of the people rallied to support him in all of his efforts. Um, the NAACP pushed the sit-in demonstrations, the integration of the restaurants and the bowling alleys and just about everything we have here in Rock Hill. Um, the black minister and the black lawyers and the black doctors were the leaders, or the Crusaders, of the NAACP back in the early 60s because the black teachers were not allowed to be members of the NAACP. So being the Secretary of the NAACP I used to go around and canvas all the teachers, although some of them wouldn't come out and join it, but they would give us donations to help carry on the efforts of the NAACP. So we must give credit to the NAACP for the integration of most of the things here. Also the, the integration of the textile plants and things around here too, because when I came here in 1958, there were very few blacks working in the textile mills. If there was one working in there, he had to be a janitor or something in that nature, because the state law at that time wouldn't allow a black person and white person to work side-by-side in the same room in a textile factory. And the white people being the majority, that's the reason they had all the jobs, because the textile plants couldn't build two separate plants for two, to work these people. Also you had to have separate, um, facilities for eating, separate facilities for drinking water, and separate bath facilities, which meant that blacks

just didn't get into the textile plants until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 65. We have two black-supported junior colleges here in Rock Hill. One of them is Friendship Junior College, which is Baptist-supported, and it was established in 1911 by the late Reverend C.A. Hall, who was a Baptist minister here in Rock Hill. It is supported by Baptist black churches in York and Chester Counties. We also have another junior college in Rock Hill called Clinton College, and it supported by the AME Zion Church. Both colleges are having it rather difficult at the present time, just most other junior colleges across the nation, because when the students leave a junior college, they usually seek their education at a senior college, and when they finish their senior college, they always use it as their alma mater and they don't usually come back the junior colleges and help them in any way.

00:12:05 *Question:* Can you tell me about the recent troubles that Friendship College is having? *Answer:* Yes, Friendship Junior College are having financial problems at the present time. I don't know too much about, more than what I've read in the paper, but it look like they are spending more than their budget can afford and it look like this is causing them to have some problems.

00:12:35 *Question:* With you being a dentist, how do you feel about blacks in that field? *Answer:* I think the field is open to qualified young blacks. Um, we have a critical shortage of black dentists in the state of South Carolina. We had more black dentists in South Carolina in 1930 than we have today, although the population of the state has more than doubled since 1930. The main problem is that the dental education is about the most expensive one can get in this country and after you get out of dental school it requires a lot amount of money to set up a practice of dentistry. So I think this has been a deterrent for most the young blacks who are qualified to go into the profession. I hope things will get better in the near future.

00:13:29 *Question:* Okay. With your wife being in um, involved in the South Carolina State Legislature, how do you feel about her being in politics and what role did you help? *Answer:* Oh I enjoyed her being in the political arena, although I wasn't a politician myself. You have to have the personality and that, that firmness, I suppose, to be a politician, and I don't have those. But I really enjoyed her being in the political arena. I supported her in every respect. Um, I suppose I'm one of the few men who didn't worry about their wives becoming more popular than I am. [Both laugh] She started in 1972 by being elected to the National Democratic Convention, which was held in Miami, Florida. So I took off, and I went down there with her to be with her during the Democratic Convention and I then supported her ever since in every way. I would support her financially, morally, and spiritually and everything else because I think more women will be involved in politics in the future. Going back to my school days at Howard University in Dentistry, that is when I became aware than women can do just about anything that a man can do because I had three girls in my class and they

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were some of the outstanding students and they are outstanding practitioners in dentistry today. So I really marvel at the women who go out to do things like this.

00:15:13 *End of interview*