

Project Name *City of Alexandria Employees – Fort Ward Project*

Title *Interview with Steve Tompkins*

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Location of Interview *Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site*

Interviewer *Steven Shephard*

Also Present at the Interview *Lance Mallamo, the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, and Fran Bromberg, City of Alexandria Archaeologist*

Transcribers: *Joanne Pierce and Terilee Edwards-Hewitt*

Abstract *This interview is to record Steve Tompkins' experience working to maintain the Fort Ward grounds and the changes that have come in the past decades. Lance Mallamo, the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, and Fran Bromberg, from Alexandria Archaeology, were also in attendance.*

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Description of Property (Manager's Office, Trails on the Fortification, Stairs Over the Earthworks)	
Steve Tompkins:	It [a concrete foundation] went from the corner of that building [the current manager's office]--there was a gate there. It went up roughly to this, I think, this is, roughly to there, over to the shrub, along the shrub; that shrub wasn't there then, by the way, when I started - [unclear]. It was practically down to the street, and if you walk over here, and then on parallel the street and back, it was like a little [unclear] kind of thing.
Steven Shephard:	Okay, just so you know, we are taping this. And we'll probably write it up and you can get a copy of it.
Steve Tompkins:	Okay, I won't be pinned to the Kennedy assassination.
Lance Mallamo:	You will not.
S.S.:	That'll be our next [unclear].
L.M.:	And you can deny everything, Steve [laughs].
Steve Tompkins:	This, right here, was the propagation.
S.S.:	We're right behind the park manager's office, the square piece of concrete, looks like a corner, and that was a what? Some foundation?
Steve Tompkins:	It was a cold frame bed. The center rose [unclear] obviously concrete foundation; the cinderblock, it was probably maybe about forty inches high and went almost all the way to the uh, shrubbery.
S.S.:	Wow. And it was to plant seeds?
Steve Tompkins:	It had doors--.
S.S.:	Windows?
Steve Tompkins:	It had hinged windows on it. And this is where, in those days, they would propagate flowers and things--
Fran Bromberg:	So I was talking about a greenhouse.
Steve Tompkins:	--for in the park itself. And [there] was a big giant structure here.
S.S.:	Wow. Pretty big.
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah. And we took that out. This, actually, manager's office didn't exist; it was one large room in those days and a dedicated crew operated out of this facility that was here. Now the museum had had some kind of foundational water leak issue over there and Cindy Armstrong was the, uh--.
S.S.:	Director?
Steve Tompkins:	Was here then.
F.B.:	So could you tell us when you started?
S.S.:	What year did you start working, Steve, for the City?
Steve Tompkins:	I started on December the third of [19]79. And the [Youth CareerConnect] grant was up here and the city hired me to run it for [th]em. Jim [unclear], who was the city landscaping architect--.
S.S.:	Sure, know him well.
Steve Tompkins:	Who in those days, was in [unclear]. And we operated out of here. And do you want to know some of the things we did here?
S.S.:	Sure.
Steve Tompkins:	We installed a playground. There was a trail and each time I bring it up, it seems to bother people.
LM: [unclear]	
Steve Tompkins:	But there was a trail that was put on - actually it went down about eight inches, dug it out, and there was a trail all along this, what are these, these, battlements?
S.S.:	Earthworks, so it was all on the top of there [unclear].
Steve Tompkins:	Started down at your ornamental gate and went all the way around to the road

	on the other side.
S.S.:	Right on the top.
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah, all these stairways didn't exist in those days; I built them, they're ancient. Right here in particular, there was – and it's still there – underneath this point right here, there was telephone pole staircase that somebody had built - I don't know when – that I buried. [pauses] Again, they would probably think you're crazy but I was told to do it. There were giant holes everywhere, where the trees had fallen out and ripped the wall out. They were filled in, particularly, two places over there.
S.S.:	But Steve, the staircase just went up the side of the earthwork at that time?
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah, it went right up to the top. And that's how you kind of, on this area of the fort, it's how you got in. They didn't want it and they asked me to build a staircase for it over there; and that was way, way thirty years ago.
S.S.:	So there was a walkway on the top of the fort?
Steve Tompkins:	Yes there was.
S.S.:	All the way around?
F.B.:	There was a walkway even in my memory.
Steve Tompkins:	There was a walkway, four foot wide.
S.S.:	I also remember gravel.
Steve Tompkins:	It was cobblestone, then pea gravel, and then sand. And it was compacted by machinery.
S.S.:	So the depth of that is probably still all there.
Steve Tompkins:	It's there; it wasn't removed. If you went down on the top of there, it's still there. You're probably talking six or eight inches. And uh, all the wood of the stairs on the other side they asked me to build, now in the bastion area where you have your little bridge, sort of where it comes down along parallel to your [pause] I'm trying to remember the terminology, y'all have to help me. Well, in the northwest bastion, what do they call the dip – the mulch -
S.S.:	The moat? Yeah, it was a dry moat. Dry moat.
Steve Tompkins:	Well, what is there on the outer edge, is a bridge where you walk across a little bridge and there's a little observation deck.
S.S.:	Right.
Steve Tompkins:	It wasn't as elaborate in those days. That one they originally built in the early [19]60s, it finally – it finally was shot. And so they asked me to tear the old one out and rebuild a new one. Wanda Dowell [Director of the Fort Ward Museum] actually added couple more of the observation decks. [unclear] And that little castle--what's that castle over on top of the gate? Is that like an Army Corps of Engineers symbol?
S.S.:	Yeah, that's what it is. Yes.
Steve Tompkins:	I built the original one.
S.S.:	Oh yeah?
F.B.:	Really?
Steve Tompkins:	And then Robbie Jones from General Services did the second one. I don't know how many they've done.
S.S.:	Maybe that's the third one, maybe.
F.B.:	Oh, really, I didn't realize. I thought this was the second.
Steve Tompkins:	Hey, David.
David:	How's it going?
Steve Tompkins:	And it was a dedicated group of six people that stayed in Fort Ward Park and never came out of Fort Ward Park. And they worked out of this building. Again, when they had the leak over there, they called Moe, who was my boss –

	Moe Simmons – we have a big problem at the house. So a lot of the stuff that was over there [unclear].
S.S.:	Should we go toward the cemetery?
L.M.:	Which one, this one?
S.S.:	Yeah. Now we're walking toward the Oakland Baptist Cemetery. So Fran, you should say directional things whenever you want.
Description of Property (Streams, Cemetery, Pond)	
Steve Tompkins:	I guess you'll see in your records, [unclear] [Colonel Mitchell] was someone instrumental. He was still up. He was retired, had just retired, but he was still up here quite a bit in those early days, which is where I got most of my information.
F.B.:	Did he know anything about the culvert here and when that got put in? Was that already here?
Steve Tompkins:	That was here. He told me one time this was going to be a pond.
S.S.:	Oh, really?
Steve Tompkins:	Yes. But for whatever reason, which either he told me or didn't tell me or I forgot, I can't remember why, I never am--but there was--this was going to be a pond.
S.S.:	But Colonel Mitchell said that.
Steve Tompkins:	Colonel Mitchell told me that. Apparently, years ago, something came across the road, I guess, [and it] is what connects to the stream.
F.B.:	Right, right.
Steve Tompkins:	I think--pipes, you can see it comes out over there – well, you can't because of high grass – there was a culvert pipe up in there. But maybe there was a stream that came across Braddock in those days. Down here, [be]cause when you got this - the issue or the neighborhood's concern of the water runoff, Kessler [correct name?] addressed it, came [and] threw riffraff in there, which is really old curb and gutter from some other project that he threw in there to try to deal with some of that.
Oakland Cemetery Fence	
F.B.:	So, was the – was the cemetery fence like this when you [unclear]
Steve Tompkins:	Yes, ma'am. Yes, it was. It's always been fenced since I've been here.
L.M.:	And always with chain link?
Steve Tompkins:	Yes, sir. But we have replaced the fence ourselves so many times because of the trees.
F.B.:	Right.
S.S.:	Yeah. Which we can see right now.
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah, you could finance a third world country with the money these fences cost over the years. Now, one of the issues we had and did were drain tiles that came out of the neighborhoods' yards into not just our yard, but into these yards.
F.B.:	What was this drain?
S.S.:	They were directing the downspout water -
Steve Tompkins:	The black PVC drain tiles were connected to their gutter systems and their yards --
S.S.:	It was just dumping all ou?.
Steve Tompkins:	--[unclear] channel, and it would just empty into uh,
F.B.:	I see, so they're channeling onto--
S.S.:	Fort Ward property.
Steve Tompkins:	Absolutely. I brought the director out here and showed him – Rich Baer [unclear], temporary, our acting director and showed him a couple of them.

F.B.:	Uh huh. And that was recently?
Steve Tompkins:	Last year.
S.S.:	So, it is still like that now, Steve?
Steve Tompkins:	I think they've been removed.
L.M.:	Yeah.
F.B.:	I see.
S.S.:	They shall remain nameless.
	Oakland Cemetery
S.S.:	And Steve, as far as how the graveyard looked – as far as you remember, does it look pretty much the way it did or do you think there were more stones?
Steve Tompkins:	When I came, it was so unkempt. When they would do graves, there would be this old guy who came out with a pick and shovel and dug the graves. And it used to just amaze me that --
S.S.:	You just dug it that way.
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah, it was an older guy and you'd just see him come out here and dig these graves.
S.S.:	Well, then was there any drive through – in some of the maps, we wondered if there was a drive coming in that way, that they brought – that they could drive in and drive back out.
Steve Tompkins:	No, I heard there was another entrance to this, and I had definitely heard that before, but it's always been right here.
S.S.:?	Yeah, when you've ever seen it.
Steve Tompkins:	Always.
L.M.:	And there was always grass on this side.
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah.
S.S.:	As you remember it?
Steve Tompkins:	You'd see a lot of tree branches that had fallen over the years – I mean, it was a mess in here.
S.S.:	And so the city though didn't maintain it or anything because it wasn't city property.
Steve Tompkins:	No, never did any maintenance in here. I'm not aware of any maintenance here.
S.S.:	And now, do they still do it?
Steve Tompkins:	I don't know who does it. I've never seen anybody do it.
S.S.:	But you know [Department of Recreation] doesn't do it.
Steve Tompkins:	It's not us, no.
S.S.:	Yeah, okay. So it must be the people associated with the church, I guess.
F.B.:	It's their property.
	Old Cemetery
S.S.:	Yeah. So we're moving to the old cemetery area, to the east.
Steve Tompkins:	Along there's the old road that's still – there was a road; and it was a lot more obvious that you could tell it was a road when I came along the fence line there.
F.B.:	Right.
S.S.:	Parallel to the main [unclear] fence.
Steve Tompkins:	If you go up there behind the fence you'll see a row of cedar trees and anybody who -- you can definitely tell there was a road there.
S.S.:	So how about this area then, Steve? How does this -- was this all overgrown too?
Steve Tompkins:	This? No, this we maintained. This was cut and --.
S.S.:	In the old cemetery area
Steve Tompkins:	I would imagine, if you were to go down a few inches you would find stones under --.

S.S.:	They're just flat, buried.
F.B.:	Uh huh. Now, you know one thing we saw on the map in 1964 or, I think 1964 [actually, 1962] when the engineer was doing plans for the -- there was a graveyard outlined on this site, but it actually was much smaller -- the outline was much smaller than we currently see and in fact, that gravestone and that gravestone that are in place are outside of the little area that was marked on the map. Do you have any sort of recollection of how extensive --.
Steve Tompkins:	No. The only recollection I have in this area right here is there seem to be more stones than you see now.
F.B.:	Uh huh.
Steve Tompkins:	Maybe two or three more and I do remember specifically one stone was very old. There's an 1897 there, right there, but I'm thinking -- I'm talking about the 18 th century, that old.
S.S.:	Really? It had the date marked on it?
Steve Tompkins:	Um, 1790s. I do remember that.
F.B.:	Cause that's really amazing.
Steve Tompkins:	The reason I remember that, I'm sort of a graveyard person anyway. I have family buried in the Congressional Cemetery, I don't know if you know where that is.
F.B.:	Uh huh. Yes.
Steve Thompson:	Off the Suitland Bridge. My grandmother and them are there. And it's like a who's who in there. And uh, anyway, to any laypersons obviously there are obviously graves here; just look at all these depressions.
F.B.:	To me it was always interesting that the outline on the map didn't include these two, so you know, I mean, I always wondered whether or not that meant those two weren't standing in those places when--.
Steve Tompkins:	That's interesting.
F.B.:	When you know, they made the map. Because why would you not, why would you draw your boundary in 1964 [1962] to exclude...
S.S.:	Yeah, ones that you could see?
Steve Tompkins:	I've always had the assumption they had some sort of guidance. What that could be, I couldn't tell you, I'm sorry.
F.B.:	Yeah, well, I, obviously--.
S.S.:	When we were here with the people from the church one day, Mr. Terrell [Minister Alfonzo Terrell from Oakland Baptist Church] told me this was part of that, and the fence was put in the wrong place.
Steve Tompkins:	Really?
S.S.:	And I was like--.
F.B.:	Actually, I think that - that might have been a misconception but I have no, because certainly, the original property boundary for the lot that's just to the north went all the way to the road. And then there was the land swap and that land swap was on the north side, so--but she may better know better than I where people were buried from the Oakland Baptist Church, it could be that they were buried here, so certainly--.
S.S.:	But, but Steve, was the general impression that you can remember of more stones being in here, like in 1980?
Steve Tompkins:	Well, as I look at it, I see three or four stones, I'm thinking like, five or six stones basically right here where we're standing. If they're underneath, if it was mischief or vandalism or I'm confused--
S.S.:	But they could have fallen over and they get buried.
Steve Tompkins:	I do remember particularly, one very old stone. This one here is some sort of

	backyard hand fashioned --
S.S.:	Right, [unclear].
Steve Tompkins:	Over the years someone had tried to patch [it] up. This was the piece we had concern about a month or two ago, but it was one of the patches that had finally come loose. We do not, as you know, put any equipment in here, we use hand-held [pause] trimmers.
F.B.:	Right. On this one--[unclear].
L.M.:	It doesn't look like it has a recent bruise to it or anything, there's that crack on the top.
S.S.:	Interesting, that one is broken off at the base. So I'll bet the -- the bottom of it is buried here somewhere.
Steve Tompkins:	Concrete starts to lose its salts if it's not reinforced, it will come apart. So obviously, this is probably way beyond the world record.
S.S.:	And it probably had freezing and thawing going on in there.
Steve Tompkins:	Yes, correct. Yeah.
F.B.:	It's sort of interesting that it almost looks like they're two -- well, maybe not, maybe that's just where it cracked.
Steve Tompkins:	Well, it may have had a tree fallen. I'm not aware of that, but maybe or a tree fell on it, or a branch.
F.B.:	See, this part, this part had come off recently.
S.S.:	Yeah, I just put it back.
F.B.:	You just put it back.
S.S.:	Yeah, it was laying here.
F.B.:	That had gotten [unclear]
	Road to Maintenance Yard
Steve Tompkins:	Now this road was not as wide as it is today, in when I came. This was -- you see it widens out a little bit -- and that's because bringing tractor-trailers in here, they couldn't turn. They had to back in to bring mulch in here. Uh, this was more of a ravine up here, where you see the tire ruts. So, water would come out and I'll show you where the depression was up inside the nursery -- water would come down, come through there -- it was a wash, it was a swale, it would come across the road right roughly where that cherry tree is and you can still see how it [unclear] today down and into that ravine. But it was probably a couple of feet deep.
S.S.:	Okay, so should we move into--.
L.M.:	Hey, how about the cedar tree? Do you remember -- we had a picture from about 1980 and they weren't there.
Steve Tompkins:	The cedar trees came after my time.
L.M.:	Not just here, but even uh--.
Steve Tompkins:	The cedar trees came after my time. They weren't here when I started.
L.M.:	So that works.
S.S.:	So Steve, that means they were planted by the city?
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah. You'll have to talk to uh, see if there's a record with the arborist, probably I'm going to guess Jennifer Hollins [?] was the arborist in those days. Or Greg Kiernen [?]. We have so many. I'm like the pyramid, so I just outlast them all.
S.S. and F.B.:	[laughs]
L.M.:	Okay.
	Artifacts
Steve Tompkins:	Now you know when I put - I meant to say, when I put this trail on top of the fort, I found a lot of old artifacts that I turned into Cindy [Armstrong?] and

	[name?]
	Do you remember what they were?
Steve Tompkins:	Yeah. Bullets, rifle barrel, old skeleton key, uh food tins, they were just barely together. I found a couple of buttons. I'm not sure if this is--you will know much better than me, but apparently you had your uniforms in those days, but when you're dressed up, marching around, you sort of had these gussied up--they had like a brass thing with a little lip on it where you'd slide over your button so now you'd have brass buttons. I found a couple of those. I don't know what they [unclear]
F.B.:	Now where was that that you?
Steve Tompkins:	When we excavated up on the hill.
F.B.:	On the hill?
S.S.:	To put the path in on the earthworks.
Steve Tompkins:	And I think this was a dump site, I was told. The city used this as a city dump at some point in the past, I don't know when.
F.B.:	Really? Here?
S.S.:	But you know what parts, Steve? Like, you don't know--.
	Goats, Pond, Wells
Steve Tompkins:	No. I know in the early -- my -- the original super[intendant] -- see, when I got here, there were guys that had been here since the [nineteen] forties. Since right after the war [World War Two], so they had this knowledge they would tell you. Whether it was true or not, you're gonna have to verify. But you know, they were here since they mustered out of the army, in [19]45 and [19]46. And when the city came in, there was so much understory here that I was told by my boss that the Kennedy Foundation was involve; they were doing something in Williamsburg -- were they involved there as well? And they brought goats in. What nobody knew was somebody had come in here and sprayed, probably DDT or something hideous thing and--.
S.S.:	All the goats died?
Steve Tompkins:	They all died.
F.B.:	Oh my G-d.
Steve Tompkins:	They came in the next day and found all the goats' bellies swelled up, and they were dead. Now today, we'd all be on CNN [cable news network] if that happened. But apparently it was really understory and brushy and awful in here.
F.B.:	That's quite a story.
Steve Tompkins:	And I was told there was a livestock pond down here, on area... Well, what area would that be? You can still see the old road. Well, maybe we can walk down--
F.B.:	Yeah, we can walk down.
S.S.:	There was an actual pond there, Steve?
Steve Tompkins:	There was a livestock pond in here somewhere, down here on that end somewhere. Probably got filled in. There was a road--if you go down just as you're turning that first loop down by the area before where the pavilion is, you see an old road depression, an obvious road. There's a well. Remember I showed you where the well was?
F.B.:	Yes, yes. Why don't we go there?
S.S.:	After.
F.B.:	After.
Steve Tompkins:	Okay. And there was a well over there and a well over here, right on the road. You could see where it caves in, where all the patches. It caves in every so often.

F.B.:	Okay, you'll have to--we'll have to try to walk out there and try and at least put those on a map.
Steve Tompkins:	Okay.
	Maintenance Yard
F.B.:	Okay, let's head out to the maintenance yard.
S.S.:	You have the key?
F.B.:	No, it's a combination lock.
S.S.:	Oh, it's a combo.
F.B.:	And I actually put the combination into my phone so that I wouldn't forget, do you know it?
Steve Tompkins:	No, I can get it for you right away. It changes every five minutes.
F.B.:	I, I've got it in my phone, so--.
Steve Tompkins:	It might be [numbers are deleted]
F.B.:	That sounds right.
S.S.:	That sounds right.
F.B.:	That was what it was. Those were the right numbers; I just didn't know what order they were in. So we don't want that on our record, Gotta bleep that out.
S.S.:	That's it, isn't it, but is it opening?
F.B.:	Um, you have it backwards, you have it backwards. Now you have it right.
S.S.:	You gotta turn it that way, right? Maybe it wasn't perfectly lined up...huh.
S.S.:	What's the number again?
F.B.:	[Combination numbers deleted].
	<i>(crickets chirping in the background, along with footsteps)</i>
Steve Tompkins	Now along this fence here, almost within ten feet of the boundary line, there was, as I said, a green metal, kind of like an army surplus shelter. It was enclosed in the back and the two sides, and it would open in the front. The trucks would back in under it. And that is where the crew that was designated here, that's where their vehicles were.
S.S.	So there was like an open garage?
Steve Tompkins	Yes. And in those days there were a lot more trees in here. I mean old oak, I mean bigger than this one here. Twice as big as that.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, there was a lot of them in here.
F.B.	And do you have any recollect --
Steve Tompkins	Well one of them in the storm came down and completely demolished that building. We never put it back. And weren't operating in that fashion in those days.
F.B.	Right. And so with the trees, do you have any recollection of when all those trees came down?
Steve Tompkins	I'm going to say early [19]80s. Well, didn't all come down in one day. But I would say by [19]83 or [198]4 most of those trees were gone. And we had moved that building out. The nursery stuff wasn't up here then. But in that corner [inaudible]. There [were] a lot of fruit trees. Pears, peach, cherry. And there was a structure on posts with netting. [inaudible]
F.B.	And where were those fruit trees?
Steve Tompkins	In that corner, by that oak right there. And they went from the back of the fence, probably about right to here. There was trash -- I'm going to say trash.
F.B. and S.S.	laughs
Steve Tompkins	Not trash like trash but--.
S.S.	Just things left here?
Steve Tompkins	Pieces of a picnic table. Playground. Swings. Just stuff, I mean stuff just piled

	eight and ten feet high. I mean this whole complex.
S.S.	Wow
Steve Tompkins	Loaded. Just loaded with stuff that had accumulated over years and years and years. And the trail was sort of serpentine. Like, just to get into the back, you know you'd go a little to the right and little to the left, and a little around this pile and that one.
F.B.	So this gravel that we're walking on now, was--.
S.S.	This is what was sinking in Steve, that you told us.
Steve Tompkins	The nursery people put this in. After my time. Now, right there if you look over here, at the greenhouse, there was a swale, coming out of the Marlborough estates, by that swing [unclear] house, right through here, right through there, to that-. Remember those tire ruts?
S.S.	Yup.
Steve Tompkins	That's where a lot of water came right through there. Pretty significant swale.
F.B.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah.
Lance Mallamo	This got leveled out.
Steve Tompkins	Yes it did.
LM	Do you remember like--
Steve Tompkins	All this would be early [19]80s, to [19]84 at the latest.
	Graves
S.S.	And Steve, was the stone-the gravestone-sitting there? [Reference to Clara Adams headstone]
Steve Tompkins	Always been there. Always.
F.B.	And do you remember ever seeing another stone?
Steve Tompkins	No, but I was told. And, forgive me but these were stories.
F.B.	Right. Perfectly understandable.
Steve Tompkins	They--I wasn't here. But I was told that the husband was buried next to it. I don't know if that's a fact. But I was told that he's there.
F.B.	We have heard that as well. And actually there is a slump in the ground on this side to the north. Very [good] evidence--.
Steve Tompkins	Okay, Colonel Mitchell told me that the graves in here were exhumed. Does that mean every grave or everyone that he was aware of? I don't know. [unclear] But they were exhumed. But you are still going to find grave shafts. So--
F.B.	Right, so you think that Colonel Mitchell told you that there were graves in this area?
Steve Tompkins	I can't say. Either what he was saying is to his knowledge they were exhumed. Whether, maybe there [were] some that he was not aware of.
F.B.	Right, right.
Steve Tompkins	Um, but he told me that they were all exhumed. So--
S.S.	And the stone as far as--.
Steve Tompkins	You may find different.
S.S.	Steve, is [that] the same stone, that is not a replacement?
Steve Tompkins	That stone is the original stone. Since the day I first come up here.
S.S.	Wow. Okay.
Steve Tompkins	And there was a house.
LM	And how about the two bushes here?
Steve Tompkins	No, those came later.
LM	The City planted those?
Steve Tompkins	Well, City employees. There was a fence here. A split rail fence around here at

	one point. Around that grave. To keep things and people away.
S.S.	That was up until like, last year. We saw it, right?
F.B.	That was really recent. So--
	Horticulture and Other Activities in the Maintenance Yard
Steve Tompkins	Well, you know when the horticulturist was up here, when the flowers came in, like mums--this entire property, the entire property, to this road back is mums.
S.S.	Just planted in the ground.
Steve Tompkins	No, in pots. They unloaded the tractor trailer. And they spread [them] out.
Steve Tompkins	And they get them out into the flower beds. So I mean this whole place. Now over here, where I told you there was this little park shelter, I mean [where] the shed was. Over there, we can walk over when we go out. There was a concrete form where we built concrete tables and benches. You mix your concrete, you throw your rebar in and build a form up. And when it hardened, you took it and assembled it. And that actually operated here. And there was a big pile always of stuff. Pea gravel. The smaller pea gravel [that was] used. And sand used to mix the concrete up with.
S.S.	But would there be anything there Steve, that would be in the ground? That--.
Steve Tompkins	No, it was portable.
S.S.	It was all on the surface.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, it was a portable frame. And when we cleaned this place out finally, like I said, in the early [19]80s, that went out of here too. Actually we threw that in the trash because we didn't want to build any more of those things. <i>(Everyone laughs.)</i>
Steve Tompkins	They weighed like eight billion tons.
S.S.	I bet.
Steve Tompkins	Now there was a trench that obviously went across here. Again, in the mid [19]80s that connected [to here] from the museum. For water, and for electric, and phone. And I was told that there was an outhouse or building, one time in here somewhere. Maybe perhaps this place here. And into [unclear]. But none of these stones that we are walking on here were original. There was another garden. I should say another little house there. There was a trailer here. Do you remember the trailer?
S.S.	I vaguely remember the trailer.
LM	Probably, yeah. Like two years ago.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, but they brought that in, like I said, in the mid [19]80s. It was on wheels. We built a ramp to the back of it, so that we could wheelbarrow in and out of it. And they operated out of that for a decade or better. More.
	Houses in the Maintenance Yard
F.B.	So, do you think there was a house in here?
Steve Tompkins	Colonel Mitchell told me there was a house in here somewhere.
S.S.	You know, where we were told by Sargent Young, back over there.
F.B.	You mean the--.
S.S.	How long was that house here?
F.B.	That was gone by the time you [Steve Tompkins] were here.
Steve Tompkins	I was told it was up here somewhere.
F.B.	There was a house that appears, right just outside, I think, of the boundary. Right on the edge of the boundary.
S.S.	On the other side of the fence.
F.B.	I think that was the Belk [unclear] house, if I recall correctly.
S.S.	At that point there were out buildings.
F.B.	I have some map here that shows possible places of the houses.

Steve Tompkins	Over here on this side there were a lot of trees, that had chains attached to them. Oaks and [the chains] were rusty. I was told by Superintendent Lyman, they had livestock. They were tethered to
	Cemeteries
F.B.	Now I'm still mulling over the statement that the fence for the burial ground was put in the wrong place and I, I guess. one of the things that--.
S.S.	And who said that?
F.B.	I think, Lance, did you say Frances Terrell said that?
LM	No.
F.B.	Who, who said it?
LM	No, she didn't. Mr. Terrell, and I don't know his first name.
F.B.	Mister--
LM	He's a younger guy, and it was just, you know, there was dispute with some of the other members and him, but he was ... just, just didn't make sense to me.
F.B.	Yeah, well maybe it was--.
LM	Like that's a, that's a pretty big error.
F.B.	Yeah, well, Maybe it's, it's certainly we, we know it's--
LM	And it's not like you didn't see other graves at the time.
F.B.	Right, right. We know it's on the property line, but it could be that--his recollection comes from the fact that--
LM	But he said, well, they switched the land. I said yeah, but they didn't switch this, they switched that.
F.B.	No, correct, correct. So I just was--
LM	So it didn't make sense to me either, so--
F.B.	Uh-huh. Well maybe it's coming from the fact that he, he thought that--.
LM	I, what I had heard is the Baptists were buried in the cemetery, and I guess they were Episcopal?
F.B.	Ah, on--.
LM	That were on the outside.
F.B.	Ah, on the outside, I, I don't know. Does that, did that come from some of the oral history as well?
LM	I got that from somewhere.
F.B.	Yeah, because I just--.
S.S.	So the Baptists were being separated from the Episcopal?
LM	That's what I had heard.
Steve Tompkins	I have to ask, is there any problem with that?
F.B.	I think that the, well, I know that from the actual survey property lines, that is the survey property line for the land--
S.S.	And it matches, right?
F.B.	that was turned over as part of the Baptist cemetery but--.
S.S.	Yeah. So it's logical the fence would be there, right?
F.B.	Yeah. But, and that just comes from the, the surveyors doing the survey data for the land that became the Baptist cemetery and for the land swap [unclear] which was to the west of that with the expansion of the cemetery to the north.
	Gravestones
Steve Tompkins	You know, ah, I'm sure, I hope--[unclear]. There was somebody saying that I was a part of something to remove stones up here and that was, I don't know. [unclear]. But that is ridiculous; that never happened.
F.B.	Uh-huh.
Steve Tompkins	No city employee did that, no agents of the city, no vendor; ah, something like that would, to me, I told Lance, is immoral.

LM	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	That never happened. I don't know how that got started up.
LM or S.S.	Well, you know you tell ten people, you start, line ten people up, tell one person one thing, and at the end of the line it--
Steve Tompkins	Besides, if you ever saw the movie poltergeist you probably would--[everyone laughs], wanna guard the--
S.S.	Well the other thing too is, as, you know, cemeteries go, they may look like they have more stones at first, then some fall over, they go in the ground, so after a while it looks like stones aren't there anymore but they may still be there.
Steve Tompkins	I agree with you, I'll bet you--.
F.B.	They're just buried; the grass grows over them and--.
S.S.	Yeah, and you didn't, yeah.
Steve Tompkins	I agree.
S.S.	Or they could--.
LM	Yeah, I've been looking at this concrete one--.
F.B.	Yeah.
LM	That, that's almost buried, you know the--.
S.S.	Yes.
LM	Top of his first name at ground level.
Steve Tompkins	And maybe perhaps there were wooden crosses at one time.
S.S.	Right.
Steve Tompkins	That have long since--.
S.S.	Right. But even the big one that's flat on the ground, Lance, if you didn't do anything about that, it [grass] would just grow over it, get dirt on it and cover it, right?
F.B.	And you know in fact when we...when we excavated for the Black Baptist Cemetery over on Holland Lane, we definitely found stones that were totally buried.
S.S.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	I was watching a thing on the history channel about Little Bighorn, Custer's last stand and it was a prairie fire. I don't know if it was a prairie but some kind of fire, and they were shocked at the artifacts they had found they didn't even know were there.
S.S.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	But it burned all that upper turf and thatch out of there.
	Houses and Wells
F.B.	So do we have anything else to do here, do we want to save the roadway and--.
Steve Tompkins	Well, that you already know, you know about the house.
F.B.	Right. We know--.
S.S.	The well over there.
F.B.	Yeah, well maybe we should, we actually, didn't we record the well, once, Steve, you and I?
S.S.	One that was up there in front.
Steve Tompkins	Yes.
S.S.	Between the fence and Braddock. We did record that.
F.B.	And is that the well that you're talking about? [To Steve Tompkins]
S.S.	We recorded that.
Steve Tompkins	Yes, Ma'am, and then the one over there that I showed you before, you and Walter.
F.B.	Yeah, well, let's go.
Steve Tompkins	And the other one's over by the, right by the ornamental gate, in the road itself.

F.B.	Okay, well we, we could--.
S.S.	We may not know about that one.
F.B.	We don't know about that one, if it--.
S.S.	But there was a house over in that direction right?
F.B.	Right. Right. I think, ah.
Steve Tompkins	That one has caved in a couple of times since I've been here.
S.S.	Under the road?
Steve Tompkins	Oh, yeah, well, you've got a big giant sinkhole.
S.S.	Hm.
F.B.	Yeah, so we should, we should make note of that one, and maybe walk up...because I know you told me a lot of things about, about the reconfiguration of roadways up on the North side of the park once.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, but I didn't think you believed any of it. [laughter].
F.B.	No, I believe it.
S.S.	We believe you.
F.B.	In fact--
S.S.	We take oral histories all the time and you know, you do have to think of how well people remember, and you know, and everybody knows memory is not perfect, but a lot of times there's information in there that's really useful.
Steve Tompkins	Well, you might want to talk to Craig because he's been here five years, or six years longer than I; he was here before [unclear] was even built.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah. There was a pond over there.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, there was a big pond over there on that side where those homes are now. [unclear]
F.B.	Well, we do have some aerial photos in this pile from [19]79 and '80; but they're not blown up very much, but maybe--
Steve Tompkins	Well, this would be more like '80, '73 or [197]4.
S.S.	Really?
F.B.	Uh-huh. We have '64 I think and then we skip to '79. So maybe he would see things on that.
S.S.	And Steve what's Craig's last name?
Steve Tompkins	Alexander.
F.B.	Should we walk farther up?
Walking North (<i>Sound of people walking</i>)	
Steve Tompkins	Then, I understand that there was a Civil War fort here. I don't know if you were told that.
S.S.	Somebody said that.
Steve Tompkins	You know, I'll keep throwing these out. (general laughter)
S.S.	Till we really get hooked on it. Okay. So we're walking--.
F.B.	We are walking north on the road from the, um, museum, and off to the right we have documents that indicate that there was a house up here on the right that was a homestead for the African-American community settlement.
S.S.	Well and also, Steve, was there, some people talk about a thing called Solitude that was over here.
Steve Tompkins	Uh-huh.
S.S.	But now you, it's not there anymore?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, it's over there.
S.S.	Oh, it is, okay.
Steve Tompkins	The Hendricks.

S.S.	Down the slope?
Steve Tompkins	It's right over there.
S.S.	Okay.
Steve Tompkins	Hendryx Memorial.
F.B.	So do you have any, I, I know that the house would have been gone by the time you got here.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, it wasn't here.
F.B.	But do you have any recollection of any, you know, maintenance things that might have--
S.S.	Or a foundation or anything?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, I think we might be able to find a piece of foundation over here.
S.S.	Whose house is this?
Steve Tompkins	Because I believe I think I pointed it out to you.
S.S.	Oh.
	Short's House Area
F.B.	This is the um, this is the, Burr Shorts house, Harriet and Burr Shorts house.
S.S.	Is it right over there where it looks sort of level?
F.B.	Yeah, I would have to measure off, um; yeah we're going to have the surveyors actually come and put in stakes to show where that's, where that is.
S.S.	Okay.
F.B.	But yeah I think we did walk around here and we thought we had a place at one point but--.
Steve Tompkins	You know there were a lot, and they're almost all gone now but there were dozens and dozens of mulberry trees.
S.S.	Oh, really?
Steve Tompkins	When I was here I'm wondering if they were, you know?
S.S.	They were just all in this area?
Steve Tompkins	Over here. It was, all up and down through here were mulberry trees.
F.B.	Uh-huh.
S.S.	Hm.
Steve Tompkins	We didn't like 'em cause you know, they--.
S.S.	Stain everything, yeah, but.
Steve Tompkins	Stain the road, we had one over here on that bridge over here, that I was talking about.
LM	One that attracts bees.
Steve Tompkins	There was always, it would get, yeah. It would get slick, people would trip and fall. Finally went down in a storm.
S.S.	So are you seeing the house there, Fran?
Steve Tompkins	We had two giant trees went down the other day, down here at the bottom of this.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Fifty-two inch poplars.
S.S.	Wow.
LM	[whistles].
Steve Tompkins	Each. Giant.
LM or S.S.	Down by the little playground?
Steve Tompkins	By the path on the other side of it.
LM or S.S.	Top lot?
F.B.	I don't know, I'm trying to see where I think we, we, okay, coming up the road. Yeah, there's some little structure over here, this is 1979.
S.S.	Well I think--that's over there, is it not?

F.B.	Yeah, here's the road, yeah, that looks like it's right along the road.
S.S.	Uh-huh.
F.B.	Before it curves. So maybe. When were picnic shelters put out, though?
Steve Tompkins	I built the first shelter in area four in 1981. I was actually hired because I used the word equilateral triangle and they were just, wow. Yeah, hire him!
All	[general laughter]
LM or S.S.	And that's the first thing you built?
Steve Tompkins	That was, that was the interview, could, how would you build this? I said you lay down equilateral triangles. They said, I'm not kidding.
S.S.	You're hired.
Steve Tompkins	Didn't have interview panels in those days. The [unclear] -- that were here when I started would shock you. [general laughter]
Steve Tompkins	Entire families worked here.
S.S.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	There are a lot of them still here, the Dodsons.
F.B.	I remember the Dodsons.
S.S.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	There was about eight or ten of them.
F.B.	Some of the Dodsons were, were, worked. Helped us in--.
S.S.	Worked with us. Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah. Well there was one in particular, just retired, who was--.
LM	[Unclear]
F.B.	Yeah, they, they used to help us [unclear]
Steve Tompkins	The due day, the shipments, there was a family [unclear]
F.B.	I wonder if we can see if we can find that foundation again just for--.
Steve Tompkins	No, the foundation I'm talking about is over here.
F.B.	Oh, okay.
S.S.	Okay.
Steve Tompkins	I'm not aware of anything here.
F.B.	Oh, right, no. Okay.
F.B.	The foundation on the north side.
S.S.	Okay, but Fran--.
Steve Tompkins	This is as much as it was, minus the trees.
F.B.	Uh-huh.
S.S.	But we're talking about the area where the Burr Shorts' house appears to be on the photographs.
F.B.	That's where we're standing now.
S.S.	And Steve's saying there's nothing that he ever saw there to indicate a house.
F.B.	Right, right. Exactly.
S.S.	Okay.
Steve Tompkins	No.
F.B.	He's talking about the other foundation on the north side.
S.S.	Oh, okay.
F.B.	Which we did, which we did see. Um.
	North Side of the Fort
S.S.	And this is the bridge you were talking about, Steve, going across a[dry] moat.
Steve Tompkins	No, the other one, back--.
S.S.	Oh, no? The one back around there?
Steve Tompkins	Wanda, Wanda, the museum built this.
S.S.	Oh.

Steve Tompkins	I didn't build this one.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah. They had a contractor do that. The one inside there I built. Not the original. I rebuilt it in, let's see, there were locusts that year, I was forty-two, so that would have been—[19]85.
F.B.	See, I thought that maybe on this, on this area we could see the roads that you were telling me about, but.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, we're gonna come up on one right now.
F.B.	Right, the last time.
Steve Tompkins	There was actually two roads.
F.B.	Yeah, looks like there are two roads on there, see [th]em?
Steve Tompkins	Uh-huh. Yeah.
F.B.	Those are, those, those are them.
S.S.	What year aerial map and photo?
F.B.	This is 1979 right? Right when Steve got here.
Steve Tompkins	They were here.
All	[general laughter]
Steve Tompkins	Right along this, ah—[unclear; sounds like “rocky stretch of the road”]
	[sounds of walking]
Steve Tompkins	And there was a house here. I'm told. And I think there's still a piece of the brick or block foundation. You didn't, I showed it to you, I don't know.
LM	Yeah, I saw that one day too.
F.B.	We saw that we don't, you know, we weren't--.
LM	Then I went to show it to someone and I couldn't find it.
S.S.	Do you know what house that is, Fran?
F.B.	I, I think it's an outbuilding relating to, ah--.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, and the, the well is, right there.
F.B.	Right. So here we are on the north side of the, of the fort. And um--.
LM or S.S.	[unclear] --wondered if that was like the foundation for a barbecue or something?
Steve Tompkins	It might have, it could be, but I was told there was a house, up by the well.
F.B.	Uh-huh, so, this, ah--.
LM	And you know there's, isn't there actually a line of bricks here somewhere?
F.B.	Yeah, there is, somewhere up right adjacent to the fort is where we saw the--.
S.S.	Not past the moat, right?
F.B.	No, no.
S.S.	Like right in here?
LM	Yeah.
F.B.	Right in here somewhere.
S.S.	It's recording the cicadas.
F.B.	So the—the circular area right here is where the well was?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah right here, where your bag—it's right underneath it.
S.S.	Yeah where the square concrete—yeah, slab.
F.B.	Slab, yeah, that's what I, I yes.
Steve Tompkins	So actually, though, years ago they had run—you see the hydrants in each part of the [unclear]?
S.S.	Oh, there were pumps?
Steve Tompkins	There was one right there.
S.S.	Really?
F.B.	That's right, you did tell me this. This is all coming back to me.
Steve Tompkins	I built this bridge, but the one that goes down into the trench, Wanda [Dowell]

	[had] built. The staircase and the upper deck I built but the stairs on the other side, Wanda [Dowell] built.
LM	I get the sense she didn't [unclear] archaeology either?
All	[laughter]
S.S.	I don't remember that.
F.B.	So the roads and these roads with—.
Steve Tompkins	[unclear] and there were homes in here and the other one was right here and this was more obvious. And I don't—I think the loop didn't exist until they started restoring the [unclear]. I think the loop, I was told the loop, came later. It wasn't original. Is that true?
F.B.	Right, I think so. There were just two roads coming up back then, I think so, but there were some historical roads like paths coming across here.
Steve Tompkins	Okay well here's one right here.
F.B.	Let's see, here yeah.
	[sound of footsteps on leaves]
S.S.	So was this always here, Steve? This little dirt road?
Steve Tompkins	Yes this has always been exactly just like this, but the road actually is there [turns away from mic to indicate] going this way and around that way and this I think came up to as Lance [Mallamo] probably said correctly some sort of outlet, maybe there was something there. But I was told the well was a structure, or remnants of one.
F.B.	I think they we actually have—have a structure on one of the aerial photos here. So I'm just trying to orient myself. So you think this road here is this? (Indicates on map)
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, I would say because there's the point right there, and there that's coming almost parallel with that angel, so I would say that would be the one we're looking for.
S.S.	Yeah, looks like it to me too.
Steve Tompkins	And that may be your pond on the other side of it, if there was actually a pond.
S.S.	But it's not this? See that, the other two parallel ones?
F.B.	I was wondering that was, yeah there were two parallel roads here.
S.S.	But did that go to the house?
F.B.	[Uncertain noise] the house, if we look at. I think we have a house [that] appears in 1920 [in an aerial photo]. I have all of them here going back through time. [19]27, here, yeah, right here. This is the 1927 aerial, so it's definitely in this area and the road came right up from Braddock to that structure but then and coming across over <i>here</i> it looks like there are additional—two additional structures right here on the edge of the fort.
S.S.	And would this where the bastion was? Right here?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah.
F.B.	Yes, and these are the structures that we see the foundations of, so--
Steve Tompkins	There's the rifle trench, right?
S.S.	Yeah.
LM	You know AmyBertsch had found something, that there was another white family in the back. I always thought they were further back, you know maybe off the property here but I wonder if this could be them. Their name was, I think it was [unclear, maybe Koffen].
F.B.	Yeah, this—this property was, I think, originally part of the land that the Jacksons owned but I'm not a hundred percent sure so this is, we're talking about the northern most property that we see in the 1927 map that's within the park where there's um clearly a structure—but these? I didn't recall these two

	until just looking at the map, so, coming out here to sort of--.
All	[sounds of agreement]
Steve Thompkins	Well, this road was still here, the remnant of it.
F.B.	Right, that's the one with the cedars.
LM	Look at how few trees are here.
S.S. and F.B.	Yeah.
S.S.	And most of there, this whole area has just a scatter, right?
F.B.	Yeah, I mean this is best resolution map and the earliest that we have—I mean, aerial that we have, it's really an incredible, gives you an incredible sense—
S.S.	and that's what you wonder if this original grove, right?
Others	Right.
F.B.	(to Steve Thompkins) Trees that you say—
Steve Thompkins	A lot of trees but not that many—
LM	But you know, when you look at this you'd understand why they'd call that the grove of trees, because there weren't many groves of trees here.
All	[sound of agreement]
LM	I've often thought that Braddock [soldiers and supplies] came through at this point? (to F.B.)
F.B.	This is the yeah, this is before, yeah, after it got, yeah, exactly after it was angled, angled up—.
LM	[Unclear] you can almost see the edge where [unclear].
F.B.	But it definitely came more this way
LM	I'm lobbying to put it back there
S.S.	Work on that one.
F.B.	You'll need to work on that, get some more--.
LM	It'll be my new project
F.B.	From Episcopal?
S.S.	Episcopal high school land now.
Steve Thompkins	Have you tried dealing with them?
LM	No, no but actually we have some—their archivist is on our work group and she's pretty good, but you know this corner, they got that as like a gift from a graduating class.
S.S.	Really?
LM	In fact I often wonder is that the city moved the road but they didn't own north of the road so the corner got clipped off and I think it was like the—I don't think it was all that long ago, the class of [19]78 bought the corner and gave it them
S.S.	Really? Wow.
F.B.	So it looks like [from this 1927 map] originally like there were roads coming in from the north to these two structures—look at these two roads coming out from the north.
S.S.	Yeah.
F.B.	Well [uncertain sound], it's going to be really interesting when people take a look at the whole series of aerials and actually write up all of this.
LM	I'll talk to Amy [Bertsch] again next week about all of this —she, um, it was kind of early on it was Copper of Koffen or something like that.
F.B.	Yeah, I sort of remember her saying something like that and I—
LM	[Be]cause that's [going to] mess up our whole interpretation now (laughs)
F.B.	Maybe, you know (laughs) I don't know whether that's not [unclear] but that's a structure up there. I always, um, and because we don't have all of the gaps filled in with the chain of title, I, when I first saw this photograph I always

	thought that was an original Jackson's structure. Because we don't know where the Jackson's lived—we know where they buried people but we don't know where they lived and so my initial thought about this was that originally the Jackson family lived up here, but that could be—you know, it's totally based on no data.
LM	But do you see that? It's totally conceivable that there could be graves up here too.
F.B.	Well—
S.S.	If they kept them near the yard?
F.B.	See this was part of Jackson the early days that's why we need the deeds, [be]cause this was part of the original Jackson holding.
LM	Now look at—look at these little things here.
S.S.	Okay, so should we go around this way?
Steve Tompkins	Well I can really, everything over here as much as it was except for that one well out by the gate—uh.
	Amphitheater
LM	How about the amphitheater? That was here when—
Steve Tompkins	No, it was a different amphitheater and different bleachers and they were horrible, they were wood—
S.S.	But in the same place?
Steve Tompkins	In the same exact location, the same concrete pad was there when I got here, it was a stick built thing somebody had built—
LM	The Boy Scouts built it I think.
Steve Tompkins	Was it? Okay.
LM	Yeah, it was like an Eagle project
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, well, we actually—there were lots of problems with that and there was actually eight by eight with two by four seating in the bleachers and years later, I'm [going to] say late [19]80s, [19]87 they built them and put them in the concrete when they redid the amphitheater [unclear]. That hasn't changed, the restrooms haven't changed, the picnic areas are the same. Now I was not aware, the stairs on the other side, I built them in [19]79 which probably you wouldn't want that to happen today. And there was another bridge out there that, [be]cause it was a watershed ravine, they asked me to connect the trail by building a bridge in there but Wanda [Dowell] had taken it out and had somebody fill[ed] it in, so that's gone.
S.S.	Wow. But those would all be over toward by where the Jackson cemetery is, right?
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, well the stairs come out that back side right there where that sinked area
S.S.	And do you ever remember anything about that? I mean any evidence that you could even tell it was a cemetery?
Steve Tompkins	Nope.
S.S.	No? Hmm.
Steve Tompkins	I was surprised, the first time I'd heard that was at T.C. Williams [high school] when they had a public [meeting] it was the first time I'd ever heard it. Couple years ago.
	Soil Types
F.B.	I'm just curious about the soils on the property here. I know when we've done any monitor, done some digging ourselves on this west side, the subsoil is really –seems different to me than that on the east side. Do you know anything about that? Like different geological configurations?

Steve Tompkins	You mean like the strata differences?
F.B. and S.S.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, but when we put that field down at [unclear] and this field down here, I don't know what it is but you seem to see a lot of that. I don't know what that is, people moving dirt around--.
S.S.	You mean it looks similar is what you're saying Steve?
Steve Tompkins	Well, it looked like— you know what I mean by strata? It looked like, you know a dark color then a light color then a dark and you just wonder what the hell was going on.
S.S.	Yeah, so it looked like fills on top of original soils?
F.B.	Because some of the soils seem to be full of real cobbly mixture; oh, that's fill, but in fact it's not; it's an original soil and I wondered if perhaps you because of it; any kind of digging that we've seen on this side is so difficult because of the types of soils—.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah we've just put signs [be]cause the guys, they hate it [be]cause it's so many cobbles but the only fill that I know of in my time is up there where we were in that nursery.
F.B.	Uh-huh.
Steve Tompkins	And that I did see go down
F.B.	I see.
Steve Tompkins	But anywhere out here? No.
F.B.	Uh-huh
Steve Tompkins	Much the same as it's always been.
F.B.	So we've got—okay, should we walk on?
Steve Tompkins	You ready to see the other wells?
F.B.	Yes, let's go see the other wells. I think there's not much left. If you could tell us about the other side?
Steve Tompkins	Nope, there's nothing over there that I can—well, when you had a dedicated crew here, this place was highly manicured, there were flowers and azalea; it was loaded. They had an annual festival, an azalea festival. I think for your purposes it doesn't really help you--.
F.B.	Well, it still is part of the history; so we're interested in it.
S.S.	But Steve, as—as far as you knew, when we're looking at this eroded out area here, you think those are the natural soils that the topsoil's off?
Steve Tompkins	I don't think it's natural but that's how it was. This open craggly ridge—.
S.S.	That's how it's looked?
Steve Tompkins	That's how it's always been.
S.S.	Really? (to F.B.) I think those look like natural layers.
Steve Tompkins	Always.
F.B.	Yeah.
Steve Tompkins	And there's an area that's similar like that in the Jackson area.
LM	What's that, this sort of this reddish—.
F.B.	Well you know, this is redeposited soils from the glacis—so you're digging down, you're digging down to create dry moat and you're throwing subsoil down to create this angled glacis and that's what—
S.S.	Are we in the glacis now?
F.B.	I think we are at the edge of the glacis, yes. Because you can see, I do think that's the reason the soils look like this, because they're more deeply buried soils that have been dug out to create the glacis and then they're sort of eroding down the hill as well which may sort of give you that impression but I think the glacis probably comes way far out over here.

LM	Yeah, I think you're—I think you're probably right.
F.B.	So that's why they're subsoil-looking soils, because they're redeposited subsoils
S.S.	Yup.
S.S.	Should we just walk across?
F.B.	Should we walk through the—might as well walk through the historical area here (laughs).
Steve Thompkins	Yeah, yeah.
F.B.	And it's shadier in here than it is on the road, so I'll take that.
S.S.	What was that from Steve?
Steve Thompkins	That's a water fountain
S.S.	Oh, it is a water fountain
F.B.	[Unclear because of helicopter] wasn't writing everything down so it's really been helpful to have you come back up here and--.
S.S.	Reminisce.
F.B.	And sort of read.
F.B.	[Are] there other kinds of disturbance things that you can think of?
Steve Thompkins	There's a drain in here and I don't know if it's still there or not. Okay, there it is. [Unclear].
S.S.	So is this the northeast bastion that we're in?
Steve Thompkins	And that's connected to the drain up in the [unclear] patch, there's a drain in there.
F.B.	I see, so that just, that feeds the water out into the [unclear] sewer, somewhere? (laughs)
Steve Thompkins	You get ponding issues now. These I guess are [proofs]—is that what you call [them]?
S.S.	Yeah, the [bomb proofs].
Steve Thompkins	Uh, Wanda [Dowell] had somebody do some work up here. But, if you got a lot of rain, it'd be a pool. It'd be a swimming pool—it would, these things would fill up. And, uh, [Wanda] put a—she did something in there, which I can't recall, and she also put a drain over here in this other point. Um, I had, well I had the [unclear]. We planted, oh man, a tractor trailer load of things like periwinkle on these proofs, all up and down in here.
F.B.	Uh-huh, so to keep down the erosion?
S.S.	Yeah, well it's pretty steep sides.
Steve Thompkins	Yeah, I guess. We planted a lot of it. Took a month.
S.S.	But it does form a natural--.
F.B.	Trough.
S.S.	Yeah, trough, that would just fill with water.
LM	So I notice on the other side, there are daffodils growin' in there. Did the parks plant those maybe, or—.
Steve Thompkins	Yeah.
LM	Okay, [be]cause I thought maybe that was the family?
Steve Thompkins	But the place was loaded with flowers in the early [19]80s, Lance.
F.B.	Uh-huh. Was that the arboretum area, was over--.
Steve Thompkins	You know that's, uh, a thing of contention. I mean, I've actually seen a pamphlet that said before [it] was an arboretum. I don't think it ever has been. I don't think they've ever gotten further than the pamphlet.
LM	Actually, I think it was a docket item that approved it but—.
S.S.	But when would that have been Lance, like in the [19]80s?
LM	(talking to F.B.) We're talking in the [19]80s, like [19]82 or something.

Steve Tompkins	Yeah, mid-[19]80s. [pause] You, you get so much turn over, the direction sometimes—they call an [unclear] when somebody new comes in. I mean, it was pretty consistent during Viola Lawson’s years, but uh, I’ve had eleven directors since I’ve been here.
S.S. and F.B.	Wow.
Steve Tompkins	And all but one have been crazy [all laugh]. You’ll have to figure out which one was the sanest.
S.S.	So this was the actual fort well, right? Right there? Or is that—.
F.B.	Yes, that’s the, the well inside there.
S.S.	And there is a well?
F.B.	Yes, there is a well.
S.S.	Okay. And that has a wooden platform above it.
LM	Weren’t not [going to] ask you who the one [sane director] is [laughs.]
S.S.	He’s not telling.
F.B.	[laughs]
Steve Tompkins	No, I’m leaving that to you. Of course, it’s James Spangler.
All	[laughter]
S.S.	<i>(laughing)</i> Yeah, whoever the current one is, right?
Steve Tompkins	But we’ve had, like, city managers that loved Fort Ward, I mean loved it. Doug Harmon, anything was not too good for Fort Ward.
F.B.	Well it really is an incredible property, so--.
S.S.	No question.
LM	You’re right though, because I’ve worked with some crazy people, but I always made very good friends with the custodian <i>(F.B. and S.S. laugh)</i> . [They] always let me know what was going on.
	Gate
Steve Tompkins	There’s a factory somewhere that turns them out, I don’t know. <i>[Sounds of walking]</i> And this has been rebuilt a million times, this gate.
S.S.	Oh, the gate, yeah.
Steve Tompkins	And that castle, the original, now I did the second one, I think. This would have been like [19]79. It was just four for those—.
LM	Can I ask what it cost you to do it?
Steve Tompkins	Fifty bucks. [laughs].
LM	Add about three more “zeros” on it and [unclear.]
Steve Tompkins	The castle, the corners were four by four feet. They’re just four by fours.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	And the rest of the stuff are out of two-by-four planks and a router, to put the windows in.
F.B.	That’s really—.
Steve Tompkins	That’s not, that one there is not mine. That’s a nicer one—.
S.S.	[Be]cause it still exists? You have it on—you don’t have it in your house?
Steve Tompkins	No, sorry.
F.B.	You could put it in, in the museum [laughs.]
S.S.	Well, I guess, if it would be anywhere, it would be in the museum, right?
Steve Tompkins	When they rebuilt these walls every so many years, they would go and scavenge in the park looking for the [locust trees?]—.
S.S.	Really?
Steve Tompkins	Now this looks like [unclear] today, but they’d actually use real [locust trees?] to rebuild these little walls.
S.S.	Wow.
LM	This is very nice now, look at that.

S.S.	Yeah.
	Well on the Park Road, South Side of Fort; Houses Near Well and in South
Steve Tompkins	Over here, straight over this [eastern] wall, you can see, there it is. You see that little patch of blacktop?
S.S.	Oh yeah, yeah—square patch
Steve Tompkins	That's your well.
F.B.	Wait, wait, where in the road?
S.S.	See it right there Fran? Down there, from where the truck is.
F.B.	Oh yeah.
F.B. and S.S.	Yeah you said it was in the road itself—.
F.B.	Exactly.
S.S.	And you say it slumps in, right?
Steve Tompkins	Not slumps, I mean it goes way down.
S.S.	Really?
F.B.	That is really—.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, and it's happened twice since I've been here.
LM	So this road was here when you came?
Steve Tompkins	Yes, sir.
F.B.	Oh that's—.
S.S.	So we're now on the, uh, south side of the Loop Road—.
F.B.	On the Loop Road right near the, uh, gate and we can see the black asphalt patch that was another one of the wells. Let's, let's look at this map and see—.
S.S.	Yeah, would there be a house here?
F.B.	Let's see whose house we could find in this vicinity [unfolds map.]
LM	Yeah, see, this is where I thought the [Jackson family] lived.
F.B.	Umm, we haven't—okay, so—.
S.S.	So here's the gate right, right there, see it?
F.B.	Right there's the gate. In [Research Lot] 28, we're at 28, which, we don't know—.
LM	(reading) "Unknown building."
F.B.	We don't know who lived here, apparently.
LM	And what's [Research Lot] 27?
F.B.	(searching) Twenty-seven. We don't know who lived here. But, and twenty-nine as well, I guess on the other side of where the road would be—.
LM	You know actually, I think it's this house, didn't Amy [Bertsch] find the building permit for the garage for this?
F.B.	Oh, I don't know.
LM	I think she did, she didn't tell you?
F.B.	She may have told Pam [Cressey]. Not everything [unclear].
LM	I think she may have told Pam. Because we were really surprised they decided to get a building permit, you know?
S.S.	Yeah.
LM	Um, I think it was like right after the city annexed this property. And you would have just thought they would have just built it—.
S.S.	Oh, yeah.
LM	And said it was always there.
F.B.	Right, so, see now, this, this property up here, looks like they're calling that the Javins' house, which is approximately the location of that northern building that we were talking about. So I think maybe that is, is [the Javins' house.]
LM	Oh, oh yeah. You're yeah.

S.S.	And that's a black family?
F.B.	Yeah.
LM	These are the other two, but I think these really go here.
F.B.	Correct, correct.
LM	And moved up a little bit.
F.B.	They're in the wrong, yeah—they're not, they're not sited quite right.
S.S.	But Fran, this other, the other house, [house number 45], is like right supposed to be in front of where the museum is, right?
F.B.	Um, [house number] 45, correct.
S.S.	It's an unknown brick building—.
F.B.	I thought some of these, we knew the, knew the names of some of the families in these, and we may, this was, we may have more information on that—.
S.S.	Than, than what's on this aerial.
LM	Yeah, we may now.
F.B.	Yeah, than what's on this, we may have some names. But clearly that building in the north was the [Javins' House].
LM	Right, well I have to run, I have a 12:30 at the [Episcopal School].
S.S.	Okay, Steven I think we've—.
Steve Tompkins	That trail came across the road right here, up this hill, and up to that point, there [were] a couple of benches and people would come and sit. And right here, that little dip along the edge of the wall, was a wide open gully, maybe five or six feet deep that had a bridge there. In a storm, a tree fell down and demolished it and Wanda [Dowell], when we took the bridge out, Wanda had it filled in like it is now.
F.B.	I see, so this is, this is on the north side of the South Loop Road that had this gully and—.
S.S.	And is that part of a [bomb proof] right there?
Steve Tompkins	I don't think so.
S.S.	Is that part of the outer wall? I think it is.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah, I would think so.
S.S.	But Steve, what you're saying is the road, this asphalt, the Loop Road, or what—.
	Trail on Top of the Fort
Steve Tompkins	The trail road, remember what I told you about the stone and key-gravel and sand trail?
S.S.	Yeah, yeah.
Steve Tompkins	It started over here—.
S.S.	Oh, I get it.
Steve Tompkins	Started right [at] the gate, all around the perimeter, all the way back here on to your sign.
S.S.	On top of the earthwork.
Steve Tompkins	Over the sign, across the road over here, up to that right there.
S.S.	And on top of all this. I get it.
LM	When was the decision made to abandon?
Steve Tompkins	I don't know.
LM	Because I guess you didn't take it out.
Steve Tompkins	I—I didn't deal with it. By that time I was moved out of here and in another department.
S.S.	[unclear] quit [maintaining] it I think.
F.B.	Yeah, but I think it was within my memory I think that they were still--.
S.S.	I think along this part, at least, I can remember it.

F.B.	Yeah, I can remember walking—.
S.S.	Not all back in here.
F.B.	No. But I can remember walking back here [on] some of it and then saying that it was a problem because of the erosional issues (<i>S.S. agrees</i>). So--
S.S.	So I think it was along that side which is the?
F.B.	That's almost twenty years.
S.S.	The, east side?
F.B.	The east side
All	[sounds of agreement.]
Steve Tompkins	[unclear] more interpretive signs along the trail, that sort of said 'You are here', blah blah blah.
F.B. and S.S.	Oh.
S.S.	And they're less now?
LM	[unclear]
Steve Tompkins	I don't know, and this has always been this way, this part here.
F.B.	Wow. This, this—.
S.S.	Well we really appreciate it, Steve. I mean it does help.
F.B.	This is great!
Steve Tompkins	Sorry that it took so long for me to get up here.
F.B.	Yeah, it was really great—.
S.S.	Glad you could come out.
Steve Tompkins	You know, I working on that crossword puzzle.
F.B.	Thank you so much.
S.S.	And you couldn't think of the right words.
Steve Tompkins	Yeah we're working [unclear].