



CALVIN C. GOODE
1927

Honored as a Historymaker 2003
Renowned Phoenix Councilman and Educator



The following is an oral history interview with Calvin Goode (**CG**) conducted by Pam Stevenson (**PS**) for Historical League, Inc. and video-graphed by Bill Leverton on September 19, 2001.

*Transcripts for website edited by members of Historical League, Inc.
Original tapes are in the collection of the Arizona Heritage Center Archives, an Historical Society Museum, Tempe, Arizona.*

PS: I remember interviewing you many years ago. It was the anniversary of the desegregation of Carver and Phoenix Union. I remember coming out to your house and interviewing you about that for Channel 10. You told me about the history of Carver.

CG: One of the things we planned to do was to have oral interviews of all of our former staff members here at Carver and we were just starting that. Mr. Corbin is the man in the back. He was our AV and shop teacher here at Carver. He's on our board and he's one of the ones that we'll be interviewing too.

PS: Who's doing the interviews? Are you doing them by yourselves? Are you audio taping them or videotaping them?

CG: Princess, did you meet, Princess?

PS: I didn't get a chance to meet her.

CG: She's a director I think they started with Dr. Grigsby.

PS: I interviewed him also many years ago. One of the reasons we started this was so many of those interviews were never saved. And it's kind of sad that they weren't saved in archives. You know, he's quite frail now and I remember interviewing him in 1980, maybe even earlier than that.

PS: I'll let you introduce yourself. Give me your full name.



CG: I'm Calvin C. Goode.

PS: What does the "C" stand for?

CG: Coolidge.

PS: Okay. I always like to know the full name. Tell me about when you were born and where you were born?

CG: My mother tells me I was born in Depugh, Oklahoma, January 27, 1927. We moved to Arizona when I was 10 months old and settled in Gila Bend, Arizona.

PS: You don't really remember that very well.

CG: No, it's difficult to remember one's birth. Impossible, I probably ought to say.

PS: Sometimes I like to ask people their first impression of Arizona, but I doubt that you remember that. When you were born, how many children were in your family? Where was your place in the family?

CG: I was number three. And later my mother had five other children; so there were a total of eight of us.

PS: You were living in Oklahoma then. Why did your family move to Arizona?

CG: From what they tell me, in Oklahoma Dad was a sharecropper and I guess the hail came and damaged the crop and his father had moved to Arizona. No, not his, my mother's family had moved to Arizona earlier. So then they decided to move to Arizona. Mom had three children at the time and we came on the train. Then later on, Dad came out with an uncle. They used to tell me about the stories of driving through the White Mountains. At that time, the road was not much of a road and at times they had to back up and get into little side roads, so people could pass.

PS: Must have been quite an adventure. That was in the 1920s?

CG: 1927.

PS: And you said the family came to Gila Bend. Why Gila Bend?

CG: Well, my mother had some family members who'd come out following the crops in Gila Bend. You know at the time there was a lot of cotton and other kinds of agricultural crops. So they decided to come out. Then later on Dad homesteaded about 23 miles from Gila Bend and he tried to drill for water. We had a well drilling machine but, we never really struck water. My uncle tells me about the time he, my brother



and I, my brother was two years older, would operate that machine and we both were real small. But anyway, later on, because of some events, they moved from Gila Bend.

PS: What sort of event? Why did they move?

CG: Well, Dad and the family followed some of the agricultural crops and lived in Buckeye, Palo Verde and Coolidge. I can remember when we went to Coolidge, my brother had a middle name, Washington. I wanted a middle name and I said, "Well, Coolidge should be a good name for me" since there was a president and town named, Coolidge. Then in 1940 I graduated from the Gila Bend school. Back then we had segregation, where school districts would exclude students of African descent depending on the local school district. So even though they gave me a diploma that said I could go to any high school in the state, I could not go to the high school in Gila Bend because of this exclusion. A couple of years prior, my sister had finished the eighth grade, which was in a one-room school with one teacher across the track, across the canal. They sent her to Mesa to go to high school and she stayed with her grandparents there. Then when my brother and I graduated the same year, I caught up with him, and then they had three children of high school age, so they looked here in Phoenix and finally decided they would go to Prescott. In Prescott, they didn't want to build another high school for African-Americans, so they let us go to the high school there. But here in the City of Phoenix, for instance, Carver High School used to be called Phoenix Union Colored High School. It is the only high school in the state that was built for African-Americans students. So I was very pleased that Dad had enough interest-and my mother. My mother was the one who really pushed education, even though she only went to the sixth grade. Dad went to the eighth grade. But he wanted us to go to school, and so we moved in order to go to school.

PS: So how old were you when you moved into Phoenix?

CG: I went three years first to the Prescott Jr. High School and then to the Senior High School and finished three years. Then I dropped out of school for a year. The doctor thought I had a heart condition and he thought maybe I wouldn't live about year. But I was 16 at the time and can you imagine, even as a Junior I was 5 ft, 1 and weighed 75 pounds. Because they thought the climate down here would be better for my health, I came down and spent some time here in Phoenix. Then I went back to Prescott and came down in October of '44. I went to Carver and graduated in '45 and I had a great time here at Carver. The teachers and the staff were very helpful in terms of trying to help me adjust.

PS: So did your whole family come here? Or did you just come on your own?

CG: For a while the family stayed up there. After high school they were here for a while and then they went back to Prescott. After I graduated from high school I went to Phoenix College. And my first year at Phoenix College I did stay with relatives here, an uncle and aunt.

PS: Were you the first one in your family to go to college?



CG: Yes. I was the first and then my sister graduated from high school and she became a teacher. She lives in Stockton now. I have another sister who went to college and got a nursing degree and she worked for the Veterans' Administration for a number of years. She lives here in Phoenix retired. I have one other sister who went to college; finished two years and a younger brother who started and didn't stay in school very long.

PS: What made you decide that you wanted to go to college?

CG: I guess my mother was a prime factor in it and I knew I needed some skills. I knew the value of education. So I decided I'd go to college and it wasn't easy in terms of the fact that our economic condition was not the best. We were able to put together some funds and I was able to go to Phoenix College for the first two years. Dad wanted me to be a doctor, a medical doctor. So when I first went to college, I took a lot of science thinking I could become a doctor and then I said, "no, I can't become a doctor." Then I said, "maybe I can be a dentist" And then I finally decided I couldn't be either one, so I changed over to business administration and got my degree in general business from Phoenix College.

Then I went on to Arizona State University and business organization, management and economics. I graduated there in 1949. I was president of the African-American club there at ASU and I invited Mr. Robinson, who was the principal here at Carver, to come down. He came down and we addressed the group and then when I graduated he offered me a position here at Carver as school accountant. I worked here from '49 to '54. Then they closed the school and the teachers and the students went to other schools in the district.

But I was out of the district for about seven months because the superintendent thought I was too forward in terms of asking for things that Carver didn't offer me at the time. I kept pushing them and they finally brought me back into the district as Assistant Property Control Director. There was a position similar to mine, Unit Business Manager, at one of the schools but the principal, "no, he did not want Calvin Goode because he may cause some problems." One was that some people may resent having an African-American Black there and supervising White women. But anyway, I kept pressing them and I finally came back into the district and I have a total of 30 years with the district. I later became Unit Business Manager at some of the schools; Assistant Budget Director; Assistant Property Control Director. So it was a great experience.

PS: Why don't we back up a little bit and you tell me about what Carver was like when you came here.

CG: Well, as I indicated, 1943 is when they changed it to George Washington Carver Museum. I mean George Washington Carver High School. Prior to that time it was known as Phoenix Union Colored High School. When I came here to the school in 1944, Mr. Roy Lee was the principal. Then I graduated in '45 and then Mr. Robinson came in July 1 of '45 and he became the principal. He came from Atlanta, Georgia and he said, "You talk about separate but equal, then provide me with better supplies. Provide me with better equipment. Add some rooms on it. Then he went out and sought teachers with Masters Degrees



from around the country. So he really pulled things together. By the time they closed it in '54, he had a number of the teachers who had their Masters Degrees and he had certainly improved the equality the school.

Now, when I came down in the fall of '44, I think it was October, I was taking mechanical drawing for instance, and they didn't offer it here at Carver but he had a shop teacher who then formed a class of one. The same way I was taking typing, second-year typing and they didn't offer it here. So he again placed me in Mr. Brown's class who taught not only shop but he taught some business classes, too. So in terms of the offering, they were very limited. But the teachers were dedicated and that meant a lot to the young people. They were interested and they attempted to also teach life skills.

So I felt that I did get a good education that year here and I really enjoyed what was taught to me. And as I indicated, I went to college and came back and worked with Mr. Robinson and with a number of the teachers. They too were committed to quality education.

PS: You mentioned that you caught up with your older brother. It sounds like you were a pretty good student then.

CG: I can remember, in the class a teacher who had eight grades. I was more adept and assertive in some of the classes so I guess that may have been the reason.

PS: I read somewhere that you had a teacher that came to Carver, Mattie Hackett.

CG: Yes.

PS: Tell me about her.

CG: Mattie Hackett was a remarkable woman. She taught Black History for instance and that's where I was really introduced to Black History. So often in the schools, even in Prescott, they didn't talk much about Black History; I guess because they didn't really know about it. In fact, I can remember one of my social studies teachers who talked about how they did the slaves a favor by bringing them from the jungles of Africa to civilization. I didn't challenge him because I was five feet one, 75 pounds, the only African-American in the class. But that certainly indicated his lack of knowledge and the textbooks didn't say much about slavery. My grandmother talked to me about the fact that many times they lived in slave cabins that weren't properly insulated. At times they didn't have shoes; and sometimes the food they were given -so it wasn't a pleasant experience for people in slavery from what I'm told.

So Mattie Hackett taught in our class and she also was in charge of the annual. She selected me to work with the annual and I think we produced a fairly good annual. She also taught the young people to dress and comb your hair and do all of these kinds of things. She was a remarkable lady. Her husband was a medical doctor. He later became blind and he had a hospital right there between 13th and 14th Street on



East Jefferson. When he went blind and he closed out the hospital it became the Winston Inn. But in the days when he operated the hospital, it was the only hospital in the state that permitted all races to come in and be treated.

PS: You mentioned that they changed the name of the school shortly before you came. Why did they change the name?

CG: Well, at one time, you may be aware that we were called Colored and then we were called Negro and then we were called some other names including African- Americans. But I understand that parents decided that the term "colored" needed to be changed, so they discussed it with the school board and they finally changed it to great African-American scientist, George Washington Carver.

PS: I'd heard there was a lot of pride among the people who went to the school. Would you talk a little about the pride in the school?

CG: There was a lot of pride back then and there's a lot of pride even now. Every two years we have a general kind of reunion. This past September, first of September, we had a reunion of the Class of '51. So every year we have a reunion of the class and in addition every two years, we have a general reunion. Yes, there was a lot of pride in the school. There are a lot of folks who graduated from Carver who have achieved a great deal not only in athletics but academically too. I do believe in integration. I'm president of the Phoenix Elementary School Board. We were talking about the month of September being Mexican-American Heritage Month. You probably know the month of February is Black History Month. It started out with Woodson, way back in the '20s and finally it was a week and a month and it should be year round in terms of our treating people as American citizens. Often I will say, "you know as an American citizen born in this country, I want every right anybody else has." We shouldn't just try to accord an understanding one month a year. It should be year-round. I also make the statement that people say Melting Pot. I say we're not really a Melting Pot. I look at it more as a solid where we all live together with our cultures and we ought to respect the cultures of each other. I also feel very strongly that God created us in His image and His likeness and we are one in His sight. I also believe that when we say the Pledge of Allegiance, "liberty and justice for all," I believe as an American citizen, I'm entitled and that all folks are entitled to those rights and privileges.

PS: You grew up at a time when things weren't always like that. Your family moved here near the Depression period. Do you remember the Depression at all and how your family survived that time?

CG: I remember portions of it as I said, I graduated in 1940. The Depression's somewhere around in '33 when I was five or six years old. I know it was difficult for Mom and Dad to scratch together. I can remember even as a child where we picked cotton and chopped cotton. Dad traveled around from city to city. He also, I don't know whether you know what ironwood is and mesquite-well, we'd get a permit and go out, cut that and saw it up and bring it up to Phoenix and sell it. So he supplemented his income. In terms of the WPA, he worked on the WPA and they would let you work eleven days a month-four dollars



a day-forty-four dollars. So that money came in to help. They also provided some commodities and some clothing. And I can remember some of the clothing that was made was much too large for me. But anyway we adapted to it. Life was not easy but we did cope and we were survivors.

PS: So you worked hard as a boy then.

CG: Yes.

PS: Not just the usual chores.

CG: That is correct.

PS: Sometimes I ask people what they're first paid job was, do you remember that or were you just always working?

CG: Sometimes you worked for about a dollar a day chopping cotton. And I don't remember what the price of cotton was, but it was real low back then. Certainly was -also was the cost of living. But anyway, it made it difficult.

PS: When you were going to school it was during World War II. Do you remember those years, the War Years?

CG: I do remember them. I remember when Pearl Harbor was bombed. And it brought memories of what happened in New York and the Capitol. But anyway I almost was called up and they examined me and gave me a 4F qualification. So I remember the years, yes.

PS: You were pretty young . You would have been a teenager even if you'd been called up.

CG: Well, in '45 I was I guess 17-18 years old.

PS: You mentioned after high school that you were able to go to Phoenix College. Were there any restrictions at that time for the African-Americans to attend the college?

CG: No. Phoenix College was a part of the Phoenix Union High School District, so I went to college from '45 to '47 and then over to ASU from '47 to '49 and received a B.S. degree in Business Administration. Later I went back and got a Masters in Education, Counseling and Student Personnel. No, they did not restrict us from going to Phoenix College.

PS: I don't imagine there were very many African-American students though, were there? You must keep in mind that even now, the African-American population is about 5%.



PS: You mentioned you wanted to be a doctor. Why did you decide that you couldn't become a doctor?

CG: Well, I guess I was looking at the surgery part of it and I don't like people sticking me with needles and from that standpoint, I just felt that I couldn't handle that. It's ironic now that I have given my wife, she's diabetic injections with needles and I've gotten used to it. I guess I could have gotten used to it. But, I felt I would be more successful in another field.

PS: I've got just a little bit more about growing up. Do you remember any special things that happen as a boy that stand out in your mind? Things with your family or special holidays as a child?

CG: Sometime I'll mention and my sons usually like to chide me; but I'll mention that I was Valedictorian of my 8th grade class. Then I'll add, "there were only two people in the class." So I was valedictorian and my brother was the Salutatorian. I remember Mr. Lloyd D. Dickey. We had different teachers every two years and he was the last teacher to come down.. Later on he came up to Phoenix and became principal at Booker, too and then later he went over to California; became superintendent of the school over there. But certainly he was a very important part of our lives. We lived about 23 miles from town. And what we would do, would be go down on a Monday morning and stay with an uncle down there and then come back out to the 160 acres that Dad was trying to get developed. He never got it developed as such. There were times that Mr. Dickey on his way down to Gila Bend; he lived in Phoenix and stayed down there five days also would stop and pick us up and other times Dad or Mom would bring us down to Gila Bend.

PS: A long commute.

CG: Well 23 miles coming and 23 miles going back. One of the other things that happened to me is that I didn't get my first haircut till I was 13 going into high school. Mom would braid my hair up. I had five braids; so sometimes I tell young folks, I say, 'you are not the originator of having braids.'

PS: Why was that? Why didn't you get your hair cut?

CG: Well, my mother said she liked to comb my hair for a while and I just never insisted on it. Even though sometimes the kids would tease me and finally going into high school, it was a little different so I said, "mom I got to have a haircut.'

PS: That would be a lot of work to take care of those braids.

CG: Yeah.

PS: I would like to see some pictures of that. Do you have pictures of that?

CG: Somewhere.



PS: You say at 16 you were only 5 ft 1 and 75 pounds. You were quite frail then.

CG: I was small.

PS: When did you grow?

CG: I guess mostly in college.

PS: Was it hard, as a boy, to be that small? You weren't playing football or anything like that.

CG: No. I went out for track in Junior High School. I was pretty fast. I could outrun the others in the track and that's when the doctor examined me and thought it may be a rheumatic heart; advised me not to. The ironic thing about it even now, the machines don't seem to measure me correctly. They say sometimes that happens. I go every year and they say, "well, things are about the same, keep on doing what you're doing." So I, do. But no, I was too small for athletics so I had to concentrate on some other things.

PS: You certainly have managed to live more than that one year they gave you.

CG: Sometimes I'll remark, "the doctor's dead and gone and I'm still here." I'm 74 years old now. I'll be 75 in January. The good Lord has blessed me with a lot of things.

PS: Speaking of that, was your family always active in the church?

CG: Not always. Later though, my mother and my father and a number of my sisters joined the Jehovah Witnesses. So, some of them are still practicing that. I did for a while and then I came down to Phoenix and was living with my uncle, who was a bishop of Pentecost Church of Jesus Christ and I taught Sunday School. I'm presently a member of Tanner Chapel and the church there at 7th Street and East Jefferson.

PS: And when did you join that church?

CG: I started attending about '50-'51; and I joined in 1960.

PS: Tell me a little bit about the Tanner Chapel Church. I read some things that they were thinking of tearing it down? What do you remember about why you joined that church?

CG: Yes, the rumor you heard is correct. There are some who feel that they need a modern church but they did vote to keep it at this present location. They're looking at the possibility of tearing down those blue arches in the north east corner and moving a new sanctuary building to that location. Then some additional church buildings would be built along Washington Street between 7th and 8th. Tanner owns the entire block there. Where the church is now they will need parking because there's also an office building there



that we own and they need parking for that. So they're thinking about building a garage where the church now stands.

The church was built in and opened in 1929. It does qualify for the National Historical Register but there are members who don't want to put it on there because they feel that would make it difficult to tear it down. I advocate that we could expand the church to the north to the alley there and keep it because of the historical significance to the African-American community. The Tanner church itself used to be at Second Street and Jefferson, but it's the oldest African-American church in the State of Arizona, so I think we need to preserve that. And I think the building itself has a lot of character to it. I'm still opposed to it but it looks like I'm being out voted.

PS: That's a shame. We don't have that many historic buildings in Phoenix.

CG: Very true.

PS: What is Tanner? Where does that name come from?

CG: Bishop Tanner. The history of the church is that once they were united with another church and then one time they were worshipping and they were down at the altar praying and the folks came down and said, "no you can't pray here." So they said, 'let us finish our prayers and then you will no longer be bothered with us.' So they walked out and they formed what later became the African Methodist Episcopal Church. There is a large congregation now throughout the country and some churches in Africa and around the world.

PS: Did you start going there in the fifties?

CG: Yes.

PS: When did you meet your wife? Tell me a little about your personal life. How did you meet? When were you married?

CG: I've been married twice. My first wife and I married in '51. She had not finished college, so she went to college and became a teacher. Then something got into her circulatory system and tore it down. So she died in '58.

Then I waited a couple years and married my present wife, Georgie. She's from Atlanta, Georgia. She went to Spellman and Atlanta University. She's taught elementary, high school and the last 14 years were spent at Gateway Community College teaching English. She is presently the chair of the library committee where we are now sitting. She had an unfortunate situation develop that a tumor impacted her optic nerve, so she has no eyesight in her right eye and just a little in the left. But she's trying to cope with that and can't read or drive. She used to be a reading teacher, so that becomes difficult for her from time to time.



PS: How did the two of you meet?

CG: Through a friend who was here and he wanted to go back to Georgia to see his lady friend and I went with him and we met. We started corresponding before we went back there.

We have three sons and all three of our sons are living here in Phoenix. The oldest got his BS and MBA from Arizona State University. They just announced that they would have their first child somewhere in February.

The middle son he works with the Arizona State Retirement System. He got his BS degree in Business Administration; and he married a young lady who is Linda Tolbert Goode. She had a four-year scholarship to ASU and ran the 100 meter hurdles. She ran in 1992 and 1996. In '92 she was running neck and neck with Gail Deavers. Gail stumbled on the last hurdle and threw off Linda so she came in number four. And then in '96 she ran again and she came in number seven. But that's a real accomplishment when you talk about the Olympics. They have two children; a boy and girl.

Youngest is Randy; he got his degree in Graphic Arts and Design. And he's working for a company as Art Director from his home. There's a picture over here we'll let you see. He does some painting on the side.

PS: That's a nice family. Your primary career then was working with the school district and the high school. You also had your own business, didn't you?

CG: We have Calvin Goode & Associates and we do primarily income tax during tax season. We started out on the kitchen table and people came, "Mr. Goode, help me with this." Our price is very low; we did it to help people. Then at the present location at 1508 E. Jefferson Street under the same roof where we live, we opened up an office from February till tax season is over. I do it part-time in the evenings but my other work has been on the Phoenix City Council. I got elected to the Phoenix Council in 1971, so I served from '72 to '94; 22 years. The longest in the history of Phoenix; eleven elections. That record will probably remain because after I retired, they passed a two-term limit of four years. We had two-year terms. Now they went to four-year terms and you can only serve eight years. My understanding is in November they're going to come back and ask that they let people have three terms; twelve years. But mine was 22 years.

PS: Tell me about how you first became involved with politics? How did that come about?

CG: Growing up and in college I never thought much about getting into politics. Then I got involved in the community in the Booker T. Washington Redevelopment Area; and I got on a LEAP Commission and was chairman. We had leadership education for the advancement of, people. We talked about empowering people to deal with community problems and letting them make decisions. I got very involved in that. The charter government came in and they wanted to clean up government so they reached out to the Hispanic community and also to the Black community. Dr. Morrison Warren was the first African-American who



ran. He ran two terms and served four years.

In my judgment, it was devised to keep a weak council. Two years, four years and then you were out. One person came to me and asked me because they'd seen my work in the community and I said, "no, I won't be able to run because I would just as soon chair the LEAP Commission." I felt I took that over and it needed my help so they ran another African-American, a lawyer. He ran; he didn't win. So two years later they came back and asked me and I said okay, we'll try it. There were those who said I was too timid to run and they didn't think I could win. But with the charter government committee help and with my contacts made in the community, we put together a campaign.

I won the same year that Margaret Hance won. We won on the Council with the other. After two years there were some folks who said "Calvin, you didn't always vote the way we wanted to." I would say, "you know I believe in listening to the community, to welcome the community and then taking as much advice, pros and cons and then voting my convictions. I did not feel I had to answer to anybody. I appreciate your help but don't tell me how to vote when I'm trying to serve people in this city." So they kind of backed away from it since they'd say, "why are you after the African-American."

Then I got elected again and after four years, two terms, the charter government dropped me. By that time we were running at-large and I had folks supporting me so I kept on running; so I had five elections under the at-large system. Then it came up that we should support the district system. All of the members on the Council at that time did not support the district. I was the only one who supported a district system. And one man there said, "Mr. Goode if you don't stop supporting the district system, no Black could ever get elected to the City Council again." I asked "why?" Well, he gave me an explanation. I continued to support the district system and they even changed the election date. I can remember a storm that came through Phoenix the night before. I can vividly recall that. Then I was the only one elected in the primary and the young man was defeated. I did believe very strongly in the district system because it provides an opportunity for better representation. You know, trying to represent all the people in the city. I had people calling me all time and it made it difficult so I thought that if you have smaller group then you can better represent them.

Also the, the question was raised that I was only concerned with the Black population of Phoenix, which was very small. I said, "No, I'm concerned with all people in the City." I would represent all the people in my district. I'd say, "I don't have a quota on Blacks. If because I'm Black and they know me and feel more comfortable I'm not going to say, "I have a quota on you." If you come, I'm going to continue to serve all people and I attempted to return the telephone calls of all people. That's when we made election easier for me in terms of serving all people in the City.

PS: I read that people were fairly surprised when you were first elected because there were so few Blacks in the community. Were you surprised that you got elected the first time?

CG: No, I have always been completely confident in my ability. I have also had an attitude if whatever



happens, will happen. If it was for me and the Good Lord wanted me to be, I'd be elected.

Do you remember Gary Peter Klahr? In one race I think I beat Gary by 45 votes. The person who got the most votes became Vice Mayor. So I said, "Gary, I beat you, I'm Vice Mayor." And they honored that. Now when we went to the district system it became different because according to the justice department you had to have about equal population and some people had higher voting percentage. I was the only person elected in the primary and that was the year Terry Goddard got elected. I said, "Terry, you know, I'm the only one elected so, even though I'd get no more votes than some of the other districts, I'm the logical one to be Vice Mayor." So I was Vice Mayor again for that year. I had a little saying when we went to groups. I'd say, "you can rest Goode tonight because you're in Goode hands." I played with that name a lot. Goode for Goode Government.

PS: It's a handy name to have. You've seen the city change a lot. You say Margaret Hance was Mayor the first time you were elected in.

CG: No, we were on the council together.

PS: Oh, you were on the Council together.

CG: And then later she became Mayor.

PS: Who was mayor the first time you were elected?

CG: John Driggs.

PS: Can you list the mayors that you've served under?

CG: Yes. John Driggs and then there was another man who was there only one term and then there was Goddard.

PS: Was that Milt Graham?

CG: No, Milt Graham went out just before and I can't think of this-we have what we call senior moments at times.

PS: Yes. I can't think other name right

CG: Anyway, I served a number of mayors.

PS: When Margaret Hance was mayor, she was the first woman.



CG: That is correct. And I served with her too, as council and also as Mayor.

PS: You knew her well?

CG: Yup, I knew her well.

PS: What was the city like when you were first elected?

CG: That was in 1971. I think that the city has certainly grown in terms of the treatment of minorities. Let me backtrack to 1944 to give you some comparison. When we came down from Prescott in '44 the restaurants were segregated. You were not invited to come into the restaurant to eat. In movie theaters you could sit up in the balcony. Certain job opportunities were denied to you. We certainly had housing where you could only live in certain parts of the city. I remarked to a group a few days ago that a Supreme Court Justice even had this clause in your deeds that restricted. They said "well don't mention his name." The Supreme Court did outlaw that.

Then we got around to schools. The schools were certainly all segregated. You remember the Supreme Court decision of 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, which said 'separate but equal,' they called it; but we know that the schools were never equal. In the Phoenix Union High School district was sued in 1953 by patrons and Judge Strokmeyer rendered a decision saying that segregation was unconstitutional. **MytamTfydia** participate in integrating the Wilson school district in '53 also.

That's the setting in terms of how segregation was quite evident in 1971. Even at the time that Morrison Warren got elected. Even though we say the Supreme Court made that decision in 1954, I indicated to the group that even now, in terms of schools, we still have de facto segregation. Some of it can be blamed on housing patterns and some can be blamed on the fact that so many white families have moved out to other districts. I served on the Phoenix Elementary School district where it's about 85% Hispanic now. that the resources of the city in government ought to be available to all citizens no matter where they live. But if you look at some of the school districts and there were 13 in the Phoenix Union district; Phoenix Union District now has become a minority. Take a district like Madison where the wealth is much greater, per child. Compare it with Phoenix Elementary even though the wealth is here, there's limitations in terms of what you can spend. And certainly with the business growing down here I'm hoping that we will have better access to the resources.

There are people who say that money won't make a difference, but certainly in terms of facilities; in terms of teachers, teachers pay and, and all of these things, it does make a difference. I'm sore to read statistics that say that Arizona is near the bottom of the list, 49th or so in terms of the amount of money they put up for education. I strongly advocate for education. Head Start for instance, I've been working with Head Start for over 30 years now. When I started there were about 170 children in the Head



Start program. Children can learn from three to five and I think we need to put more money into that. Also into upgrading some of our educational practices.

PS: Were you involved in the Civil Rights Movement in the '60s?

CG: I was involved to an extent. I was a member of the NAACP and supported it. I wasn't one of the ones out in the front there. Lincoln Ragsdale and George Benjamin Brooks were two of the more vocal ones in terms of the Civil Rights. I was certainly concerned and I did what I could from my where I was.

PS: Were you out at any of the demonstrations?

CG: I would march at some of them. I wasn't in the forefront.

PS: What do you remember about that period? Were there any particular marches or demonstrations that you remember?

CG: Yes, there was one there at 16th Street and Van Buren where they had a sit-in because the drugstore there wouldn't sit people. Downtown Woolworths there's a candy place over there and they had a march down to the Capitol in terms of opening up public accommodation.

PS: You took part in that?

CG: To a limited degree.

PS: So your whole family was somewhat involved?

CG: To a limited extent.

PS: Did you ever think growing up that things would change as much as they have? Something better for us and that good minded people would recognize the fact that we're supposed to be the leaders in this nation, in this country, in the world rather. Our democratic ideals should be extended to all people so I worked where I could in terms of furthering that.

One of the things that I did do when I was with the Phoenix Union High School District, was that I had a personal battle with the Superintendent who said, he wouldn't give Goode a job even if he had to because of his attitude. Well, my attitude was that people here at Carver were deserving of equipment and supplies and all of those things. Mr. Robinson did let me work with the budget and the bookstore . and all of those of things. So I pushed him and they did take all of the children and { the teachers as I indicated to the school district. I was the last one but I was the one who had to fight to get in. At Phoenix Union for instance, I believed so much in education and would talk about public education being free, but where students had to buy their books and sometimes it was \$30 or so. And there was transportation-we don't



have buses for the kids. And lunches. I believe very strongly that unless you have proper nutrition, it affects your capability to learn and to grow. So, at Phoenix Union, after operating the bookstore I was able to get the ruling from the state to rent the books to kids for fifty cents and that sort of took care of that. It helped them. Then we entered into Federal lunch program and other things trying to keep young people in school. The last ten years was trying to keep them in school there at Phoenix Union. I think we were successful to a large degree.

PS: You mentioned you were fairly popular as -being elected to the City Council. Did you ever think about running for a higher office?

CG: Thought about it. And I remember one year, where a lady came to me and said, "Mr. Goode why don't run for Mayor?" I tell, you I said "You know, I need about ten thousand dollars to run for Council and the price has really escalated since and about fifty thousand to run for Mayor." She went out and she circulated petitions and then came back to me. She wasn't able to raise that kind of money. You know, you've got to do a credible job of things you need in order to run. Then when Goddard decided to run for Governor and he resigned the Council, that left eight of us to pick an interim Mayor. At one time I had four votes and Paul Johnson had four votes. But I couldn't get the fifth vote. So the vote went over to Johnson. Now if you look at qualifications, there was Calvin Goode with a Bachelors, a Masters and so many years on the City Council and older. But that wasn't the determining factor; so he became Mayor. In *The Gazette*, if you're interested, I'll show you the paper where they printed two papers. One said Calvin Goode Takes Over As Mayor; and the other was Paul Johnson Takes Over As Mayor. Because they weren't sure who was going to become Mayor until the vote was taken.

PS: Were you disappointed?

CG: To a degree. I felt that I was the most qualified. There were others who felt the same way. But in this case the most qualified person didn't get the position.

PS: Ever think of running for Congress?

CG: No.

PS: Governor?

CG: No. No. You know, politics now is so costly and unless you've got some funds to do it, it's difficult to compete. But people have asked me about that and they tell me even now they miss me on the City Council and wish I was back there. They ask whether or not I was going to run again and these sorts of things, but I have shifted. In fact, when we came out with the term limits, I could have served because it wasn't real retroactive. I could have served eight more years. But 22 years is a long time. I made a number of decisions that helped to steer in the right direction.



You know where the overpass is at 16th Street, south of Jefferson? I remember when I went on the City Council, I said I voted for that. Someone said, "no, you didn't." Some staff furnished me some information so it was included in a bond issue but it was a general kind of one so they didn't use the money for that purpose. So I started agitating for that and Margaret Hance said "well, you'll probably never get it." I will say, it took nine years, but we finally got it built there.

One year, you remember when all of the bridges were out except the one in Tempe. One of the council members said to me, "She's going to wait on Orham Dam." And I said Orham Dam may never be built and folks need to connect South Phoenix to North Phoenix with the bridges. It took a while but we finally got them. One of the Council members told that the last bridge was going to get, Goode. Well, I said, "we'll see" and we got **ih Avenue and 35th Avenue**. Those were things that we needed.

PS: You've always lived, near Jefferson and 16th Street.

CG: I live at 1508 East Jefferson Street since 1955. And prior to that time I lived on the other side of the river.

PS: Why do you choose to live there ? Why do you continue to live there? You could live anywhere you want right now.

CG: Well I don't want to live anywhere else. I like where I live; but I can remember when a lady said to my wife, "There's a house for sale on our block, why don't you move up? Looks like you're a good family and you can send your kids to good schools." She said, "Why, don't you come and move into our neighborhood and help us to build up our neighborhood?" We do have what we call the Eastlake Park Association and we've been able to get some houses built in the neighborhood. Eastlake Park improved. I don't have a problem with the crime that they say is in my neighborhood and our sons all went to Phoenix Union and the youngest went to Central High School because they closed Phoenix Union. We fought that for about 11 years. But they finally closed it. So I'm comfortable where I live and I don't plan to move anywhere else.

PS: You have lived there almost 50 years.

CG: Yeah.

PS: Tell me a little about your neighborhood and how you've seen it change. You're part of the Eastlake Park Neighborhood Association. What was it like in 1954 when you moved in?

CG: They neighborhood has changed. A number of the African-Americans have moved out. At one time that was where a lot of the African-American professional people lived. They moved out so we have a higher concentration of Hispanics now in our neighborhood. The Booker T. Washington Redevelopment Area was from Fifth to Twelfth Street. At that time we had outdoor privies and a lot of run down places.



But we have some condos at ih Street and Washington. We have some businesses that moved in.

We've have Washington Housing Project that has moved in, so there's been a general upgrading. Then we came in with another redevelopment plan from Twelfth to Thirteenth Street. We have a number of houses that have been built on Monroe Street from Twelfth to Thirteenth. It was replanted from 50 to 60 feet and some nice homes are in there. Then we have Eastlake from Thirteenth down to Sixteenth Street. We've got a few homes in there we need to rebuild also.

In Eastlake Park there's been an improvement to the gym. Randy Johnson has provided some money so that the ball field in the back there will be renovated and that's under way now. The Arizona Civil Rights Memorial is right on the front of the Eastlake Park area. If you haven't seen it, sometime, you ought to stop by and see it.

At the Booker T. Washington Child Development Center we started out with 60 and now we're up to 177, I believe, with Head Start children. There are still some vacant lots and we're still working on that. In fact, we meet once a month and had a meeting last Tuesday.

PS: Eastlake Park itself has always been kind of a community center with park buildings there. You live right across the street from there.

CG: That is correct. And I have some postcards of Eastlake Park and I had them enlarged. At that time there was a lake in the back and looking at it, it kind of looks like Encanto Park. Many people will remark on that, but the folks wanted the lake filled in; and a baseball diamond in the back there. The memorial there at Eastlake shows you what they had at one time and a number of different things. One of my friends said he can remember that there were two alligators in that lake. He said one of them got out, crawled down to the Salt River and got away. Now we do know that the Salt River at one time did flow, so there may be some truth in there.

PS: I remember I interviewed Bennie Gonzalez for this series that we're doing and he talked about growing up in Phoenix and going to the swimming pool there at East Lake Park, but they wouldn't let them swim in that pool all the time. Only certain days of the week there were restrictions like that.

CG: I don't remember those restrictions, I do know that other pools in the city were restricted to both groups that there was a time when the park was owned by the Transit System and they used it to turn around of the trolleys that went down Washington. Those tracks are still there, they just covered them up.

PS: I remember going there in the '70s to cover the Juneteenth Celebration.

CG: Yes.

PS: **coleman** was one of the leaders of that. Do you remember that time?



PS: Oh, yes, I participated in much of that. She started it over at Dunbar School and then she brought it over to East Lake. For this coming year, they're planning to have some of those events in January and February, saying it gets too hot. There are some citizens who feel that it should continue there but we'll see what happens.

PS: June is too hot to celebrate. I guess you could move it. Did you have role models as you were growing up and as you got into politics? Can you think of any people that were your role models for your involvement?

CG: I'm a little older than Martin Luther King but certainly he was one that I certainly had a lot of respect for. Jesse Jackson is another. I remember participating in a number of events when he was here. Certainly George Washington Carver, a man who was a great agricultural scientist. I can remember inviting an engineer down to tour and ask him if he knew who he was and he said "Yeah, he was that peanut man." So I had an opportunity to education him in terms of what and who he was and the accomplishments he's made to this country.

PS: Are you still serving on the Phoenix Elementary School Board?

CG: I was appointed for a two-year term by Sandra Dowling and then I was elected last fall.

PS: You're not really retired then, are you? You're still serving on the school board?

CG: My wife indicates I'm just as busy if not busier than I was when I was on the Council or working with the High School District.

PS: I know one of the things that you've been working on for the past two years is this Museum and Cultural Center; why don't you tell me a little about that?

CG: Carver was open for the class of 1926 and closed in '54. Then the building was owned by the Phoenix Union High School District and they had offices here, in fact, they had offices in this room. They converted the gym into a warehouse. They had a maintenance headquarters just to the east and to the south. They built some big warehouses in the back; there's 4.8 acres of land here. So they occupied it for a number of years and then they moved out to 2526 West Osborn.

The Alumni had permission to come and meet here. It finally got to the point of asking the school district to give the building to the alumni. They found out that there was a state law that said they had to get market price or something for the building. So they were able to work out something allowing for the depreciation and removal of the buildings to reduce the price. Then they wrote into the deed, a deed restriction that it must remain as a museum and a cultural center. We did raise enough money with some help from the State Parks Board and then from the Alumni to buy the building from the High School District. 4.8 acres of



land, plus the buildings and then we discovered we needed a new roof and asbestos abated in the roof. Presently we're working on re-piping the building. Seventy-five year-old galvanized piping become obsolete and we have breaks from time to time. We also need to upgrade the electrical. We had a situation that water in the electrical met down underneath here and causes really some serious problems.

The other thing we need is to deal with heating and cooling. The old system of heating and cooling with the boiler was abandoned by the High School District. They put some heat pumps around the building. In fact, the one heat pump is heating and cooling this place and I turn it on only when we use it because I'm trying to keep in mind the cost of operating this plant.

We have a couple of warehouses in the back that we leased out to provide some of the operating monies. In the last five years we have been developing and changing the museum. As you can see, we've developed a great deal of the library here because we think that people ought to know the culture of African-Americans.

We've also have some other exhibits and artifacts here. We have some John Waddell statues. There is a duplicate set of them here. Those were the girls that were killed in the Sunday School bombing back in '63, I believe. So if you have time, I certainly would like you to see those.

We're not going to segregate or discriminate; but we do think it's important for us to know the culture of the groups. We have a Hispanic Museum here; we have an Indian Museum; we have an Irish Cottage and so on. So I think it's important that we understand the contributions that African-Americans have made to this nation.

We have a little cabinet over there that talks about Dr. Daniel Hail Williams who is reputed to be the first person to operate on the human heart and he's African- American. Charles Drew, he developed blood plasma. Matthew Henson was with Admiral Peary when is discovered the North Pole. Matthew Henson of the Housing) Project is named after him.

But anyway we're we've come a ways and we're still developing the Museum and the Cultural Center here at Carver. We also have the shop building over here that we've named the Dr. Jay Eugene Grigsby Art Center. Once we get our building in shape, we intend to develop that for art.

PS: Must be a lot of memories for you being back here at this school.

CG: Yes there is. I went one year as a student; then I came back here and worked for five years as school accountant. Then the last five years I worked here as a volunteer. So there's eleven years in this building.

PS: When you walk down the halls here, what kind of thoughts do you have? Do you remember what it was before?



CG: Yes, and it has changed somewhat so your thinking has to change along with it. But yes, as a student, I was very happy here with the students. As I said, I was small, but they all treated me nice and respected me. Then as an employee here the teachers certainly respected me. I requisitioned to get the books for the students over here. Before that they had to go over to Phoenix Union and get their books and bring over. It made it more convenient here. Then I was in charge of the athletic events, and selecting the teachers and requesting pay for them and all of those kinds of things. It was a great experience for me.

PS: How do you feel now about seeing people back in here instead of a warehouse?

CG: Well, I think that's the way it ought to be. The memory of Dr. George Washington Carver. We have pictures of teachers who were here when it was closed and we're in the process of getting oral interviews for each one of them, so we can have those here at Carver.

PS: You mentioned about the air conditioning system. One of the things I like to ask all the people that lived here in Arizona many years ago was about their memories of summer in Phoenix and in Arizona. How did you keep cool? What do you remember about growing up in the summers here?

CG: Well I can stand much more heat than I can cold and down at Gila Bend we didn't have any air conditioning. I guess if you haven't been exposed to something, you don't miss it as much. Certainly we'd try to work early in the mornings and in the heat of the day we'd take off and turn to picking cotton. When air conditioning came along we tried to take advantage of it but it wasn't a great big concern to me back then.

PS: As a kid were there things that you did to keep cooler in the summertime?

CG: I remember some people would take a sheet or something and hang up to the windows so the wind would blow by. We knew that evaporated water would cool something. I remember that they would take a line of fabric or something around it and put, uh, wet them and that would tend to cool some of the water. I think that's what they did.

I remember that they would take some _____ or something around it and put, uh, wet them and that would tend to cool some of the water. I think that's what they did. I remember that they would take some _____ or something around it and put, uh, wet them and that would tend to cool some of the water. I think that's what they did.

But at Gila Bend we didn't have electric and we didn't have running water and those kinds of things. And as I indicated earlier, if you didn't have them, it's not easy to give them up.

PS: People today can't imagine living without their electricity and running water. When did you first get electricity? Can you remember that?

CG: I'm trying to remember. Probably when I moved down here to Phoenix. Because in, Prescott at the time, we didn't have electric. We stayed out from town about three and a half miles. But later on electric



came out there too.(So I guess maybe when I came down to Phoenix, we didn't really have electric) '(

PS: You mentioned about the floods that washed away the bridges; do you remember any other particular periods of floods or, or droughts when you were growing up?

CG: I remember when we lived out from Buckeye there in a camp. This is sort of to the West of Buckeye. I remember Dad coming in, I was real small, and taking us out of tents or what it was. He took us out of the flood waters down there. I think maybe that was the only other time that I can recall.

PS: Do you remember when the Salt River was a flowing river?

CG: I remember when the water was almost up to the banks.. But they came in and dammed the water so that only in cases of heavy rains or when they let water out of the dams would it really get real high. I remember a number of instances when I lived South or North of the river, the river getting up.

PS: Some people have talked about going fishing there as kids before it was all dammed up. There was water in it more often and you could go down there and fish.

CG: I've heard people say that but I never did fish.

PS: As you look back over your life, what accomplishments are you proudest of?

CG: That's a very difficult question when you try to limit. I'm proud of Calvin, I'm proud of my family and I'm certainly proud of the opportunity to do something to help other people. I have them coming to me frequently. In fact I went to a church; what is today? Wednesday? Monday, I went to a church and the minister came up to me and said, "Mr. Goode, we're certainly grateful to you for what you did in helping us to get our church back." City had gone in and got the property and was going to let a developer come and use it and it fell through so I had to step in and assist him.

I'm certainly pleased to be able to help, children. Head Start as I mentioned to you. I was very pleased to be able to help high school students and encourage them and many of them still come to me and express appreciation for what I've been able to do.

I also work with senior housing. A nursing home had to close not too long ago because 54 beds just couldn't make it profitable.

Just the opportunity to be in a place where I could help and certainly all of the 22 years on the City Council. I didn't achieve everything I wanted to but I was able to be there and raise questions and push for things. Many of the folks call me the conscience of the Council. So, I'm, pleased that the Lord gave me that opportunity to be there to make a difference in the lives of people. So I guess if I summed it all up, the opportunity to be of some service to people.



PS: Do you have advice for young people today that are just starting in their lives and their careers? What kind of advice do you offer?

CG: I say to young people that the best computer made is a brain, use it. I say to them get as much education as possible, it will be helpful. Certainly you're going to run into people who want to take things away or limit your ability to achieve but persevere. I say to young people, have a strong faith and belief in God. If you face difficulties, we've face greater difficulties in the past you just keep on pushing ahead.

PS: Do you have a particular legacy that you'd like people to remember you for?

CG: I guess the legacy that Dr. Martin Luther King used when he said, "don't talk about my education". Don't talk about all the awards. I got a lot of plaques but remember me as a person who tried to do the best thing for people. I think you're aware of the fact that they honored with me by naming one of the buildings downtown after me. The Calvin C. Goode Municipal Building.

People have come to me many, many times to tell me they appreciate what I've been able to do. I think I've had some part in helping others to achieve.

PS: You mentioned when you were first running for the City Council that some people said you were too timid. I've heard people say that you're very soft spoken. Do you think they are misled by that sometimes?

CG: Sometimes people hear me make speeches and they're surprised at the volume of my voice. I'm comfortable speaking with people and very influential people. A lady came to our house last night, who's homeless and I have worked for the homeless. Thirteen years on the homeless shelter at 1209 West Madison. So, yes, I can be soft spoken but I can also pound the table whenever it's needed.

PS: Well, I think we're about out of time for this morning. Anything you wanted to say that I didn't ask you about?

CG: No, I think you raised a lot of questions with me and I will be interested sometime in the future to see how it came out.

PS: We'll give you a chance to do that. Thank you.

CG: Thank you.

