

**PETWORTH LIBRARY - "IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL"  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**WASHINGTON, DC**

**Oral History Interview**

**with  
BUDDY MOORE  
by  
CARMEN BOLT**

**PETWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY  
November 9, 2019**

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NARRATOR: Buddy Moore  
DATE: November 9, 2019  
INTERVIEWER: Carmen Bolt  
PLACE: Petworth Neighborhood Library

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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**Carmen Bolt 00:04**

My name is Carmen Bolt. I'm a PhD student at American University. I work on the Humanities Truck that we're currently sitting inside out here at Petworth Library. It is November 9, 2019. And it's around midday. I don't know, one o'clock or something, maybe two. And we are out here conducting oral history interviews about Petworth. So if you don't mind introducing yourself and then we'll jump right into the interview.

**Buddy Moore 00:31**

I am Buddy Moore. I formerly lived in the Park View neighborhood.

**Carmen Bolt 00:36**

Okay, wonderful. And so, can you just tell me your experience? Did you grow up in Petworth or did you? Yeah. How long have you been a resident of this general area?

**Buddy Moore 00:47**

Okay. I grew up as a teenager in the [inaudible] neighborhood, as a matter of fact, I lived directly across the street from Cardozo High School and I attended Cardozo High School. After I was married, I moved to the Park View neighborhood in the Georgia Avenue, Park Road area. And that's where I raised a part of my family with the second marriage. So that was a great experience. At the beginning, of course, unfortunately, after living in the Park View neighborhood for maybe two or three years, the drug epidemic hit. And that sort of devastated the Park View neighborhood for a period of time. So that was that was just a period in which the neighborhood didn't know whether we would be

able to survive in that whole drug epidemic because there was just drug activity everywhere. And unfortunately, I feel many of the residents who lived in the Park View neighborhood moved away. Some of them moved to Prince George's County because they just couldn't take the devastation that was taking place in the Park View neighborhood.

**Carmen Bolt** 02:07

Sure that makes sense. And so what period of time if you have years about was this drug epidemic happening?

**Buddy Moore** 02:14

I would say it began probably around 1982 and it lasted until close to 2000.

**Carmen Bolt** 02:27

And was that when you also decided to leave Park View or what's been your transition from neighborhood to neighborhood?

**Buddy Moore** 02:36

Okay, now, I lived in the Park View neighborhood until May of last year of 2018. And that's when I moved from Park View into the Tenleytown area into a senior building. I was beginning to age. I'm living in a three bedroom home that's beginning to be too much for me to handle. So I had to move into a senior building which is really great. I do in fact, come back to the Park View neighborhood and I spend much time. Matter of fact, I spend more time in the Park View neighborhood than I do in the Tenleytown neighborhood. Because I visit the Senior Wellness Center practically every day.

**Carmen Bolt** 03:20

That's great. So in addition to the epidemic you saw happening in the 80s through the early 2000s. What other sort of changes did you see over your decades living in the Park View neighborhood?

**Buddy Moore** 03:31

Yeah, well, unfortunately, again, some of the businesses moved out. And there was difficulty in shopping in the Park View neighborhood. Many of the residents have to drive either to Virginia or to Maryland or to further parts for the areas within the District of Columbia. So there were just a few places to get basic things that we needed. So that was not something that we looked forward to, that is having to drive from the where you live just to get the basic staples.

**Carmen Bolt** 04:02

Yeah, absolutely. And so what caused to that sort of transition? Why were businesses moving out?

**Buddy Moore** 04:10

Well, there was just too much violence in the neighborhood and businesses that felt that they couldn't survive with so much negative activity going on around their particular near their particular sites, so you just couldn't and then of course, the residents of Park View were even afraid to go on to Georgia Avenue to shop at those businesses because fear of retaliation or fear that they stuff would happen to them during their travels.

**Carmen Bolt** 04:42

Yes, so Okay, um, those are some of the more significant changes you've seen. Well, do you have any favorite memories or experiences during your time on Park View that you want to share?

**Buddy Moore** 04:56

Now, we did form an Orange Hat group (neighborhood watch group). And our job was to speak with the drug dealers and just let them know that we didn't appreciate them coming into our neighborhood and causing problems. And we feel that we were successful in having them move to maybe other areas or leaving our neighborhoods. So that was a plus.

**Carmen Bolt** 05:22

Yeah, that's amazing. Can you tell me a little bit more about that Orange Hat group, like who decided to start forming that and what were your methods? I guess of talking with these different groups?

**Buddy Moore** 05:31

Yes. Well, the Orange Hat sort of group originated a number of years ago. I can't remember exactly who started the Orange Hat group. But I was somewhat familiar with their methods. Of course, at the methods that we personally began to form the onset group for the thought me neighborhood it was the group we call the police area 302 Orange Hat group, - 302 that was the area that the police had designated for 303, 304 ... and we were the area that the 302. So our group was called the PSA 302 Orange Hat group. And again, our goal was not to confront anyone. Our goal was just to educate those persons that were in the neighborhood doing negative things. We even talked with those persons hanging on the corner about getting jobs. Because we felt that if they wanted a job, maybe

we could help them out. So we just walked the neighborhood with our orange hats and just talking with some of the people, positive people, people negative people, and again, we feel that we made the difference because it did. It did sort of cut down on some of the violence or cut down on a lot of these sort of ... just these people hanging out on the streets. We think that some of the residents who would have moved and decided they were going to stay in the neighborhood sort of stabilized. And then of course, eventually, it began to improve quite a bit, which now, it's a rather comfortable neighborhood.

**Carmen Bolt** 07:20

That's gonna be my next question. So you've seen it change. You've seen the community in a bunch of different periods of transition. So if you had to describe it today, what words would you use to describe it?

**Buddy Moore** 07:33

Okay, it's beginning to be a neighborhood where people feel somewhat safe. They feel that they can now walk to certain businesses that the business of becoming in and if not on Georgia Avenue itself, in a store on the 14th and Urban Street area. Even in the Georgia Avenue, Kansas Avenue area, so we're seeing some positive things. With the bookstores that's come in a number of restaurants that have come in. So we see that the neighborhood has definitely changed from what it was back in the early 80s and throughout the 90s.

**Carmen Bolt** 08:14

Definitely. And we spoke with some individuals at the Taste of Petworth event. And they also mentioned a lot of changes in the Petworth area over the past decade or so, as a result of redevelopment and other things. And have you also noticed a lot of changes that have come from redevelopment and even gentrification in this area?

**Buddy Moore** 08:32

Yes. Now, of course, the fear is that there will be too much gentrification that that's sort of the fear at this time. But hopefully, things will stabilize, especially if housing prices were to stabilize more people will be able to afford to stay where they are, or bring people in who ordinarily could not afford the high rents and the high prices of homes for sale. Now I've seen a great positive change in the Petworth areas and in the Park View area over the past 3, 4, 5 years.

**Carmen Bolt** 09:06

That's great. So it's about finding that kind of perfect balance right, like the improvements and, and new businesses and stuff coming in but also know, you know displacement as a result of that. Thank you for sharing a little bit about that. I want to be respectful of your time. So we'll close with this question. Is there anything else you would like to share for the record during this interview today about your life or your experience in Park View, Petworth, or anything at all?

**Buddy Moore** 09:32

Oh, no, just that the main thing that I would like to state is that persons who've lived here for quite a while I just want to encourage them to hang on I think this help on the way when it comes to health and I think the mayor and the City Council are beginning to come together to figure out what can they do to to make sure that persons to live in this area for quite a while are able to stay can attract persons who may not have been able to purchase the home in the past, they may be able to come in and purchase a home because the mayor and the Council will have the ability to make some type of regulations or pass some legislation that will sort of stabilize the housing market, both in sale and rent.

**Carmen Bolt** 10:30

Okay, thank you so much for sharing that on camera here. Thank you for your time today. I'll let you head off to your next meeting. But it's so nice to talk to you.

**Buddy Moore** 10:38

Thank you very much. Nice talking to you.