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IMOGENE: I went high school and finished in college. So, I was a part of the last class at Swift College. It was 1955. I had two years of really... I really enjoyed my two years of college. It was a fun time, and we had several guys from out of town that was in our class. So, we had a lot of fun. It was really good. Then of course, I had... Several members of my family have been to Swift before I came along, and one sister that was there. And it was just really enjoyable, and it was a foundation for the rest of my life. I can look at the schools, the high schools, and all that – that I have attended their graduations and all – is so different than what we went through because now they can wear any kind of shoes, flip flops or anything. We had to wear.. The women, ladies, had to wear pumps, and the men had to wear shoes – nice, shiny shoes – and shirt and tie. Now they come the way they want to. And I just recently went to my granddaughter's graduation, and just to see the difference in the way they acted at the graduation and everything, and thinking back to the way we did at Swift, it makes you very thankful. And the respect that we knew to give people, especially elderly people and all, I mean it's just so different now than it was, back when we were at Swift. So, as the years go by and the more you hear about Swift, it makes you very thankful to have been a part of it.

IMOGENE: Having the experience of two years of college right at your hometown, that was a that was a blessing.

MARY FAE: Well, they [people who went to be in military service] just came back in and fit in because they were on the football team and basketball team, and they just came back like heroes, as far as we were concerned. I mean the girls, you know. We just kind of looked up to them.

IMOGENE: I just wish that they hadn't have been... I wish they had... It would be so nice if it was still there because I would like for my children to have had the same experience that I had, going to Swift and being part of it.

MARY FAE: And too, then you think that if it had stayed that, eventually, it would have been a four-year college. That's what I think.

IMOGENE: I have heard so many Whites, people that are in the community, they're sorry now that they took it down. Because it would have been a help for both races. I know a lady that I exercise with, she and her husband, when she came to the Museum and saw the mural on the wall of the School... She had tears in her eyes because she said, "Oh"... because she remembered it because she grew up in Rogersville. And then moved away, but recently she has come back. And she saw that, and it just overwhelmed her.

MARY FAE: It would have been an asset to Rogersville for it to have stayed because I think it would have continued to have grown. And then you'd have more people coming in, and it would've gotten bigger.

IMOGENE: It closed in '63 because my sister went there. I think she graduated in '63 from the high school.

MARY FAE: They must have torn it down ... but you have so many people that just don't take interest in it because like Nelson Merry, are you familiar with that? I mean it's just sitting there. Nobody is doing

anything. And it was so strange... I used to teach it a little school down in, you know, well, it was considered as Sevier County, but it was sort of right at the point. It was a little one-room school, and they went in there... I don't know when or what. That school is gone. I mean there's nothing there but just land. They just tore it down. And you know, they should have kept it because one-room schools you don't see them anymore. I mean they really go down in history, especially with that one because before I started there, they were having trouble with a little White girl that they wanted to attend. And she eventually came and started going to school there. That was sort of at the beginning of Integration. But when I went down in there and saw it gone, I couldn't believe it.

IMOGENE: We lived out, and we were bussed in. Before we were bussed in, we were cabled in. Sent a cab out to bring us into town. It's part of Hawkins County, but it's out. Anyway, when we were in grade school, we were in between Rogersville and Surgoinsville. So, we could have gone to Surgoinsville, or we could have gone to Hawkins County. But by the time we were little, we had older brothers that were already in Hawkins County, and they were driving to there. So, we all, the younger ones, all went to Price Public. So, we didn't have to go to Surgoinsville.

MARY FAE: Dandridge. Because well, my mother and father went there, and uncles and cousins and just about everybody that started out in college went up there. So that's how. The time come for me, and they shipped me up there. I stayed on campus. Like if you were dating, and on Sunday was the only time that you could have a date to come to see you, and we had to go in the chapel. We would have... The teachers would have to sit out in the hall, and you know how chapels was, like church benches. And you'd have your little friend on the church bench, and that would be the only way you could talk to him. I mean, you know, you better not try to kiss or nothing because if you did, they would call you out. I remember that, and you couldn't come down until they called you. You know, you couldn't be loitering around in the hall. So, they would call, like, "Mary Fae!" and you would go. And there would be your date down at the foot of the steps, and you would go in the chapel. About 30 minutes, you might sit in there and talk to him, and that was on Sunday. So, I had some good times there, real good times. But it was like a family though. Very strict, which makes you appreciate things down through life for being as strict as it was. Although we had some that was a little on the wild side, but most of them followed orders. It was just a good atmosphere.

MARY FAE: And see, like, in Rogersville, the people that live there probably never would have gone to college if the school hadn't been there because they wouldn't have ventured out anywhere else. But by being there and being local, and at that time tuition wasn't that high. You know, you could go very easily. Plus, the fact, I'm sure, that the County paid something for them to come. So, it has helped a whole lot of people.