

Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project  
 Charles (Charlie) Turner Interview Abstract  
 October 15, 2018

Interviewee	Charles (Charlie) Turner
Year of birth	1945
Place of birth	Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas
Interviewer	Camille Hatcher
Interview date	2018-10-15
Interview location	Charlie's Barbershop; Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas
Keywords	<p>Turner, Charles (Charlie)          Turner, Marilyn          Compton, Neil Dr.          Horton, Bill          Walton, Sam          Hatcher, Camille          Bella Vista, Benton County, Arkansas          Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas          Vaughn, Benton County, Arkansas          Arkansas Regional Airport; Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas          Rainbow Curve; Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas          Airports          Barbers          Beaver Lake          Cooper Communities          Education          Elections          Farming          Medical care          Moonshiners          Politics          Recreation          Roads          Schools          Trails          Walmart          Walton Family Foundation</p>
Description	<p>A Bentonville barber for over 50 years (2018), Charlie Turner has listened to hundreds of stories. Now, it's time to share his stories.</p> <p>Turner recalls school, family, and farm life in Northwest Arkansas in the 1950s-60s. Born in Little Rock in 1945 and adopted at six months, Turner grew up in Vaughn. He graduated from Bentonville High School in 1963, part of a class of 98. Turner's dad was a farmer and carpenter. His mother helped on the farm and worked as a school cook. Being a farm family in the 1950s meant growing alfalfa and clover for the quail and, after getting a freezer, butchering beef and hogs in the fall. After school</p>

	<p>Turner would hand-milk cows (something he is glad to never do again) and cut weeds using mules until Dad got a tractor. Fun times included Saturday cartoons in on the family television. Best times were spent roaming around, swimming in the creek, hunting, fishing and motorcycle riding. In the summers he worked to save \$300 for his first car, a 1950 Plymouth. Rainbow Curve, until the stoplights went in, was perfect for seeing how fast your car would go.</p> <p>The interview is filled with stories related to Turner's years as a barber starting with school in Little Rock as an apprentice and later recalling the close call of almost buying a building that would have major structural problems for his shop. He talks of his mentor, Bill Horton, and the people of all ages, politics, and habits who've sat in his chair. Turner reminisces about the times haircuts were \$1.50; how, thanks to his idea, local barbershops began to close on Mondays; and cutting Sam Walton's hair. He names the businesses and civic buildings that surrounded the Square in the 1950s-60s: the Royal Theatre, LeFevre's and other clothing stores, lawyers, jewelers to name a few.</p> <p>Turner believes the growth of Bella Vista played a role in the growth and changes in Bentonville in the 1960s. People moving to Bella Vista came to Bentonville to shop, bringing with them new demographics, expectations, needs, and politics.</p> <p>Turner lived in Benton County when alcohol was not legally sold. But, as his stories of moonshining tell, there were ways around that. In other stories, Turner shares his thoughts on both the value of Beaver Lake with its ability to supply water to the area and the impact of the airport on the area and lives of the affected local farmers. He remembers the quality of medical service provided by Dr. Compton and his work with the Buffalo River.</p> <p>When this interview was conducted, Turner was running for Mayor of Bentonville. He discusses his platform issues of City Trail safety and the Eighth Street Project.</p> <p>Turner says family and customers are his life. Married to Marilyn since 1963, the two continue to live in Bentonville and enjoy time with family. Retirement will come...his mentor, and a sign in his shop, remind him he will know when the time comes. Just not today!</p>
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Comments	
Interview sidebar	Talking of what Beaver Lake brings to Northwest Arkansas, Turner says “we grew up with two wells...and had to juggle so we didn’t run out of water...Now you’ve got rural water out of Beaver and I wonder sometimes what this county would be if we didn’t have it...looking at it now, without water, you got nothing.” [01:06:26]