

Interview with Dr. Andre Lee

**Total Runtime: 58:29**

[[00:00:00]] PG WATKINS: So... recording. Great! So, yeah, I'm here, I'm PG. I'm the director and co-founder of Black Bottom Archives, erm... here on this Zoom call on September 17 with Dr. Andre Lee, and really looking forward to our conversation. So, er... as I shared before our call last week, just, you know, these interviews are usually pretty informal for the most part, you know? Just an opportunity to share whatever stories you have that you wanted to share. I know you have a lot of family connections to Black Bottom, and so... really wanna just make space for whatever it is you'd like to offer, to share with us... erm...

DR. ANDRE LEE: OK...

PG WATKINS: To put down in our digital archive. But...

DR. ANDRE LEE: OK...

PG WATKINS: ...let's start off with the basic questions, you know what I mean? Just... if you wanna share...

DR. ANDRE LEE: Mmm-hmm...

PG WATKINS: ...erm... your initial relationship with Black Bottom. If you lived there or had family that lived there.

DR. ANDRE LEE: I grew up, lived there. I wasn't born there, but, er... I lived there. I was born in Trinity Hospital, which is located at where Gratiot and 375 came together. OK? And, er... I grew up at Gratiot and Mack on Elmwood. OK? And I went to school in that area, and so... During the time I was there, there were a lotta... lotta gangs. It was all Black... and a lotta gangs. And the only reason I didn't get to be a gang member was because I was just... too little! (*Laughs*) That's the only reason they didn't take me. But they *protected* me, because I grew up... And Black Bottom, during those days, er... The white people, when they patrolled, the police, they patrolled in those big Continentals or those big Impalas. Er... they called 'em the 'Big...' We called 'em the 'Big Four', because there was always four big bully-looking guys that came through and they had a big shotgun always across the back of the window, in the back. OK? Er... and... So, I was very familiar with the Brewster Center, er... the Jefferson Street Center down on, er, Jefferson and Mack... and, erm... So, you know, that was my—my thing. My mother, when I was little, took me... er... to the, erm... Flame Show Bar, my brother and I when we were, like, four or five years old. And I—I think you got some pictures of some old dancers that were there. I was on stage— She put me on stage with those dancers! (*Laughs*) OK? And they had just done a 'Dance of the—' Er... 'Dance of the Veils'. OK? Now, they weren't naked— but they (*laughs*) had... They called it 'Dance of the Veils'. And everybody just thought that was funny to have these two little boys up there on the stage at... at the time. So.. Why I remember that particular incident, I don't know! (*Laughs*) OK? But I do remember the Flame. I

remember the Twenty Grand. I would say I remember er... the Gotham. All of the old hotels. OK? And my mother was part of that social scene. And in one of the—

[[00:03:00]] DR. LEE: ...the pictures that you guys show, of er... er... two couples, sitting in a bar... I mean a... cocktail table. Er... that was my former... father and mother-in-law. That's...one of the couples. I was shocked! I looked, I said, "Oh, my God, what the heck!" (*Laughs*) You know. And of course, you know, Joe Louis was my—my uncle, on my— *distant* uncle on my grandfather's— I didn't know Joe. OK? I'll just... Lemme put it that... Make sure we're clear on that. But I did know his sisters. OK? And Aunt Emerald was one of his sisters, and *her* I remember very well. She was married to my grandfather's brother. So that's how we had that distant relative connection... Erm... And I grew up... er... My mother worked for CA Howlett Company [?] which was a barber and beauty supply company. Most people don't remember that, but he started on Brush Avenue and, you know, St. Antoine, which was the heart of the Black community at one point. And then he moved it over to Gratiot and Mack, my mother just simply followed. And Mr. Howlett was a very nice man. He helped me through college. He helped pay for my college, to be honest. He let me work there every summer. Er... I finished school, and, er... If I finished on Friday (*knocks on table*) Saturday I was workin'. Just like that, you know? If I had to go back to school New Year's Day, (*knocks on table*) I worked all the way through whatever. I mean, the man— for four years! (*Laughs*) And he taught me all, how to make all these beauty parlor products— personal [?]... I knew about hair-straight— radiotene [?] all of that stuff. And he taught me how to... We made it with big... *tubs*... in the back. OK? On a burner. And he showed me how to put the ingredients in the thing and stir it up and then we would pour it into jars and slap the label on 'em and... out the door they go to the barber and beauty supply c— er... shops... around the thing. And so Mr. Howlett never had kids. But he— That's why he— I guess he adopted me so much. Never had kids. So... Anyway, that, er... But the larger barber and beauty supply people put him out of business. But he was— He had a couple of friends that came up during that time. There were a couple of other Black inventors around... Oh, I wish I could remember this guy's name... They invented products that, er... er... people don't... that used for a long time, they didn't realize it— Curtis! Dr. Curtis. Curtis products. OK? Er... And one that's still on the market... Ringtone! Ring— er... Ring... Ah, but that was Sewell. That's still on the... and the— and the— and it's still around. His family is still runnin' it. OK? He invented this universal liquid ointment that you could put on— He claimed it could fix anything, but of course, it couldn't. But (*laughs*) he claimed it could!

[[00:06:00]] DR. LEE: And it sold everywhere! And his family's still sellin' the darned thing. He was coming through Detroit to work in the factories and he ran into Edgar Cayce. I don't know if you remember Edgar Cayce. He was a white guy back in the '40s that was considered to be a prophecy... kind of guy. Well, nationally-known guy. But he saw the tent where Edgar Cayce was holding a meeting. He went in there and Edgar Cayce told him, said, "You're going to Detroit to do a factory job." He said, "Don't take it. Go to Detroit—but you gotta do somethin' else." And that's how he managed to change and create this ointment. OK?

PG: Oh, wow...

DR. LEE: That's a true story. Now...

PG: (*chuckles*)

DR. LEE: My uncle, Frank Brown, was the one who used to put on all these shows for these entertainers. OK? He... I mean a lot of them. That's how I got to see Miles Mavely [Davis?] and James Brown up-close and personal on a little stage that probably wasn't any bigger than a foot or two off the floor, at the old Greystone. Most people don't remember the old Greystone, but I did, because my uncle— that's where he put all the shows on. And so I got to... I got to meet 'em, but I didn't really know 'em. But I got to meet 'em. For however quick that was. I was a little young snot back then. And so his ex-wife was the woman you see up on the... er, putting the sign up on the Palace...

PG: On the Paradise Theater?

DR. LEE: That's right. Paradise, yeah. On the Paradise. Now I've been to Paradise, too. Yeah, up there, that... that was Ernestine. Her and my mother were very close, very very close... You know, 'cause it was—

PG: You said her name was Ernestine. What's—what's her last name? Do you remember?

DR. LEE: Oh... Well, it was Brown at one time. It ain't that no more, but I forgot what it wa— She just died, too. She just died last year. She was ninety-something years old.

PG: Oh, wow.

DR. LEE: Yeah, sorry, it's not comin' to me...

PG: OK, no worries...

DR. LEE: Very— very pretty woman. Her and my mother, you know, were like sisters, and they were— they hung out together, and so... very wonderful, nice lady. Super nice lady. And I talked to her daughter, er... a couple nights ago, because she and I were together in the second grade. And... and her daughter Beverly has *all* those pictures, 'cause Frank took a lot of photos, black-and-white photos. I'm tellin' you, I— she won't let me see— She won't turn 'em loose! After I'd begged her— I even offered to *help* her! She won't share those dang photos. (*Laughs*) And you know, but— And she's got one sittin' on Joe Louis's lap, when she was a little girl. And, er... but I— When I come back to Detroit, I'm gonna go by there and I'm gonna try to sit with her and do my best to persuade her to let me see those— to at least let me *see* the rest of the photos. And I know he got— she got hundreds, so... Just hun— I mean, stuff that's *way* valuable. You'll— never been seen, anywhere. And she— she won't turn 'em loose, you know... but anyway...

PG: Yeah... yeah, you know some of that stuff feels... It just really is sacred...

[[00:09:00]] PG: ...to the family, to those memories, and you don't wanna...

DR. LEE: It *is* sacred towards her. She's an only child, so it was sacred to her... You know?  
And—

PG: Mm-hmm.

DR. LEE: ...and I don't know why she won't do it. But, er... She's weird. That's what I told her. She's weird. But I'll go by there and try to do it, the next time I come to Detroit. Now, obviously... I'm a retired hospital administrator. I used to run hospitals for a living. Er... I ran... I ran the old Highland Park General, which was up there on Webb and John C. Lodge. You can still see the building to the right as you're going north. They made it into an older folks' place. I ran that for four years and then I ran er... Sunday Hospital which was started by Dr. Sam Milton down in Red Rouge. OK? That was a family-owned place and I still... I ran that one for about four years, I ran Highland Park for four — that was a city-owned hospital, and then I ended up, er — another hospital in Fort Wayne don't count — but then I left there and I ended up down here at Medical College, and I ran their hospital for about... fifteen years. And then I came back to Detroit and worked for Detroit Medical Center for a while. OK? And, er... So... for about three or four years. And I was put on the Board of the Detroit Medical Society, and erm... You know, it was a — I'm a PhD not an MD. You know?(*Laughs*) And so, they... I was the only non-position on the Board and they— And I served on that Board for about ten, twelve years. But in part because I knew all of the old-timers. I knew all of the old— the old Black physicians, like Dr. Milton, who did not come out of a Black medical school, he came out of Brown, er... but super-smart man. And... and I knew Burton. I knew Dr. Burton and his wife. I knew Salisbury. I knew Lionel Swann. Er... Alma George and I were... thick as thieves—I knew her very well. I didn't know Thomas, but, er... but I did know... and, er... Oh... what was her—? See, I knew most of the (*indecipherable*) was on the Dunbar. OK? From the Dunbar Hospital. And, erm... So on the Board I tried to resurrect the Dunbar as a museum! Er... and got close, got a lot of money donated. Not enough, but, er... It's a historic building. And so it falls under the, er... It's been designated as historic, so it falls under the Michigan Law as... for Historical Buildings. So it can't just be renovated. It has to be done in a historic way. And that's where the money comes in. And I thought for a minute we were gonna get it from DMC, but DMC was... They ran into so much financial trouble! (*Laughs*) It was terrible. So...

PG: When did you try to— When were you trying to do that? When was that happening, that you were trying to get it to...?

DR. LEE (*overlap*): Oh, gosh, I—

DR. LEE: I'd say, eight, nine years ago now.

[[00:12:00]] PG: OK. Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: Yeah, I was still on the Board of the Medical Society, and it... It got a lot of support to do it. And I did renovate the inside, but the roof and the windows — 'cause it's leaking air through the windows — all of that, and through some of the walls, where the cement has broken away, it's so old...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: And, er... It, er... The Medical Society still owns it. They don't know what they gonna do with it. They—they can't maintain it, and they—they can't sell it, and nobody wants it! You know... I—I don't—I gave up. You know? And to... Talkin' to physicians is like herdin' cats. It's *real* hard! Real, real hard (*Laughs*) to do! So, just... just couldn't pull it off, you know? But, er... But, so... But I got deep into the history, quite a bit, and erm... er... So I—I'm sorry we couldn't do anything with it. And I still do the medical—the newsletter for the Medical Society, so they still include me in on the meetings, the virtual meetings, and all that kinda stuff. Erm... I... and I'm still heavily involved with the, erm... And I knew all the Black administrators that were around, er, in Detroit, obviously, you know. Even when I go... When I came back there... two or three of us still. Herman Glass was still around. He's gone now. Er, er... Paul Allen. Ed Thomas who was over at St. Albert, the emergency r—... at, erm... Detroit Medical. Emergency room, er... Detroit, 'scuse me. That's what I'm trying to think of... And, er... All of those guys kind of—Elliott Robbins—they all kind of mentored me when I first came out as a young guy, er... outta... fresh out of school. And so they—they kept me out of trouble. Er... As they said, they didn't want me to do nothin' stupid. You know? So I said, "OK, I appreciate that!" (*Laughs*) And, er... but... erm... So I... well, I'll come back to that. And I had just, by accident, went to a breakfast with, er... down here at the Tennessee Hospital Association... er, last year, and around October. And at the table was the new DMC CEO—the Black woman.

PG: OK, OK... yeah.

DR. LEE: Er... so we're sittin' there having breakfast. And then I got called upon to come get... I got an award and I got called up to say somethin'. Then *she* got called up to say somethin'. So I'm listening to her talk and she says somethin' about jerk chick—Her and however they like to serve their guests jerk chicken and stuff. And I looked at my wife who was with me and I was like, "What the heck? This woman's Jamaican!" And as it turned out—When she came back I said, "Are you Jamaican?" She said, "Yes, Lord!" I said—and she said, "I'm going to Detroit Medical Center on Monday—" This was on Friday—"I'm going Monday to take over the Detroit Medical Center." I was, "Ooh, girlfriend, good luck with that. 'Cause I *know* they got trouble." As it turned out, you know, *my* wife was Jamaican...

[[00:15:00]] DR. LEE: So, they just—they just went—!

PG: Yes, I was curious what the connection was! (*Laughs*)

DR. LEE: So that was— That was the end of that. Erm... but I worked at Detroit Medical Center for a little while, er... For a *little* under Arthur Porter's leadership when he was there. He was the old— He was a CEO from when he— He's from Sierra Leone. And he was a, er... cancer specialist and a physician. And he left and went to Montreal. And then he left there, and he got in trouble, and so—he's deceased now. But, erm... And I worked for a *hot* minute— No, no, no, I didn't work on the— But I *do* know Duncan. OK? And... Duncan's a... a pistol! (*Laughs*) That's all I gonna say! He's a— He's a— He's a true—He's a true piece of art, erm... But... What can I say? So what else did you wanna—?

PG: Well— Yeah, this is very great. I—I have a— I do have a couple of questions.

DR. LEE: OK...

PG: So... erm... I *loved* when you were talking about— I mean, I heard you say you were born in Trinity Hospital, and y'all lived in—

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: —Black Bottom, grew up there.

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: What year did you leave Black Bottom? Did your family move out of Black Bottom, or did you leave—or—?

DR. LEE: No... (*pause*) I dunno. My mother never left. She stayed there and—and, er— and died. And when she died, she—she didn't live where we used to live 'cause the house got old when my—when my stepfather died. And my stepfather, by the way, I found out... He was a— believe it or not, he was a former player for— former Harlem Globetrotter. (*Pause*) Yeah! Back then. And this is the killin' part. Back in the late '20s, he played for the Globetrotters! Never told me a single word... To this day, if he was alive, I'd bless him out. (*Laughs*) Never said *one word* about— Now he told my sister, but he ain't never told me anything about the Harlem Globetrotters— And I'm just *full* of questions, now, that I can't ask him! Er... He also played for, er, five or six Negro baseball teams, OK? Back in the thirties, and the forties, until he broke his leg. And, er... he's in their history book. And he's in the Harlem Globetrotters' history book too. No picture—

PG: Oh... yeah—

DR. LEE: —although I think I found a picture of him. Er... but anyway, he was... So when he died, my mother... She stayed in the house for a while, but then she— It was too much, because all of us were gone. And, er... So she moved to the Senior Citizens Place down there on, er... near Jefferson... and, er... not Mount Elliott... erm... ah! McDougall, I think. Think that's the cross street...

PG: Oh, OK...

DR. LEE: Yeah, there... Close to that. The next block over.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: And so, she— she— And when she passed, that's where she was living. But when I left to go to school, and then I just— then I— my brother and I, we had to go into service. This was during Vietnam. Er... when I went back I went straight onto grad school...

[[00:18:00]] DR. LEE: ...and other schools, and I— and then I got jobs, and so I just never came back till I actually came back to Island Park. And that, that was—

PG: Oh, OK... So, what—What year did you leave Black Bottom? Like, what year did you— You said you went to Vietnam first before going to school?

DR. LEE: No, afterwards.

PG: OK...

DR. LEE: Yeah, I left in '66...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: So... Yeah, '66.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: I had to go in the army. And lemme tell you somethin'... That was during the draft. That's— That's a piece of work too! (*Laughs*)

PG: Mm-hmm... (*chuckles*)

DR. LEE: 'Cause... That... We got processed in the old Fort Wayne. I don't know if you remember the old Fort Wayne. That was the—

PG: Yeah.

DR. LEE: That was the induction center. Er— (*sigh*) You're there half a day in your underwear, and they just move you from station to station, make you stand up, lines and lines of guys going crazy— You know, back then it was the draft, and they needed troops for Vietnam. And guys were cryin' (*imitates*) and weepin' and you got all kinds of wild excuses... "Oh, I have flat feet, bad back..." All kinds of stuff. But then when... I mean, you needed to be down there dyin' from cancer in order to not go. (*Laughs*) You know what I'm saying?

PG: Yeah, they were just takin' everybody...

DR. LEE: Oh! My God... Listen: They finished with us about noon. They started like, seven in the morning, finished around noon. And they said, "OK, the bus'll be out here at two o'clock. You can go home and kiss your loved ones goodbye because you belong to us now. And you better be on this bus, don't let us send the FBI for you." (*Laughs*)

PG: Yeah, if you weren't back before the bus left...

DR. LEE: Before the bus left! (*Laughs*)

PG: Mmm...

DR. LEE: That was the— Those were the instructions and you was just... It was... *That's* an experience.

PG: Mmm... That's— yeah...

DR. LEE: So that's when I left, '66. (*Laughs*)

PG: OK. And... and where did you go to school, while you were there— while you lived there?

DR. LEE: Oh, I'm— I went to Michigan State.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: Er... yeah, yeah. I was at Michigan. I tried at the University of Michigan, and they— they— for some reason they wouldn't take me in undergrad. And I tried twice.

PG: Hmm...

DR. LEE: I tried twice for grad school, they didn't take me. I interviewed *twice* for jobs with the— the University of Michigan Healthcare System! I got rejected *six times* by the University of Michigan, and I said, "Well, I guess... they don't really want me in Ann Arbor!" (*Laughs*)

PG: OK... (*laughs*) Everything happens for a reason...

DR. LEE: I never got to— That was the thing, you know? And so... actually... I, you know... That interview with Michigan, I interviewed that same week for three jobs. One was Michigan, which I wanted, bad: It was over— supposed to be over at the Children's Hospital. And one was for... Curvewood[?] with Dr. Salisbury now. Er... And so, Michigan told me—took all day— they said, "We'll get back with you." I interviewed at Curvewood. They say, "We'll get back to you." And the—And the next night, I interviewed over at Sunday. And Sunday says, "Step in the hallway." And I said, "Uh-oh..." Now, I knew an offer was coming, so the question is do you take the bird in the hand...

**[00:21:00]** DR. LEE: ...or the one in the bush? I took the bird in the hand and I never did hear from the other two. (*Chuckles*) OK?

PG: Yeah... Erm... OK, so you went to Michigan State for undergrad...

DR. LEE: And then I went to Cornell.

PG: And then Cornell...

DR. LEE: Yeah...



PG: Where'd you go for, like, elementary school, middle school, high school?

DR. LEE: Harris Elementary, which at the time was located— Well, it's still located over there on, er... on Mack Avenue...

PG: Mm-hmm... Harris?

DR. LEE: Harris. H-A-R-R-I-S.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: It's still there... er... It was not where it is now. It was a couple blocks closer to Gratiot, when I went. But then they tore it down and built the new one. OK? And then from there I went to Cass, OK? And I did my four years at Cass, and then from there... I didn't— Young Black guy whose parents were not educated. I had no clue what college was like. (*chuckles*) OK? I just heard my classmates from Cass sayin', "We're goin'— I'm goin'— I've applied here and I'm goin' here..." So I knew about University of Michigan, and like I said, they turned me down. I knew about Wayne State. I— and then I— and then one girl said, "Well, apply to Michigan State." And so I applied to Michigan State. And I didn't even know where Michigan State was, but I said, "OK." And at the time, Michigan State was under pressure because they were accused of having only Black guys that cou—that were athletes. So, I guess my timing was good, 'cause they said, "Well, we'll take you!" (*Laughs*) You know? I was *not* an athlete, but they took me... And so, that's the way I got up at Michigan State...

PG: Oh, cool... I went to Cass—

DR. LEE: —and as it turned out, I—I lettered while I was at Michigan State, so I ended up being an athlete—

PG: Oh, what sport did you play?

DR. LEE: You'll never guess. Fencing.

PG: (*pause, then*) Oh! (*Laughs*)

DR. LEE: The fencing coach taught me in a class and said, "I want you for the team!" And so I was the second Black guy to be on the fencing team. OK? The first Black guy—

PG: Oh...

DR. LEE: And we fenced together... Yeah. So I ended up— And at the time, Michigan State put all the Black guys together in one dormitory. OK? That—that was coincidental, wasn't it? (*Laughs*) I mean, so—

PG: I mean, 'coincidental', yeah...

DR. LEE: Me and (*indecipherable*) And all the famous— (*indecipherable*) All the athletes that you hear about, we were all there together, in the same dor— even bedded together in the— in the—the thing. Because...that's— And the next year they stopped doin' that, but that first year— And they had curfew too, so they knew we weren't going nowhere... And— And so— And that changed after that... But that's how I got to know all of them, because we were all in the same building.

PG: Oh, wow. OK, yeah...

DR. LEE: Yeah, and in an older time, I met— lots of famous people. I met— Diana Ross and I went to high school together.

[[00:24:00]] DR. LEE: We used to eat lunch together, before she— And one day, the last time I saw her, she said, “Andre, I just—I just... cut a record.” You know, back then, everybody was cuttin' a record, OK? I mean, everybody was croonin' on the corner... (*imitates singing*)... You know? And I said, “Well that's good, Diana. I'm glad that—“ She says, “I hope it takes off.” I said, “I hope it takes off for you too!” (*Imitates blown kiss*) That was it!

PG: And then...! (*Laughs*) Wow...

DR. LEE: We... I had to share an apartment with some guys, off-campus, later... And, downstairs, Scherrie Payne lived there. I don't know if you know Scherrie Payne. Scherrie Payne took Diana's place as head of the... er... er... of the, er... Supremes! And so the— er... then the connection was still there.

PG: Wow... wow...

DR. LEE: I was doin' State the same time as, er... Stevie Wonder.

PG: Oh, wow! What? (*Laughs*)

DR. LEE: Yeah, oh yeah... yeah, yeah, so... Hey, what can I say?

PG: Yeah, wow, that's really amazing.

DR. LEE: And I met Martin Luther up there. He came to speak one day at State.

PG: Hmm...

DR. LEE: And, er... I snuck backstage, and he was standin' there, lookin' over his notes. And I said, (*nervously*) “Dr. King, can I get a picture?” (*Confidently*) “Sure, young man, come on and take the picture!” Oh, shoot! SNAP! (*Laughs*)

PG (*laughing*): Yes, you always gotta ask!

DR. LEE: He's gotta— yeah! Listen: And then, over time, I've met all of the people that were part of, er... King's entourage except Abernathy. OK? I met Billy Small. I met... er, what was his name? Fulbright? Bright? Ah, I can't deal with it— All of the ministers that... that surrounded him. Except for Abernathy. OK? I met all of 'em. Lowery knew my neighbor when I was in there — when I was at (*indistinguishable*) And... he came, and he said— and he said— and my neighbor said, “Hey, I got Dr. Lowery stayin' with me this weekend.” He said, “They lookin' for the administrator to come to, er... Southwest Hospital in Atlanta. Can he come talk to you?” So I'm in the kitchen, me and Lowery, me and Joe Lowery, I'm— I— I ain't got a care for he's saying! I'm (*indistinguishable*)! “Why... nobody gonna believe I'm havin' this conversation with this icon in *my* kitchen!” You know? But as it turned out he and I worked together on a couple of projects later, so I got to—I got to spend time with him, you know? And I got pictures, OK? And I got pictures with Jessie and I got pictures with Small and I got, and of— the minister and the other man whose name I can't recall right now— He did the— the— He worked in, er... Birmingham... no, Knoxville. Er... I met him during the— He did the film for my sis—, er... my other sister. So I got to meet all of the thing... And then I got to meet Coretta's, er... assistant. I can't remember his name. Er... He was on a hospice board here in Nashville.

**[[00:27:00]]** DR. LEE: He and I and Dick Gregory. OK? Now Gregory... Greg and I got to be real close friends. And Greg and I were going to create, er... Greg wanted to create a weight loss program in Detroit. So he and I used to rat around looking for sights to create this thing, and of course, you know, Greg is a nonstop talker. I mean, he had a — (*phone heard buzzing and going off in background*) he had all kinds of stuff that— that, er... he had in mind to do. And er... he wanted... He called it the “Thousand Pounders”. And we never did get it off the ground, but I heard so many stories— We're not gonna talk about him, though. But Greg and I were friends for years and years and years. In fact, I was with him two weeks before he died, because we had a common friend— the lady that whose hospice board we served on. He and I and Martin III were all on the Board. So she used to fly all of us in together for a meet. So we'd all go to lunch and all kinds of crazy things. But anyway, when she died, he flew in— Martin didn't come— but she flew in... I mean *he* flew in for her funeral. And they called me at, like seven or— I think the funeral was at ten— they called me at seven-thirty and said, “You gotta run to the airport and pick up Greg. Greg is there for her funeral!” I said, “Oh, my God, I'm in my pajamas!” We jumped up... I went and got him. He was standin' there in the airport by himself. He looked like a homeless man — his beard was growin' so long, you know? — and he was always skinny. And, er... So we hung out *all* day that day, er... 'cause he didn't want, you know... We went to the funeral, he did a thing... And then we went to where they had a repass but they took so long comin' that he said, “Forget all that, Andre, let's go eat!” So we went to... We went to Ruby Tuesday's. And... and all the times that I spent with him... You know, I would always buy the lunches up, but... But this was the only time he ever bought me— He... he paid for the meal! He paid for dinner. I...I could not believe it. I thought, “What the heck got into him?” (*Laughs*) You know? And I could tell you— I could spend an hour talkin' about all the stories that *he* shared, but that's another— that's enough...

PG: Yeah, that's... (*laughs*) That's a different conversation... That's so...

DR. LEE: Now, Alice... You know, I met Alice many years ago...

PG: ...Alice Randall.

DR. LEE: Randall. Yes.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: When she was a... a country western songwriter. Did you know that?

PG: *What?!!* No, I didn't know that!

DR. LEE: Oh, they— they— at least that's what they told me. I never saw her, but they told me she was the only female Black Country western songwriter.

PG: OK...?

DR. LEE: In Nashville, OK? And, er... so... I was a bachelor at the time, but, er... I was a single father and I had custody of my—my kids. And so somebody said, "Well, you need to go out." You know? "We're gonna fix you up with this nice cute—

[[00:30:00]] DR. LEE: "—cute little young girl." And I said, "OK." And so she and I went out to breakfast. I—and she remembers too! Because— and I— I think because after the breakfast, it was close to the house, and I said, "Lemme show you my kids," you know? And I'm thinking Alice must've thought of the kids and said, "This man already got kids, I ain't wanting any with him!" (*Laughs*) Sure—I don't worry about it. She never said that! (*Laughs*) But anyway she went on and she married... Avon...Avon— son. Avon— what is it? He was a civil rights icon here. In Tennessee... Avon Williams. Avon Williams. And then she—she married his son. And then, er... And I lost track of her after that, other than when she was on *Oprah* show for her book, *The Wind Done Gone*.

PG: OK, yes. I have heard about her other books and the other things she's written and erm... Yeah, wow... I didn't know she was a (*laughs*) country songwriter!

DR. LEE: Yeah, that's what they told me! That's what they said, so... you know...

PG: Yeah... (*Pause*) Erm... yeah, I was curious about, er... I was just thinking about the time where you lived with your mother in Black Bottom, your parents in Black Bottom, erm... and were y'all... Were there any, like, clubs that you participated in or organizations that— organizations you were a part of then, erm, that you remember, that you—?

DR. LEE: There weren't any.

PG: Weren't any? OK.

DR. LEE: I guess, er... The only ones around were the gangs! (*Laughs*) There were lots of... Lots of gangs. But... so no, there weren't any. There were about six or seven gangs in the area, er... but like I said, they pretty much protected me. You know, I was too little to be a part of

any— they said, “You can’t—you ain’t gonna be no blood to us.” So they—they didn’t let me be in the gang, but they protected me because I lived in the area.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: (*Indistinguishable*) So that I was a member, but an *unofficial* member. OK?

PG: (*laughs*) I’m always curious too, just about ideas of safety, and how people— what makes people feel safe in the neighborhood. So I hear you saying, “You know—there were a lot of gangs.” And for some people, that might be like, “Oh, there were a lot of gangs and it made me feel unsafe to be there,” but how I hear you talking about it, it’s like, “There were a lot of folks that were involved in gangs there and I— they protected me, they looked out for me, there was still—“

DR. LEE: They didn’t bother— The gangs did not bother the people who lived in the neighborhood. OK?

PG: Mm-hmm.

DR. LEE: Er... when they had a clash, it was generally on... the—the borderline of different— other gangs. When they—may have crossed over, and did something in somebody else’s territory. But by and large, they never bothered the residents. Never... never bothered the residents. And if they did anything illegal they did it elsewhere. OK?

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: So—that... That’s why it really wasn’t a scary place to live.

PG: OK. Great, yeah, I love hearing that. I love just hearing about—

[[00:33:00]] PG: ‘Cause I think that type of stuff matters, right? Like, how we feel looked out for, and—

DR. LEE: Well, and I would have to say that drugs had not quite gotten a foothold, either.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: I can’t say that would’ve been the case had drugs been a big deal back then. But drugs was just startin’ to come and it really wasn’t pervasive yet. You know, it was mostly alcohol, OK? And maybe some weed, but that’s about it. No—no—no hardcore drugs like you see today.

PG: Right.

DR. LEE: Yeah... yeah.

PG: Yeah. Erm, so... yeah, and then I heard you talk about some of the bars and clubs and places that you got to go...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: Erm... with family members. Were there any... Like, what was something that you would do for fun? Like, when you were a kid in Black Bottom, like, were there places you went to hang out with your friends or— ?

DR. LEE: We mostly hung on street corners...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: ...for the most part. Jefferson Street Recreation Center was a couple blocks away. Er... and that was on Mack and, er... Mt. Elliott, on the corner. There was—there was a church there, and... and, er... Or, if we did go, if I did go away from the east side to go to the west side which was considered the bourgeois part of the Black community, then, you know, I'd have to take a bus because I didn't have a car. And I knew a lot of 'em because I went to Cass, and that's where most of the elite Blacks went! You know... Er... the poor Blacks, er... the kids had to go to Eastern, er... High School. There was no— Or Miller. And there was— They— We went to those... They went to those— My brother went to Eastern. But—but my teacher from elementary thought I was smart. So she said, "You're goin' to Cass, you're not—!" 'Cause the Casses were considered the— the 'elite' school for smart kids. And she said, "That's where you're goin'! Don't wanna hear nothin' else from you." And this was a big white lady, too. And, so... that's why I ended up over there, at Cass...

PG: OK. Did you hear me earlier when I said I went to Cass too?

DR. LEE: No, I didn't hear that! (*Laughs*)

PG: Yeah, I— (*laughs*) I graduated from Cass too!

DR. LEE: Oh, yeah! I was on...now... I was an athlete at Cass.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: I ran track for Cass!

PG: OK, cool!

DR. LEE: I wasn't that good, but I did run track for Cass— And it just so happens my niece, about, er... two years ago, was searching the internet, and found a picture of me in my old Cass track outfit!

PG: Oh, wow!

DR. LEE: I was out when they were takin' the picture! But— but... And how she even *knew* me, 'cause I don't... You know me, I mean, you know, you look *different* now at age— You know, *my* age. And you look back then, you know, sixteen, seventeen years old. How she even *cause* that picture is beyond me, because— I had a big “C” on my chest.

PG: Wow, yeah, that's--that's great! Oh, my goodness... I— I, erm...

DR. LEE: Yeah... Cass, Cass was just across the street from from Commerce at that time.

[[00:36:00]] PG: OK.

DR. LEE: You don't even remember Commerce, do you?

PG: No, I don't know what Commerce is...

DR. LEE: Commerce was the... was the— was the school right across the street from Cass.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: And they had a... I wanna say it was for girls, or somethin'— I don't remember what it was for. But next to it, between the two, was this little shop—restaurant— called the “Bungalow”. And that's where most of us hung out—at the ‘Bungalow’. ‘Course the Bungalow's gone now and Commerce is gone now. So...

PG: OK, well, nice! Yeah, I didn't play— I didn't play sports at Cass... but I, erm...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: Well, I did— I tried out for, like the volleyball team—I didn't make it. I tried out for the softball team. (*Laughs*)

DR. LEE: (*laughs*)

PG: But I was mostly in orchestra—

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: I did orchestra, and, er—

DR. LEE: I wish I—

PG: —and harp and vocal...

DR. LEE: Yeah... yeah. I wish I had learned to play an instrument. My mother nev— couldn't afford to do it. And they did a lot for my sister who came along way after my brother and I...

PG: Right...

DR. LEE: And, er... sort of... Soleil [?], she was a last child, so they spent a lot of time and attention on her. Let her learn how to play the saxophone and the piccolo and all that stuff. Hey... I— Me and— My brother and I didn't get none of that! (*Chuckles*)

PG: That's usually how it works, right? It's like they always use—

DR. LEE: Yeah!

PG: —all the lessons and all the things that they...

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: ...weren't able to do with you...

DR. LEE: Yeah, now we played in the streets, and so— Or at the Jefferson Street Rec Center, but that was... that was about it... there was no elsewhere. And then later when we got transportation— Oh! You know what? (*Claps hands*) There was a group! Oh, my God, I forgot. They were called the Hexagons!

PG: OK... What was the—?

DR. LEE: The Hexagons! The Hexagons... right! There was a group of us informal guys that—and—and— I dunno, there must've been thirty or forty or fifty of us. Er... It wasn't a gang. It was a social club. And, so— and, and I didn't drive, like I said, but they would swing by and pick me up. And we just—we, we created our own little parties and things like that. OK? And we had—we had the Hexagrams. Those were the girls. And, er... and, so... That's... That... I forgot all about that little group... hm!

PG: (*chuckles*) That's so cool! So y'all just made it yourselves... you just kinda decided that's what y'all would be...

DR. LEE: Yeah, yeah...

PG: —or was there something that'd—?

DR. LEE: I—I didn't do it. I *joined* them. They were—

PG: OK—

DR. LEE: —had formed them. And they just— what do you... initiated me into the group.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: Yeah, it wasn't - wasn't a fraternity, but it was fraternity-like.



PG: Right.

DR. LEE: Yeah.

PG: OK, that's really cool... OK. Erm, well, I mean, the other things... I mean it feels like you've shared so much. I'm so excited to hear about all the different type of connections you've had and all the different folks you've been able to meet. Erm, and so I just don't know if there's any other stories you wanted to share about people you knew while you lived in Black Bottom or things you remember about that time... Oh, you know what I actually would be curious about? Because part of what we're learning through this archival process...

[[00:39:00]] PG: ...has been about the process of actually demolishing Black Bottom to build the freeway...

DR. LEE: Ah!

PG: And I'm curious if you remember when that all started. Like, were you there when they started building the freeway, and like, what do you remember about that, if anything...?

DR. LEE: Which freeway are we talking about?

PG: 375.

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: 375...

DR. LEE: 375... Yeah. I—I was sort of around, I was younger then.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: And like I say, that's where Trinity Hospital was, and my doctor there was Dr. Ames. Er... you know, he was the one that birthed me. And, yeah, when they tore down all that, I remember there was some controversy. Er, people did not like the idea of tearing down one of our Black hospitals for a freeway. You know? We didn't have that many— 'cause we were still segregated back then. They—they didn't really like that idea too much. Erm... and, erm... That's really the only place I heard of and— plus it destroyed the Brush Avenue and St. Antoine area, which was the heart of the Black community, because a lot of those hotels and clubs we talked about were out in that area where the Eastern market is now. Am I right? I think that's right. Close enough.

PG: Yeah, that's close by where Eastern Market is. Brush—

DR. LEE: Yeah.

PG: Mm-hmm.

DR. LEE: Yeah, and so, yeah... there was some controversy because that was the beginning of the end. And there was controversy when they built the Lafayette Towers, because that cut into the Black—Black Bottom. OK? So by the time they built Lafayette Towers, that was really pretty much the end of Black Bottom. They just cut into the territory so bad there was nothing left.

PG: And so folks just started moving, they had to move...

DR. LEE: They started moving, they had to move, yeah... yeah...

PG: Yeah... When you say there was controversy, you just remember folks talking about it? Like, you don't—there wasn't any—

DR. LEE: Yeah.

PG: OK.

DR. LEE: Well, yeah, and—and I think some people tried to go the political route with it, but—but it didn't go anywhere. 'Cause I remember... Senator Brown—State Representative Brown, and of course the Mayor Coleman Young... *(laughs)* You know? He... And Coleman used to come by the house and sit on our back porch, talkin' about stuff. I was a young guy, I didn't really know what—but he liked talking to my mother. So...so... yeah, I do remember him comin' by, and saying things, you know. I can't repeat him, 'cause he cursed so bad. *(Laughs)* He was very graphic in his descriptions. *(Laughs)*

PG: *(laughs)*

DR. LEE: 'Cause he cut to the short version. Hehe... So... I did history on the Black— on Michigan's Black...

**[[00:42:00]]** DR. LEE: ...erm, Doctors, and so forth. 'Cause, er... and... I have an exhibit... I have four exhibits, really—*six* exhibits, on the— They were panel exhibits, about three feet wide, six feet tall, and...and one was on... The first one is called "Who Was First?" And I did a Black history on that. And then... and then... and it traveled all over the country. Then I had— My second exhibit was on Black military, the history of Blacks in the different military services. And that panel exhibit was about four panels. The first one was five... And then, Dr. Ma Creece [?] and I— She's still in Detroit— did a joint effort on Black medical schools, and we got *seven* panels. Er... then we did one... I had a special request for Kentucky, because the African-American Museum in Kentucky wanted me to do one. So I did one for Kentucky, and that's about four panels, and I did one for Pennsylvania. And I still got one for Michigan, that was seven panels, and one for... er... Tennessee, which I haven't finished yet, but about six or seven panels. And I did children's books for all of the panels. I was gonna do a history book, but... I was doin' it, and I was—I was gonna try to display it at the Wright Museum. Charles Wright and I, by the way, are very close friends. And, erm... er... The curator over there said,

“Andre, you know, I had a book written, about 350 pages.” He says, “Everybody don’t have a passion for history like you and I.” (*Laughs*) He said, “Ain’t nobody gonna buy this book!” And I said, “Well... huh.” (*Makes “tsk” noise.*) So then I decided to break it down into... for children. And the minute I did that, *everybody* was for it. So that’s how I ended up with about eight or nine children’s books.

PG: Wow! How can folks... Can folks still purchase those books...?

DR. LEE: Oh, absolutely. I’ve sold about 7500 of them, so far. Erm... I’m trying to get it in the Wright museum. I’ve talked to the Wright museum peop— not Wright Museum, what am I talking about? I’m wearin’ the shirt... Smithsonian! They’re the... (*chuckles*) African-American Museum! Erm... so, yeah, they’re still available. And I just finished a coffee-table book collaborating with a couple of doctors... er... with the National Medical Association. It just came out Monday.

PG: Oh, wow. Congratulations!

DR. LEE: For the 125th Anniversary.

PG: Wow—

DR. LEE: —of the... End of May. So, then... I just collaborated on that one so if you get that book... And you can go to their website, and see that book...

PG: Right.

DR. LEE: Er... I’m acknowledged in the first couple of pages. I don’t make no money... I don’t do this for money, it’s all... out of passion (*laughs*) that I do it...

PG: ‘K...

DR. LEE: I don’t care less about the money... Huh?

PG: What, erm... What are the...

[[00:45:00]] PG: ...titles of the books, like how can we find the books that you’ve written, the children’s books?

DR. LEE: Oh! Children’s books. Oh. Funny you should ask... I may have some right here... (*looks around*)Er... I thought I had some here. Hold on a minute—

(*Dr. Lee steps away from mic/camera to look around elsewhere in house. Finds book, comes back.*)

DR. LEE: You know, you have to keep ‘em brief. ‘Who Was First?’ (*Holds book to camera.*) Can you see it?

PG: Yes, I can see it.

DR. LEE: OK... (*gets another book*) This is one: The Legacy of Black Medical Schools.

PG: Oh, wow. OK...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm... And, er... let's see... Oh. 'Pennsylvania'.

PG: OK, so that's... Black health, Black history, related to Pennsylvania.

DR. LEE: Yeah, yes. Yes. 'Cause I was requested to do one for Pennsylvania.

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE (*keeps showing books*): 'Black Military'.

PG: Oh, wow. OK.

DR. LEE: OK... 'Black History Trivia'.

PG: Mmm!

DR. LEE: OK... Huh... Well, those are all the ones I've got right here in front of me. (*Laughs*)

PG: Yeah... That's very helpful because then we can find 'em by the title.

DR. LEE: Yeah, I er... Er... Yeah. Those are the ones that I did... By the way, just so you know... All... All of the kids are granddaughters, nieces and nephews! (*Laughs*)

PG: Oh, models for the cover!

DR. LEE: (*laughs*) That's just a little trivia! (*Laughs*)

PG: Oh, that's great...

DR. LEE: Yeah... of course, they're all older now... (*laughs*)

PG: Yeah, but they're modeling for this book art.

DR. LEE: Huh?

PG: I said they were modeling for the book art.

DR. LEE: Well, they didn't know, they just... look at me, sayin', 'Hey, I'm takin' your picture and I'm gonna put it on the front!' "OK!" (*Laughs*)

PG: Do the exhibits that you have...? Are they still ones that you travel with or are they permanently somewhere or—?

DR. LEE: I—I— You know, I'm trying to get 'em... Well, there is one permanently on display in Kentucky, the African American Museum in Kentucky.

PG: OK...

DR. LEE: Everything else is... still available to travel. They don't travel much durin' the summer and this pandemic hasn't helped any. (*chuckles*) So... they're probably... They're sittin' over there in my thing right now. But they... they roll up into a tube 'cause they're done on a— a—er... flexible panel. So they roll up and—er... and... and I can ship 'em... fifteen-sixteen dollars...

[[00:48:00]] DR. LEE: ...and they got grommets in the corners so that when they—people get 'em they can hang 'em on the walls, or they hang 'em from the ceiling, however they want to do it.

PG: OK. Cool. Yeah, no, I just always am thinking about that...

DR. LEE: I charge a thousand dollars a month for it. And I get it.

PG: Yeah.

DR. LEE: OK? I get it. My... One exhibit was at the Detroit Historical Museum...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: ...down in Culvert. One was at, er... First Baptist. Er... I'm thinkin' First Baptist. I think it was First Baptist... Yeah, they had it. And then, Beaumont Hospital had it. OK? I've had an exhibit there. And then I had it... I had it in Beaumont, two different places. Yeah, two different of their facilities... so that's...

PG: Yeah, you know, 'cause we have the Black Bottom Street View Exhibit. I don't know if you've ever seen that exhibit.

DR. LEE: Ah!

PG: But it's like... It's essentially, these images from the Eminent Domain Process of Black Bottom. So when they were tearing down, like, demolishing homes in order to build the freeway, they took pictures of every parcel of land...

DR. LEE: No, I didn't know that. Yeah...

PG: Yeah, and er... erm... The creator of Black Bottom Street View, Emily Kutil, was a professor at University of Detroit Mercy. And she found these images in the Burton Historical Collection...

DR. LEE: Oh!

PG: ...at the Detroit Public Library...

DR. LEE: Yeah, yeah...

PG: And basically we blew them up, really huge, like, so now they're like— And stitched them together by address.

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: So it just had these big panorama images and you could, like, walk through the streets of Black Bottom.

DR. LEE: OK... I think I've seen that... I *have* seen that! I've seen that. Yes, yes... I have seen that.

PG: That's a... yep. I just dropped a link in the chat, I dunno if that works for you, but just to see it—

DR. LEE: Hey... I found that they also had the only copy left of the Black Yellow Pages...

PG: Where?

DR. LEE (*laughs*): Where you just got that other stuff!

PG: Oh, at the Burton Historical Collection. Yeah...

DR. LEE: Yeah! Yeah... I got a copy of it. I made a copy of it, I wasn't supposed to, but I did... (*laughs*)

PG: You could, like, take pictures of it and stuff—they—

DR. LEE: Yeah, I took pictures of it. I made copies of 'em, black and yellow pages. Back...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: ...of that time. Had a lotta pictures in it, and stuff.

PG: Awesome. Yeah, we found a —like, the different city directories and things like that. Maybe you were talkin' about the same thing, but...

DR. LEE: Right... right, right...

PG: But that's been... definitely been helpful in the research we've been doin'... but this is—

DR. LEE: Where is—? When're you gonna do the exhibit?

PG: That's— That's what I was askin' you! (*laughs*)

DR. LEE: Oh, OK...

PG: I was tryna see how you've been operating in the pandemic and stuff like that, because for us, we've been...

DR. LEE: Yeah, I haven't been, er... er... because there's nowhere to... er... there's nowhere to... I'm copying this, this er... (*refers to link in chat*) There's nowhere to, er... to take it! I mean, you know, er... I thought about getting some money to do an online virtual museum, er... and I was hoping to be able to get— 'cause I created a foundation for that purpose, so that...

[[00:51:00]] DR. LEE: ...I could get money from other places that will—will be funded. And, and let it serve as a place for schools to do field trips. You see what I'm saying? So... and I'm thinkin' that that may be the thing to do now, because this pandemic is... is— We're not gonna go back the way it was.

PG: No...

DR. LEE: So I'm thinkin' that—that, er... er... a virtual presence will do good. OK? Were... and... But I don't like to just give away things for free, so I'm big on, er... that if you have a virtual thing for schools then there ought to be funding by somebody so that the exhibit can generate money so you can do *further* research, will produce further books or films! You know, I've done about two or three documentaries, OK, on Black Medical History. OK? And— and— And one of 'em's on Detroit. Erm... and I did those ten years or so ago, er... at the Dunbar. I did 'em at the Dunbar, so...

PG: Oh, wow, I didn't know...

DR. LEE: So, I'm— If you're gonna do exhibit, that would be what I'd want the exhibit to do...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: OK? And, so, er...

PG: Yeah, that's really cool. I definitely... We're tryna... I should try to figure out how it could be more virtual, 'cause right now, we had it up— So we had it up last year at the Detroit Public Library, like the main branch of the Library, for a few months...

DR. LEE: Right...

PG: Erm... and then this year it was up at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Building on Woodward, because they were celebrating their 100th anniversary.

DR. LEE: Uh-huh...

PG: And I think that used to be the Paradise Theater. The building that—the theater that they're in was the Paradise Theater.

DR. LEE: Really?

PG: So there's some connection to be had to Paradise Valley and Black Bottom.

DR. LEE: OK, OK...

PG: And, erm... So they had the Black Bottom Street View Exhibit up then for— and also for their Classical Roots Concert.

*(Crosstalk)*

DR. LEE: Those venues would've been great if they were still alive and running.

PG: Mm-hmm..

DR. LEE: I just don't see them coming back. And I— I just think social distancing is gonna be part of our social fabric now.

PG: Yeah, I think so too—

DR. LEE: For a while. For a while.

PG: ...unlearn it and learn something new.

DR. LEE: Well because the vaccine that they've developed is only gonna be good for the strain they have now. That strain's gonna mutate, and then you'll have to get another vaccine.

PG: Yeah, and it's a process to do vaccines, right?

DR. LEE: Oh...oh...

PG: Like it's not just that you make—get them and that's it?

DR. LEE: Yeah, exactly. It's gonna be a process, but it ain't gonna be like that fool up in the White House saying, you know, "Oh, no... It's comin' back! They'll have it ready for us by Saturday!" *(Laughs)* I mean, that guy is crazy. Man, I mean, you know— I mean, he just saying— He opens his mouth and you know there's a lie comin'. *(Laughs)*



PG: Yeah. I mean, yeah. That's—you're never surprised by it. It's not anything—

DR. LEE: No, no. Anything he say...

[[00:54:00]] DR. LEE: ...I discount... I—I—I don't even pay attention to it. So I think you're gonna have to go virtual.

PG: Yeah. That's definitely... It's definitely been the thought process, for sure, so we're tryin' to figure it out, especially right now— Well, these— The interviews that we're collecting, like, these oral history interviews, and, erm... the different research we've been compiling is definitely going to be on the digital website.

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: And so, then we've been trying to think about how do we put this street view— these panoramic, stitched images also somewhere virtual and folks can... you know, view them as they're viewing the map that we created. Erm...

DR. LEE: I wanted— I saw a... erm... I wanna say it was a real-estate site. But I liked the thing where you create it and you go into the front door—at least in my mind's eye, I say, “Going through the front door.” And—and you walk into the elevator and each floor represents a different gallery. And you push the button, and you get off at a certain gallery and—and say it's Hastings Street. And you go out and you—you know— go out and you see objects and you can reach and turn the object over, or flip the page—that kind of thing. Now that's—that's—that's top-of-the-line. But it takes some money to do it, so the question is, where can you get the money?

*(Pause)*

PG: Yeah, that's, I mean... that's always a question, right? Er...

DR. LEE: Well, I—I think that's the way to go. 'Cause it—once you do it, then you can sell things. You know? You can sell a pair— I mean, I see you've got a shirt on. I can't see all of it, the lettering on your shirt...

PG: Oh, my shirt. This isn't a Black Bottom shirt. *(Adjusts camera to show shirt)* But it says “Another Detroit Is Happening”—

DR. LEE: Yeah, that's OK. But that's what I'm sayin'... You still can sell paraphernalia that generates revenue to support the exhibit *and* additional projects.

PG: Yes. That's what— We actually are selling things right now. We created this— stitched-together map... erm... from a bunch of Fire Marshall maps.

DR. LEE: Hmm...

PG: And so it's like a big... I actually have it up in my house. (*Adjusts camera to show map*) Over here in this room... But it's like a big poster-sized map—you can kind of see it.

DR. LEE: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! I can see it...

PG: But it's—

DR. LEE: Yeah... that would be good.

PG: It's a map of—it's a map of what—some folks would consider Black Bottom, you know? And, erm...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: (*brings camera back to chair*) And it has, erm... significant places highlighted, a bit of a paragraph about the history...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: ... of the neighborhood, you know... And so we've been selling that.

DR. LEE: Yeah, yeah... I think that'd be... That's... that's the kinda stuff I'm talkin' about...

PG: Mm-hmm...

DR. LEE: So, you got the right idea...

PG: Well, I really love talking with you, Dr. Lee... I'm so grateful...

DR. LEE: Alright...

PG: And it really is a small world, you know...

DR. LEE: Hey, what is this now... you put up here? Is this a store?

PG: Yeah, that's where... That's where the... That's the map I was talkin' about. That's... erm...

DR. LEE: OK, OK, I wanna... I wanna take... I'm gonna get a copy of that. Hold on... I'm gonna copy that... that link too. I'm gonna visit these later.

PG: OK...

DR. LEE: Alright, yeah, so... er... Yeah, this has been good and it's so fun to go down memory lane.

[[00:57:00]] DR. LEE: Er... All that... Like I say I have a passion for history, so I appreciate what you guys are doin'... (*chuckles*)

PG: Yeah... well, I'm grateful. I—I love history too...

DR. LEE: Mm-hmm...

PG: I love Detroit so much and I just really, erm... want to honor all the—all of it. You know what I mean?

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: I wanna really sort of... hear folks who were there, to get the stories, so...

DR. LEE: Yeah...

PG: You know. My inbox is open, you have my cell phone number if anything else—

DR. LEE: OK.

PG: —comes up and you're like, "Oh, yeah... I didn't share this or..."

DR. LEE: (*laughs*) Alright, alright...

PG: (*laughs*) You know... I'm open to it...

DR. LEE: If I get those other pictures from my cousin, I'll definitely get in touch with you...

PG: For sure, and you know, even if it's just... Erm... And I know she's not wanting to let go of them. It's like, for us, since we're a digital archive, we're not trying to like take ownership of the pictures or anything like that but even if we could just have pictures or digital copies of them to share...

DR. LEE: I—I will do what I can... I can't...

PG: Yeah, I know... no problem...

DR. LEE: I cannot understand her working... the workings of her mind!

PG: Yeah. No... no pressure at all, for sure...

DR. LEE: Yeah, OK...

PG: Just wanted to say that... we're not lookin' to *take* 'em... We just... you know...

DR. LEE: Right, right...

PG: Just wanna be able to share them...

DR. LEE: OK...

PG: Erm... so, yeah, this has been great. Er... what was I gonna say? I was... Well, we can finish the recording... I just have... *(laughs)*

DR. LEE: Ah...

PG: I feel like we probably are connected in other ways too... so I just wanted to see who else you knew that I knew... *(laughs)*

DR. LEE: OK, tell me...

PG: But... but I think we're good on the recording. Thank you so much, Dr. Lee...

DR. LEE: OK, not a problem...

PG: I'll stop the recording now...

DR. LEE: OK.

**END**

**[[00:58:29]]**