

**T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection**

**ABSTRACT**

**INTERVIEWEE NAME:** Ruth Laney, Sr.

**COLLECTION:** 4700.0476

**IDENTIFICATION:** LSU Class of 1939, Secretary to Athletic Director

**INTERVIEWER:** Ruth Laney, Jr.

**SERIES:** University History – Distinguished Alumni

**INTERVIEW DATES:** 6/24/94; 8/5/94

**FOCUS DATES:** 1915-1990s

**ABSTRACT:**

**Tape 681**

Family background; White Castle; schooling; Shakespeare; LSU; Donaldsonville; Miss Tandy, a favorite teacher; reading material in her school days; O. O. McIntyre; Mayzel Adams, girlhood friend; Olive Mury, girlhood friend; Lena Mae Hebert married Dubby Mury; *Gone With the Wind*; Bowie Avenue, White Castle; St. Anthony street, Baton Rouge; 7<sup>th</sup> Street; teachers; fractions; recreation at school; Laney played basketball; swimming between levees; Dr. Jim Foley, dentist, married Miss Tandy; attended White Castle High School; only eleven grades; Laney's father interested in theatre; brother plays pickle in school play; Laney in play with father; favorite subjects; discipline; Chaney Joseph; description of school building; Paul English plays, traveling group; Randolph Moody wins diamond a one, gives it to Laney; basketball; move to White Castle at ten; Dr. Hansen in Donaldsonville; smoking; forbidden to attend dance because she and her friends sunburned their initials on their backs; playing school; college, reasons for going; Catherine Bres, Eloise Dabadie, Gin Richardson, friends; Struby's Drug Store; ferry to Port Allen; Laney majors in Speech and Hearing Therapy, but never works in the field; opera at LSU; Nellie Pugh; Dr. Claude Shaver; Laney on LSU Debate Squad with Russell Long; debaters from England; train depot in White Castle; Laney got in trouble for crawling under a freight train as a girl; Laney and siblings loved to drive around; Laney breaks key in ignition; family once drove in a ditch; Gold Dust Twins; financing college; Huey Long; brother Ray sends Laney orchids from South America; mother made all her clothes when she was small; Laney would roll up the bloomers beneath her dresses; aunt made her nice underwear; in Baton Rouge Laney opened a charge account at Dalton's; Perry Cole, Dean of Student Affairs; Ione Burden his assistant; Laney's first job is working in Cole's office in the Field House; tea dances; big bands.

**Tape 682**

Robertson Eastland; insurance firm; old Field House social center of campus; warning couples to behave; Laney learned good work habits from Ione Burden; secret admirer leads record for Laney at office; "no-breaks" at dances; fist-fight over Laney at dance in White Castle; Laney recalls first day at LSU; scheduling of exams; Laney didn't know freshmen couldn't cut classes; "hogolawed";

hazing; fraternity initiations; Laney didn't join a sorority because she didn't have the money; "rating" dates for dances; Laney lived at home, but often spent the night with friends in the dorm; friends Honey McGregor and Fannie Mae Chauntz; Fannie married Ed Supple, who was later married to Honey; Laney traveled to Ohio to be in Fannie Mae and Ed's wedding; Yankee lifestyles; Smith Hall; friends Tina Frost, Mildred Smith, Lou Gayneau; Joe Gayneau; French House.

### **Tape 683**

No summary available

### **Tape 684**

Laney's Speech and Hearing major; dance at Field House; costume party; Laney went as a female pirate and was pictured in the *Gumbo*; T. Harry Williams; Vivian Wintz; study of the ear; Dr. Harley Smith, speech department; Dr. Smith perhaps later on USL faculty; diction; record students voices with a record player; Psychology professor who was actually working for the FBI; 1939 scandal involving President James Monroe Smith and Governor Richard Leche (?); Smith's son Jimmy; Smith's daughter married Owen Ware; Page Himel; bus to debutante party in New Orleans; Psychology professor takes field trip to asylum at Jackson; Williams's biography of Huey Long; Long and football; Laney's aunts and uncles; sign-in and sign-out procedures at dorm; smoking in dorm; Christmas firecracker in dorm stairwell; voices yelling "Chloe" at night; fraternities and sororities; "rating" dates; Beverly Nolend, Laney's steady, a Kappa Sigma; cutting class; Miss Stone Stone, Academic Dean of Women; Laney cut orientation; Eloise Dabdie; Chooky Bouanchaud; R.O.T.C.; Pentagon dormitory; extracurricular activities; honorary fraternities; Richard Pizzati of Block and Bridle asked Laney to be his sponsor, but she declined; Norman Ott of Bogalusa; sports and physical education; swimming pool; Huey Long assassination; Courtland Smith, Jimmy Huguette and Katherine Meyer on double date with Laney at the time; Carl Weiss; body lying in state at capitol; Laney recalls hearing news of Athletic Director Jim Corbett's death while on a bus to New Mexico when she was serving as chaperone on a field trip; Laney tells how she became Carl Maddox's secretary; Nellie Pugh; Laney worked for Roger McCluskey, food service director, as his secretary in the Union; later became Maddox's secretary, who took her with him when he moved to Athletic Dept.; Jerry West; Ed Miremont; Maddox's insistence that a theater be part of the Union; Town and Gown; Music and Dramatic Arts Building; operas; completion of LSU union; Student Government; Athletic Department; football trips; Laney had good basketball seats; move from Union to Athletic Department; Mickey Owens; coffee breaks, policy against; Mr. Phillips; telephone answering policy; Maddox visiting Laney at Ollie Steele Burden Manor; Maddox thrifty; women's sports; Sue Gunter; D.D. Pollock; Dale Brown; Charlie Mac; travel money; Dee Glueck, assistant athletic director; Steve Carter; Athletic Council; expansion of facilities; comparison to other schools; death of Corbett; Don Phillips; Sue Marino; banquet planning and tickets; revenue vs. Non-revenue-producing sports.

### **Tape 685**

Steele name appears in family; Laney's date and place of birth; parents; family's educational background; Tennyson; siblings; chores; dining customs; school; Cleve Joseph, bank president catches Laney crawling under train at age nine or ten; Dr. Darcantel, family physician; Sunday School picnics; State Fair; Belle Grove; Ware family; Nottoway; Owen family; J.T. Owen; bridge parties; father's influencing on Laney's reading habits; Mother's religious influence; St.

James; relatives; grandparents; napping; grandfather farmed; horse and buggy; open Dodge touring car; parents' affectionate relationship; sleeping arrangements in the home; aunts and uncles; driving; milking cows; butter; meals; LSU; Russell Long; voting; Bryan Pugh; DKE fraternity; Huey Long assassinated; debate squad; Darlings of LSU; Homecoming not as important then; importance of college education; bus; prices of items when Laney was a student; smoking; Carl Maddox's office policies; Maddox conservative with money; importance of football program; Maddox retired 1979; Laney worked until 1983; Bo Ryan; Gerry Stovall; Bob Broadhead; Dietzel; Dale Brown; Jordy Hultberg; College Temple; Chris Jackson; Rudy Macklin; Shaquille O'Neal; Assembly Center; Cow Barn; cheerleaders; Gym Armory; coaches' salaries; Beulah and Frank Metz; Dee Glueck; scoreboards; Moore track stadium; Marty Broussard; Jack Gilmore; Verty Gilmore; recalls porter who brought her coffee.

**TAPES:** 5 (T681, T682, T683; T684, T685)

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 4 hours, 50 minutes

**# PAGES TRANSCRIPT:** 66 pages; 105 pages

**RESTRICTIONS:** None