

Interviewee: **Julie Hawkins-Ennis**  
Interviewers: **Ernest Demby, Linda Moore-Garoute, Noah Waters, Ryan Craun**  
Date of Interview: **January 15, 2020**  
Location of Interview: **Eagle Harbor Community Center, Eagle Harbor, MD**  
List of Acronyms: **JE=Julie Hawkins Ennis, ED=Ernest Demby,  
LG=Linda Moore-Garoute, NW=Noah Waters, RC=Ryan Craun**

[Begin Transcript: 02:10]

ED: What is your name?

JE: My name is Julie Hawkins Ennis.

ED: Great. Thank you for doing this.

JE: You're welcome.

ED: Do you have a nickname?

JE: No, just Julie.

ED: Just Julie. Who are your parents?

JE: Charles Hawkins and Roberta Tony.

ED: Are they from this area?

JE: My father is from this area. He actually grew up in Bryantown. And, not far from here, I guess that is the Baden area but there was a nickname for that area. They called it "Dog Patch".

ED: Right.

JE: Malcom.

ED: Okay. So, like did your family come from another area here.

JE: Not that I know. My father's, mother was from Bryantown. She grew up in Bryantown, and his father was from Indianhead I believe, which is also in Charles County.

ED: Okay, do you have any siblings?

JE: I do.

ED: How many? Brothers and sisters?

JE: I have two sisters, half-sisters and a brother.

ED: Okay. What was it like coming up around here as a child?

JE: My dad would... A lot of us actually lived in same area. My parents were separated but my dad lived not far from here. So he would pick us up and come to this area, it was fun. There was a little store that I remember in "Dog Patch" or Malcom, where we would walk and get candy. We got a lot of family here. You just spoke to Desales. He's my cousin. I remember going to their house, the farmhouse and run and up and down the hill. This oak tree they had. It's gone now. It's gone isn't it? We used to climb on that oak tree. My aunt Ethelle made good food. She did. I remember all that coming here. Riding through the area. Actually through this area with my dad and we would visit different family members.

ED: What your dad do around here?

JE: He's a bricklayer.

ED: Okay. So was he responsible for any of these buildings around here?

JE: Could be. I wouldn't know. He built a lot of homes or repaired a lot of the homes in this area for years.

ED: Did you do any church things or functions or anything like that while you were here?

JE: When we were here. I mean, we went to funerals, unfortunately, and if we did anything it was at St. Dominic's. I remember going with my dad. And that was normally for weddings. Because a lot of families around here are Catholic. We're Catholic, so that is normally were they had funerals or weddings.

ED: Right.

ED: How were the other people from around here when you were around? I mean, do you know them as well?

JE: I knew them. If I didn't know them they knew me because they knew my dad.

ED: Right.

JE: And everybody I met just about, we were related. Always a cousin or an aunt. So I just went to a funeral at Adam's Funeral Home, because my family again from this area, they normally use Adam's Funeral Homes.

ED: Right.

JE: And I just went to funeral last week where I was meeting more cousins. So it's a very tight community, very family oriented.

ED: But, I think, like what would be a thing was like a really fond memory for you when it comes to.

JE: Coming here?

ED: Yes.

JE: Family picnics.

ED: Picnics

JE: Family gatherings.

ED: Were you, oh I'm sorry didn't mean to cut you off.

JE: My grandmother, normally would have some type of gatherings and everybody used to come to her house. She's like a nucleus. So a lot of times when we were up here a lot of cousins at Aquasco would come over to her house during the holiday. It was fun. We have a large family so.

ED: So that was like the hub?

JE: The was the hub.

ED: Right. What did your grandparents do?

JE: I don't know exactly what my grandmother did. I think she was more of a homemaker. By the time I was born she was like in her 60's. So she stayed home. But she did own, and DeSales correct me if I'm wrong. She own or manage clubs. Right? I think one of them was called Starlight?

ED: Around here?

JE: Around here, I think. Mechanicsville. She owned clubs for what I know. In fact, My dad told me that since we had such a large family, all the boys worked the bar and all the girls are waitresses.

ED: Everybody.

JE: The whole family. Yes. I think she was known for that. By the time I came along she had gotten older.

ED: Right. I haven't asked anybody this question. I don't know why. Did the places around here feel historic to you at a time, or they were just another place.

JE: I mean it was just home. It wasn't until I got older and until recently, that I realized how much history we had and how much we have flowing through our veins. And that's both Black, White and Native Americans. Like he said, my grandmother, which would be his grandmother, DeSales, that's my great grandmother. She lived not far from Dr. Mudd and I have relatives that are related to Dr. Mudd.

ED: Wow.

JE: That's all I can say, don't make me. I had to chop that out. I don't want to make old people mad. Yes. It's a lot intertwined. Which I know, my grandmother in Bryantown, or my great grandmother, who actually raised my dad because he was the youngest. He used to talk about her a lot. But she was part, I believe part White Native American. I think. But she was related to a prominent white family in Bryantown called Eatlands. I know a lot of people are. So those are my relatives. Or DeSales and my relatives on that side. .

RC: What house did your grandmother lived in?

JE: In this area? It was in Malcom which is maybe what, six miles from here. But. they would come down here. As a matter of fact, I talked to one of my uncles the other day about who is my dad's brother. So he gave me some information in Eagle Harbor. They said they used to call this a Riverfront. It was a place where Blacks came because it is the only beach they were allowed to come to. And they would come down here for all kinds of activities. I had never heard this. They said we used to call that the Riverfront. I'm like, really?

ED: Wow.

JE: So something else, historical.

ED: From all of the other stories I've collected from today, it seems like everybody got along pretty well. So when it came down to coming down to the beach or whatever, was it everybody or just the black people?

JE: I heard that it was majority black but you did have whites that came down. Especially if they like the music. They were drawn to the soul music.

ED: Like the culture.

JE: Yes like the culture. Put it this way, they didn't stop them from coming if they came.

ED: Right.

JE: Unlike us, you weren't allowed. But they didn't care. And again I think it's because a lot of us were kind of family. Like my dad, he used to always, this is how I got interested in this. If he met somebody, a white person that had that name Eatland. He would say, "You know you're my cousin".

ED: Right.

JE: He did. He used to tell me that. He would tell them all the time, "You were my cousin". I actually think my dad would know more than they would about who they actually were. I used to think that he was just being funny until I did research and I did ancestry, and who pops up on my ancestry tree, as a third, fourth cousin was Eatland.

ED: Wow.

JE: And, so. Yeah.

ED: Do you, think that those kinds of connections are what will keep this place what it is?

JE: I think. My generation and down. We're more accepting of that. Because like I told you, I've been telling you all week, a lot of older people don't want to talk about it. For whatever their reasons are. Since I've been doing my research seems like people are more willing to talk about it now. And accept it. I think I've mentioned this to you before that I went to a family reunion, after connecting with this family from this area. That was white. And once they found that we were cousins, they invited us to a family reunion. So I think that's kind of a start to show that, okay, we're going to work together. And that I think that would help to keep this area intact.

ED: I gather that. It's like there is an underlined understanding for this area that is like so contrary what the normal is in those times. What I mean it's so opposite of what was supposedly going on.

JE: And the normal was like, as I said earlier, I mean racism was there but it wasn't blatant and people were still cordial with each other. We just didn't go on certain area. Oh actually you just can't go to certain area. You just knew who didn't like you and who did and if they like you, you just stay clear. But you just, you didn't really feel it a lot, who has spoken of but you didn't feel.

ED: Do you think that is exactly why this town still has so all these historic buildings that are, you know, It's that same kind of respect but just in another way.

JE: Yes, I think so.

ED: That's what it seems like. It seems like there's isn't any.

JE: And now that we know were history because like I say, if you live here you didn't realize at all that it was a historic area. Now that everybody knows that, I think people would be more willing to come together to try and preserve it.

ED: What do you think is the most important thing about this area?

JE: The people. Our culture. The appreciation for our culture. Because we really appreciate it. Now that we really know, it's almost unique.

ED: It is. It's very unique.

JE: I call it very unique. And I think that has a mix to do with just how we were raised, and the religious aspect of it. And I love the family in this area.

ED: Even in the religious aspect, it seems like that is even taking on a change.

JE: Because that is how we were raised. Like catholic, just being Catholic, that was our lifestyle.

ED: Yes, you lived it just like you said.

JE: Yes, you know, as kids we did our own thing sometimes but I remember my grandmother that was just our lifestyle. We didn't realize it. But it was.

ED: But, I mean that kind of value is why I think so much of this place is preserved.

JE: Right.

ED: It's the value showing to the place itself, so I think that's deeply rooted in.

JE: It is. it's just respect. You were taught respect. You were taught about good and bad. You were taught respect for yourself actually. Which will turnover into respecting everything else.

ED: Do you remember anything that happened around here that was just something that you can, that sticks in your mind like those on your memory?

JE: No, anything bad? No.

ED: Not bad, it doesn't have to be bad. It could be a happy time or just a memory.

JE: Oh, God.

JE: Because every time we came up here it was a happy time. And I mean like, I know as a kid, my sister and I. My father made it exciting. Of course. People when we came up from St. Mary's County that was time for all of our relatives to see us. We came every other week. They were always like "Heeeyyy". They were just loving people. Everything was always fun. My grandmother, she's was either cooking for people. She was the type of lady that like to have company. The house was always full of activity.

ED: Big house?

JE: It wasn't a big house, but for some reason everybody was squeezed in.

ED: Just a place for people to come. You talk a about her a lot. What is your fondest memory of her?

JE: She talk us about our descendants. That's how I knew they were. And we would sit on her porch and snap peas or help break the tops off or whatever. And she would just start talking about who we were. You grandfather was this one we're related to the Eatland, we're related to this one, we're Native American. And if anything I remember by the time I didn't understand why she kept telling me that, but now I know.

ED: Right, she wants to know who you are.

JE: Wants to know who we are. I think this area, that it's like contradictory to what I have been telling you. They throw hints at you. You know, the older people, they don't want to talk about it but they will throw hints.

ED: What would you like to see happens with this area?

JE: I would like to see the history preserved. I would like to see something like a Williamsburg. Maybe trying to restructure the homes. Keeping the homes like they are.

ED: Restoration.

JE: Restoration. That's what I'm trying to say. Just like I said, keep them like they are. Just tell the full history of area. To think that the full history is being told.

ED: Right.

JE: That's all.

ED: I agree.

RC: Can you list of some of the names that you remember interacting with your family members? Not necessary the first name and last name, just the family that you remember playing with.

JE: Farmers of course. Turners, Sevoys, Wades, Queens, some Queens, Swans. My father's grandmother was Swan. Who else? Duckets I think are around here. Curtis's, Washington's, Proctor's, how could I forget the name. Gray's. Who else is around here? I think there is somebody, did I miss somebody? Did I miss anybody?

LG: McGruders.

JE: McGruders, Moores, Brooke's, Makle's that's a big name Makle's

ED: Question, Brooke's.

JE: Estep, Sevoy's, I think.

ED: Brooks's. do you know them from another area?

JE: I know, I'm from St. Mary' County. They're Brooke's in St. Mary's County as well, Brookes.

ED: Is that south?

JE: South.

ED: Would they extend this far as Virginia?

JE: Could.

ED: The other side of my family is Brooks?

JE: Yes, could.

ED: And they're mechanics from Virginia.

JE: Oh, mechanics from Virginia.

ED: Yes.

JE: Could. Because you know what happened really.

ED: Right.

JE: Sometimes, so long right.

ED: And it is a historic area on a plantation.

JE: And honestly, because now we drive and it seems far but St. Mary County is right across the river from Virginia.

ED: Right.

JE: And from I think it's the Britain Bay or one of the bays is right across the river. Like for an instance my grandfather from down here is related to people in the middle of West Virginia. And it dawn on me, that's right, technically right across the river. We just have to go up and around.

LG: I think you forget about the Chesapeake Bay.

ED: Right

JE: Right

LG: Those all the way down.

JE: Yes.

ED: Right

JE: Yes, she probably.

LG: So we all could be family.

ED: Yes.

RC: Can you talk a little bit about your current day life from your teenager years and stuff you came down here but just inform us of yours, who you are and who you'd have become and where you live now and why are you going back to here.

JE: Oh okay. Well, I was a little old country girl. I always like to say I am from St. Mary's and Charles County like I said, my mom from St. Mary's and Charles and even Prince George's because I had family. It's almost like a tri-county, right, so I kind of was raised in all three or four counties, three counties. So when I was coming up, I was just a country girl. And I'm not saying it in a bad way, I'm saying it in a good way. We had fun, we ate I always say we ate organic and everybody talks about eating organic now, we always ate like that. We always eat from the land. We've always had kale, and kale is not new people. Water Crests is not new people. I was raised on it as a kid. And then, where I came from lot of people, lot of kids, teenagers, you did one or two things. You'd just stay in the county or you left and went to college. I was one that left and went to college. I went to Alderman University in Virginia. So I really didn't go that far but, and then I got educated, stayed up in the big city. Though like that was the big deal and didn't want to come back home. But then as I got older, I realized. I would go home. Don't get me wrong. I appreciated it here. I loved it. I would probably come back down. I see myself inching back down now. Cause I started Norfolk, came back home, lived in Northern Virginia for a while then I lived in Kettering, which is like an urban area in Maryland - Prince George County. Now I live in south Anne Arundel County. Edging back down Route 4. Easing my way on back down to St. Mary's. So now, I just appreciate my history more. And I love saying "I'm a country girl. Yeah I'm from the country". I love it.

ED: You see what it gave you?

JE: Yes, like I said, we we're just pure people. In fact, when I went to college, true story, ya'll are going to laugh. We always ate. If we didn't grow food at home, with my grandfather in the field, we bought our food from the Amish. Because the Amish, there is a large population in the Amish where I'm from. We always got, if my grandmother didn't do the meat like DeSales did at the meat house. Well she didn't do it or my grandfather didn't do it. We bought everything from the Amish. Our eggs were always brown. I grew up in brown eggs. When I went to college and school, I'd be like "What in the heck happened to the eggs?" Because I had never seen white eggs before.

ED: Right.

JE: Never, because we always. We had a little store in the area but you only went there for like Kool-Aid. The little Kool-Aid packets. actually my grandmother did. Or the sugar.

RC: What is the name of the store?

JE: McKays, in Leonardtown. We lived like maybe two miles from McKays which is in St. Mary's. They are a popular name. That's a popular surname in St. Mary's county. We've been knew to McKays. My family might be related. Do an ancestry. But yeah, because, then I lived at my grandparents too. So that made a big difference. They still had that farm mentality. They still had, the stuff from the store we'll kill you. True story, my grandmother was sick, and in the hospital, she wouldn't eat, and we couldn't figure out why she wasn't eating. And finally, she told the doctor, she said, I don't like these eggs. I'm not used to store bought eggs. He allowed us to go to the St. Mary's County, go to the Amish and buy eggs, so she could eat. She didn't like the taste though. Because she said it tasted different. That meat taste, because it is store bought. It tastes different. She was just used to eating "organic" food. Different. It's amazing. And in our family, most of the men can cook, and cook well. DeSales. Cousin likes to cook. One of our cousins, my cousins, actually DeSales nephew, Jay. He can bake from scratch cause his grandma taught him how to do that. And he's running, selling cake and stuff, and he bakes from scratch. And he's maybe 30. How old is Jay? Maybe almost 40. Because that is how we were taught.

ED: They gave you the building blocks and the tools.

JE: It is just what we did. It wasn't abnormal. It's just that is how we did it.

RC: What draws you back now? What's role you play in this community now?

JE: In this community I'm helping to preserve the history. Right, I hope. I'm trying to get people to come out and talk about it. Like I say, that is our life and until you to start talking about it guess what? We are a part of some type of the history. But it was just our life. It was our way of life. We're I'm from too we eat something called stuffed ham at home. It's a ham, it has to be prepared for like 3 days, and you take different types of greens, mix the greens up and put it in ham. Well that's what I always ate. I didn't realize, I know we're talking about Charles County and I'm probably going off track to talk about St. Mary's but all the people in Charles County also make it. But it is indigenous to St. Mary County, but I grew up on it.

ED: I did not know that.

JE: I grew up on it.

RC: Now you can get it at Bowen's Grocery

JE: Now you can get it at Bowen's Grocery. That's been about 10 years when they started selling it in store. But it still it isn't as good as my grandmothers. They don't make it right. They don't make it has supposed to be. So that's the kind of stuff you'll find in Southern Maryland. Nobody just ever. I think cause we're private people too. As you are finding out. We're very private community. We don't really like to, I don't want to say sharing. We just don't have big mouths. We just don't as a community.

ED: Whatever stays at home, stays at home.

JE: Stays at home. You don't about it.

ED: Right.

JE: Anything else?

ED: I don't have any more questions for you. To be honest with you.

JE: You just want to keep me in this chair. Don't you.

NW: You did research on you family's Native American heritage?

JE: Yes. So, doing my research, and because my cousin is here I'll keep including him. But DeSales and I have relatives, it would be his grandmother, my great grandmother, was part Native American. So I did a research and found out that her father, George Headland, he is the son of the Headland family that I just talked about, a white family in Bryantown. We traced his roots through that family back to the, I did actually to the Piscataway. His daughter which is Princess Mary. I always messed this up. Princess Mary Cuacacana. I think. I found out that we are the great grandchildren of her. I'm like the ninth, DeSales would be the eight great grandchild of her.

ED: I feel like I've seen a movie about her.

JE: You've probably. She's like the "Pocahontas of the Western Shore". I would say that.

JE: DeSales did I tell you that? I'm telling you that. Yes, we are the great grandchildren of her.

ED: I don't have any more questions for you.

JE: That's it. I'm done.

ED: That's a wrap. Thank you very much Julie.

[End Transcript: 29:10]