

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Harry P. Black and Jack Litter

Date 2006 October 16

Medium digitized audio cassette tape

Description Audio cassette tape of an interview with Harry P. Black and Jack Litter. They were interviewed on October 16, 2006 by Bruce M. Stave and Sondra Astor Stave at Mr. Black's house in Simsbury, Connecticut. Harry Black was born in 1942 in Dallas, Texas. His family later relocated to Los Angeles, California, then to High Point, North Carolina when he was in high school. He attended North Carolina State University for a year before transferring to UCLA. He lived in Los Angeles for a few years after college, before moving with Atlanta, Georgia with his wife and daughter. They lived in Atlanta for twelve years, and Black worked at a suburban police department. In 1970, he left the police to work in the Security Department at Rich's, a department store retail chain, in Atlanta. At Rich's he worked in Loss Prevention and was in charge of internal investigations. In 1974, he was recruited by Ed Mangiofico to work at G. Fox & Company. At G. Fox, Black started as the Security Director before taking other positions within the store. His last position was the Vice President of General Services. He never met Beatrice Fox Auerbach, as he started at G. Fox after the May Company purchased the store, but he did hear stories about her. In the late 1970s, the store had a lot of external shoplifting and some internal problems. The store installed closed-circuit TVs and sensomatic electronic tags. Black worked at G. Fox for 36 years and was a member of the Moses Fox Club. He retired in 1990. He

Basic Detail Report

describes an incident at the Meriden branch where men were shoplifting, which led to the death of at least one of the suspects. The NAACP picketed at the Meriden Police Department calling for the police officer's dismissal. The KKK then got involved in the situation counter-picketing. Black describes how the downtown store and branches had store detectives, which were later supplemented with closed-circuit TV and electronic tags. Jack Litter was born in 1926 in Windsor, Connecticut. He attended Loomis Chaffee School, then went into the U.S. Air Force for eighteen months. He then graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1950. His father worked at G. Fox & Company in the Mail Department. His mother worked at Windsor Trust Company. After graduating from UConn, Litter worked at G. Fox as an Internal Auditor for 2-3 years, before becoming the head of the Auditing Department, which oversaw Payroll, Budgeting, and Inventory Control. He stayed in that position for 2-3 years, then he became the Assistant Controller. Litter did work with Beatrice Fox Auerbach and describes his interactions with her. Litter joined the Moses Fox Club in 1975. He describes attending the monthly staff luncheons held by Beatrice Fox Auerbach. He describes the Connecticut Room and how models walked around the room displaying the fashion. In the 1950s, G. Fox had a division called Foxmart in South Windsor that sold farm equipment, tractors, and gardening supplies. They also had the Connecticut Hospital Equipment and Supply Company on Jefferson Street in Hartford. There was also a G. Fox pharmacy in Hartford Hospital. He describes the G. Fox delivery service, which ended in the early 1980s. At Christmastime, the Security Department would have

Basic Detail Report

50-60 staff members, and there would be a person stationed at the top and

bottom of every escalator to greet people and keep people moving. They discuss

the lectures held in Centennial Hall. As more branches of G. Fox opened, it led to

less customers going to the main downtown store. Both Black and Litter would

travel to the different branches to oversee functions. They discuss the dress code

and how most of the staff was comprised of women. They discuss what may

have led to G. Fox closing in 1993, as well as the changes in Hartford.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 11 Minutes, 23 Seconds