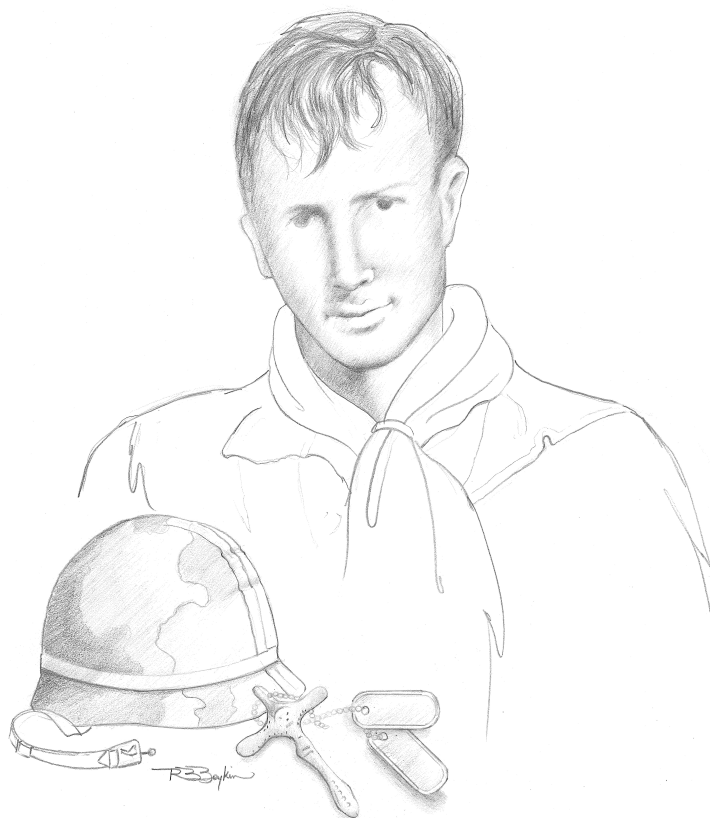


Transcript



CHARLES “BUD” FERILLO

ORAL HISTORY

Prepared for: The South Carolina State Department of Education

Prepared by: The Auntie Karen Foundation

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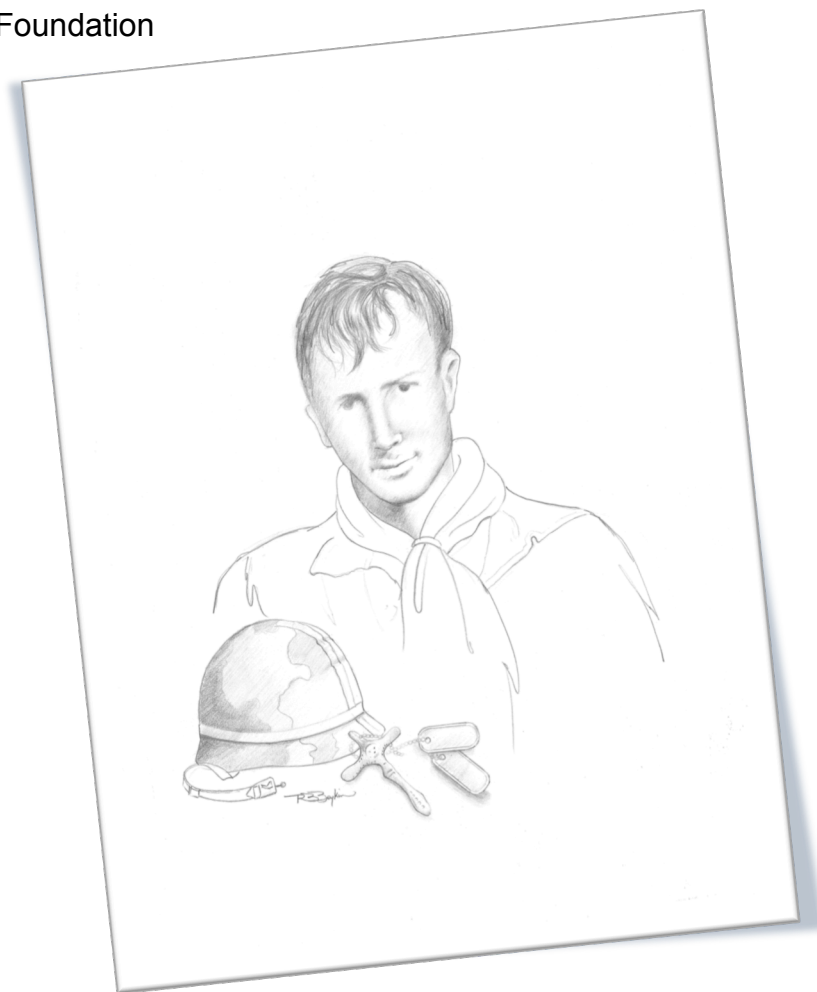
Project: Documenting South Carolina Civil Rights Oral History from 1950 – 1979

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Dedicated the memory of SC House of Representative

Joseph “Joe” H. Neal

August 31, 1950 – February 14, 2017



Civil Rights Oral History Interview with Charles “Bud” Ferillo

Interviewee:	Charles “Bud” Ferillo
Interviewer (s):	Tre Tailor Karen Alexander Ricky Taylor Tony Kenion
Location:	Columbia, SC
Interview Length:	50:08
Supplemental Material:	Includes transcript, interview release form, select photos, video, art rendering by Rodgers Boykin, music by Byron Counts

Abstract

Charles “Bud” Ferillo was born Charles Traynor Ferillo Jr. in Charleston, South Carolina on November 2, 1945. His father was born in Italy in 1893 and came to Charleston in 1896. Bud grew up in an integrated neighborhood in Charleston and attended Bishop England High School. He was greatly inspired by the priests and nuns at Bishop England High School to get involved in the social justice movements of the day.

In the interview, Bud describes his early days in the Civil Rights movements in Charleston, his political work and activism.



Transcript

Tre Tailor: Today is Saturday, March 4th, 2017. I'm Tre Tailor and this is an interview with Bud, well, Charles Ferillo.

Bud Ferillo: Right, but use Bud when you do talk to me.

Tre Tailor: Okay. We're talking to him about his civil rights experiences from 1950 through 1979. Bud, tell me your name, first.

Bud Ferillo: My name is Charles Traynor Ferillo Jr.

Tre Tailor: Where and when were you born?

Bud Ferillo: I was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on November the 2nd, 1945. I am now 71 years old.

Tre Tailor: Where'd you grow up?

Bud Ferillo: Grew up in Charleston. Furthest north I ever lived, before I moved to Columbia, was John Street. Which was an integrated neighborhood. But, I considered Charlotte Street, which is just two blocks behind Mother Emanuel, as my boyhood home.

Tre Tailor: Now, you have become one of the central figures in race religion, race relations, in South Carolina. How did that happen having been raised by a racist father?

Bud Ferillo: The sad thing was, I did not have a father who was an inspiring figure on racial matters or religious matters. He was a very intolerant man. I don't know why. He was the only person in his family that way. I don't know what happened and nor did his mother. His father had died in 1940. Growing up in the fifties and sixties, I just heard all this bitterness from him. He ran the local movie theaters on King Street. Which would later become an incident, in our lives, of conflict. But my mother, and his mother, were very generous spirits. My deceased grandfather, his father, employed ... 95% of the employees at his Super Service Station on Calhoun Street, across from Mother

Emanuel, were African Americans.

They came to see us every Christmas and we had a shot, they had a shot, of liquor to celebrate my grandfather's passage. But the gratitude that they had through those 1937 years for his kindness to them and the employment that they got. Long after he died, well into my grandmother's last Christmas, 1972, they would come on Christmas morning, all dressed in coat and tie. They'd go in the kitchen and they'd have a shot of bourbon together. As I got older, I joined the group but, of course, the group was getting smaller because of the passage of time. I knew that deep in my family roots was a sense of social justice and human kindness, brotherhood and sisterhood. I don't know what happened to my father.

Tre Tailor: As you said, your mom and your grandmother were both very tolerant and very open and welcoming to all races, ages, religions, genders, and you lived in a neighborhood that was filled with ... An integrated neighborhood, as a matter of fact.

Bud Ferillo: Yeah. Our neighborhood, Ansonborough and Wraggsboro, were full of the children and grandchildren of slaves and immigrants. On my father's side, his father was born in Italy in 1893 and came to Charleston in 1896. He lived in Cumberland Street. We lived on Charlotte Street for most of my boyhood years. Which is where I got involved, inspired by the priests and nuns at Bishop England High School, which was just further down Calhoun Street. I could be at Mother Emanuel's basement, where I made sandwiches and signs for sit-in protestors at my father's movie theaters, in about three minutes. I could be in high school in about eight minutes. Charleston, downtown, in that area, midtown, was a very walkable city. I found the young priest and nuns at Bishop England to be so heroic.

They would quietly slip out of town and join the marches and protests around the South, and be right back in the classroom on Sunday. Some of them having spent some time in jail Friday night and Saturday night in some small southern town. They were very courageous people. They also took very strong positions, publicly, during the garbage worker strike and the Medical University strike in '68 and '69. Which is when I was in Vietnam. Those were robust times that required a lot of courage on the parts of whites to join the struggle. There weren't a lot of us, but there were enough of us, to

make a difference and help push things forward, but you always pay the price for it with some relationships in your family.

Tre Tailor: Tell me how you felt during that time. You just talked about being a young, white man, being an activist. Even helping when people were doing the sit-ins at your own father's movie theater, working in Mother Emanuel. Did you ever feel frightened about the retaliation?

Bud Ferillo: A few times. Rarely, in the city ... The city police were very rough on the white divinity students who would come down in the summers of '60, '61, '62, '63, to help us with voter registration and adult education. Most of those programs run by the late Septima Clark, Esau Jenkins, Bernice Robinson, Marjorie Amos-Frazier. They were a generation who were even older than Dr. King. You know when Dr. King died he was only 39 years old?

Tre Tailor: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Bud Ferillo: 1968. So, they would all meet up in Monteagle, Tennessee, in the fifties, and down at Penn Center, to learn about civil rights and nonviolence. Gradually, their stories and those experiences would reach my ears and my heart, and I was signed up. Plus, we had the first Catholic, and very liberal, president, John F. Kennedy, in the White House, and there was a very strong Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, who was a mentor of mine. Who I got to know before his death. So, my high school years were my coming out years in the Civil Rights Movement. I'm very proud of that and I've stayed with it ever since.

Tre Tailor: You have. Tell me about the pivotal thing that happened at Emanuel, or because of your involvement with the sit-ins at Emanuel, that impacted you some 50 years later.

Bud Ferillo: Well Emanuel was two blocks from my house, on Charlotte Street, near the corner of Charlotte and Alexander. I could be at the basement door at about 10 in the morning, those summers, and walk in, and protestors were assembling to usually go to the 1 o'clock, or attempt to go to the 1 o'clock film. Mostly at the Garden Theater, which is the first theater south of Calhoun Street on King Street. It's

now an Urban Outfitters store. They would march two by two, carrying signs, "Freedom Now," all before the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which granted them access to the theaters. They didn't want to sit up in a gallery anymore. It happened that my father was the manager of the company that owned five theaters on King Street.

And it fell to him to have them arrested for trespassing. Now, the trick was, for all of the people who marched and sat-in, to sit on the property of the theater. They had to scrunch in around the box. If they blocked the sidewalk, they'd be eligible for 7 to 10 days of blocking city traffic. If they just trespassed, that was a 24 hour sentence. Back in those days, my father would come and give them 10 minutes of warning that they were trespassing on private property. If they wanted to watch the film, they should go at the gallery door. Which was next door and full of African American employers who were ticket takers, and popcorn sellers, and ushers, and they could sit up there.

Of course, none of them wanted to do that. They wanted to sit right there with everybody else on the ground floor. On the third warning the police were called and they were hauled off in the paddy, paddy wagon. They spent the night in jail, in the Charleston pen-, the Municipal Jail. The next morning, at 10 o'clock, the city would prosecute them. My father would testify on what happened over and over and over again. Matthew Perry, a distinguished attorney from Columbia, and others, lawyers from Charleston involved in the NAACP, Fred Henderson Moore, Bernard Fielding, would assist him. They would make claims of freedom of protest and First Amendment right of assembly. The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendment was guaranteed citizenship rights.

The municipal judge would bang his gavel and say, "They're guilty of trespassing regardless of all those protests, legal protests," and sentenced them to time served. Well, they'd get up and they'd go right back to Mother Emanuel and eat our sandwiches and get fresh signs. The police stupidly thought that they could collect all the signs and that there wouldn't be anymore demonstrations. They'd come back, after a 10 o'clock trial, by 10:45. They'd have lunch, we'd have new signs ready for them, and back on the street they'd go. Week after week, month after month, until the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964. To this day, my father never knew that I was the person who was feeding them and that his mother was paying for the lunches.

Tre Tailor: Wow. Your love and experience at Mother Emanuel, as I said, kind of motivated you to do some work, now because of what happened a couple of years ago.

Bud Ferillo: Oh, sure. Well, you know, those were the early sixties. By 1965, we organized and integrated Young Democrats club. That's where I met Jim Clyburn. He and Emily had first moved to Charleston, where he took a teaching job and she became a librarian. We became fast friends. There were a group of about 30 of us, black and whites, who became allies. We were all roughly the same age. We engaged in a lot of encouraging of integration movements and efforts. It lead, ultimately, to Jim Clyburn's first race for a seat in the legislature from Charleston County. Where he had to run county wide, no single districts back then. I managed that campaign. But I had been in Vietnam for two years prior to that, having been drafted. Those were years that cemented my relationships with the black community substantially. I would want you to know about that because there was a big gap between those early years in high school and where I am today.

Tre Tailor: You mentioned your relationship with the African American community, so much so, that a very influential member of the African American community gave you the cross that you're holding.

Bud Ferillo: Yes. This is the cross made by a slave on John's Island before the American Revolution. It was passed down through many generations and given to Esau Jenkins, who was a great civil rights ally of Dr. King. I had met him through the late Septima Clark, who lived on President Street, in the city. Esau lived out on John's Island all of his life. He'd even run for the school board, as soon as African Americans were given access to the democratic primary, in the early fifties. He found a lot of projects for me to do. Picking up prominent guests from the airport, bringing them out to the Progressive Club. When it was time for me to ship over to Vietnam, there was a farewell party, big integrated affair, about a hundred people.

And Esau brought this cross and he said, "Bud, I've had this in my possessions," he said it was ... I think it was, it had passed down through a series of ... by 12 families. The last family, I believe, was

named Grimball. He said, Mrs. Grimball's sister gave him this cross. She said, "We have no one left to give it to." He said, "I have this in my desk drawer and I've had it for four years. I want you to wear it with your dog tags to make you safe when you are in dangerous places." I was in the 4th Infantry Division as a squad leader. I taped ... You see this was a little can opener called a P-38 with my dog tags.

Which read my name, my draft number, my serial number, US 53510426. I still remember it. My blood type, A positive, and my religion, Catholic. If I were to be killed, one of these would be placed in my mouth and the other would be placed on my toe. I saw that happen many times to other people. That's a little can opener, you'd open it this way, and run it around the top of a can of beans or something. You had some, you could, this was important in life and in death. I put black tape around that so it didn't rattle in the jungles. I brought it back, and it was a welcome home party, and I took it off the chain and offered it back to Esau. He said, "Oh, no, Bud. That is your cross now. We have much more work for you to do."

Tre Tailor: As far as some of that work that you've done, in addition to working with Jim Clyburn, you've been politically active right in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement.

Bud Ferillo: Yes. Absolutely. I ran Jim's first campaign, in his life. He was 26, I was 19. I didn't have ... I had been president of the Young Democrats, here at USC in 1966, but I didn't actually have experience running a political campaign, certainly, county wide. He saw in me an ability to reach out both to the black community and the white community to put together an organized effort. He gave me an enormous salary, \$50 a week, which I still tease him about. We only raised and spent \$7000 on that campaign, if you can believe it.

He won the democratic primary in June and then he narrowly lost the election in November by 500 votes. We went to bed thinking we'd won it, but some of those precincts out on the sea islands, I think, were acquired beneath our organization. He lost, but Governor John West saw his popularity and his talent and brought him to Columbia. He began his career, here, at the Human Affairs Commission, after serving on Governor West's, John West's, staff. In 1992, he went to Congress.

Tre Tailor: Tell us about some of the other ... Some of your other political work. I know you've worked with everyone from Speaker Rex Carter to Lieutenant Governor Mike Daniels. You, yourself, were Deputy Lieutenant Governor from '82 to '86.

Bud Ferillo: That's right. I came up to Columbia in 1972 to go to law school, which I did for one year. Frankly, I hated it. It was very dry and, naturally, it was preparing you for a career in civil procedure, and torts, and criminal procedure. Senator Isadore Lourie knew I was struggling and he said, "Bud, what is it that you want to do in life?" I said, "I want to be in government. I don't necessarily want to run for office, myself." I was Catholic and I had an Italian last name, and I didn't think that there were too many constituencies who would elect somebody like that. Particularly, somebody as liberal as I was.

He said, "Well, you don't have to be a lawyer. You can come work for me as my legislative assistant if you'd like to work on constituent matters and speech writing and media relations, and things like that," and I did, for two years. Then he got sick and he introduced me to the new Speaker of the House, Rex Carter, from Greenville, who succeeded Solomon Blatt. Who had been speaker for about 30, 40 years, and ran the House with an iron fist. Well, this was a new generation now coming in. It was Joe Riley, who was a member of the House in 1974, who introduced the legislation to establish a research office. Which allowed legislatures to get independent information on bills.

That position came to me on July 1st, 1974, and I became, at the age of 27, the first Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the House. I did that for nine years, went through two speakers. First, Rex Carter, from Greenville, and next, Raymond Schwartz, from Sumter. Whose seatmate was Ernest Finney, who went on to become the first African American Chief Justice of the South Carolina House. He was a dear friend of mine, as is his wife, Frances, and his daughter, the extraordinary poet, Nikky Finney.

Tre Tailor: Now, even though the State House was integrated during that time, did your liberal views and your thoughts and beliefs about integration affect you in that political realm?

Bud Ferillo: First of all, it was democratic majority in the House and the Senate but there were liberals, and conservatives, and moderates. There were republicans and a small and growing number of African Americans. I took it upon myself to treat every single legislator, regardless of their partisan background, the same. On a personal level, I developed more friendships with some of the democratic members, but with many republicans. I would probably embarrass them if I named them now. We served them all equally and enthusiastically, doing research, finding out the best practices in other states to do things.

One of the most significant things was helping Representative Robert R. Woods, from Charleston, find a way to get some financial relief for Septima Clark. Who had been fired in the early 1950s, as a teacher, for refusing to resign from the NAACP, as required by state law. So, she lost all of her retirement benefits and was now struggling in her seventies. With a little help from me and the Speaker of the House, Representative Woods put in an amendment to the budget bill, in which Septima received \$10,000 a year for the rest of her life. Until the last year, in which we settled for \$25,000.

I still have a lot of correspondence from Septima, which I treasure, and one day will put in the Hollings Political Collection. I heard from Esau often. I'd get to Charleston as often as I could but I was ensconced in the State House as Chief of Staff to the Speaker, and then later as Deputy Lieutenant Governor under Mike Daniel in Governor Dick Riley's second term. That's when we passed the Education Finance Act and I began my, what became, the rest of my life. A twin passion of civil rights social justice, public education advocacy, particularly, for our poverty districts.

Tre Tailor: Speaking of those poverty districts, what brought you to filming the documentary, "Corridor of Shame"?

Bud Ferillo: "Corridor of Shame" arose after I had already given about a half of year of free public relations services to the legal team headed by Carl Epps, who brought the case in 1993, and the late Steve Morrison, who was the Chief Counsel. Brilliant men. They were trying the case in Manning. Which, of course, was where Thurgood Marshall had brought the Briggs case, initially. Then it was appealed to the

Charleston District, and up to the Supreme Court. Precisely, fifty years before this trial, called Abbeville vs. State of South Carolina. Somewhere during that period of time of trying to get media attention to cover the main witnesses who could bring to light the terrible conditions in those 40 school districts.

Eight of which will put evidence in the trial, not all 40. We'd still be there in the courthouse. Putting all that evidence up took 103 days. It was the longest trial in state's history, to this date. Some people in the business community and in the philanthropic community suggested that I make a documentary of that film, and go to those schools, and interview some of the people who had come forward to bring the case. Principals and teachers who could show me around and show me the conditions that their trial was contesting. So I did. I began it in January of 2005 and it premiered in April of 2005, and won six national awards in the fields of documentaries.

Tre Tailor: Were you shocked of going to those places? How did you feel?

Bud Ferillo: I was shocked to my core. I read 8000 of the 32,000 pages of the transcript of that trial. I also went to Manning many times to listen to key testimony. At that point, looking for people who would be effective on television and a good spokesman for the conditions. I didn't know any of the superintendents so I had to call them all and introduce myself and persuade them to let me come into their schools, and give me time to walk around. I would do that, generally, a day or a week ahead of taking the film crew down, do that by myself. Then I'd go down with a cameraman and a soundman. The late Brett Jackson, he was 80 years old but he would bring coffee and donuts and he would help us unload the equipment. I knew from those earlier visits who I wanted to interview and what I wanted to show.

I could not believe my eyes at the condition of some of these schools. The oldest was in Dillon and built in 1896. Even the newer ones built in the fifties, when the state of South Carolina tried to prove separate but equal. Those schools were put up so hastily and in such bad locations. It was common for snakes to be in the classroom or the lunchroom, in the morning, sewage would backup because of the location of the septic tanks. The roofs leaked, often fell in. It was dangerous, unsanitary place to try to educate a child. Of course, the teachers were making far less money than the teachers in the

wealthier districts right next door. It was a hideous story but it was my privilege to tell that story, not only for South Carolina, but, ultimately, to the nation.

Tre Tailor: Now, because of your work on that documentary, a little known senator from Chicago ... Actually, you had the privilege of showing him that area and it kind of catapulted his political career. Tell us about that.

Bud Ferillo: That was an unintended consequence of that film. We expected only South Carolinians to be interested in it. But, Representative Bakari Sellers, at the time, the youngest member of the House, had given Senator Barack Obama a copy of the "Corridor of Shame". Within days, I heard from the senator and his campaign aid, Anton Gunn, who's become like a brother and my family. I planned a tour of these rural schools for the senator. Probably, over the course of 2007, he visited at least 10 of those communities along I-95 from Dillon. There's a wonderful picture of him with his hands on his hips, short-sleeves, just look ... Staring at the train that was going by 50 feet away.

Blowing its horn, rattling the plaster that was falling into his hair. He knew that the teachers had to stop, stop teaching, until the train noise went by, train horns. He couldn't believe the conditions. He said, he asked me many times, he said, "Bud, we have poor schools in South Chicago but we pay the teachers the same, but we don't have any schools that are condemned by the Fire Marshall. I've never seen anything like this." He wanted to know from parents and administrators, who he spent a lot of time with, not just me. But he went, first hand, and he would have private lunches over and over, and private meetings, five and six hours at the time in these different schools.

So he mastered the art of articulating the needs of our rural children and he took that across the country. ' Cause I would hear about it and read about it as he talked about the rural schools called the "Corridor of Shame", and that attracted international and national attention. That was in 2007, and, yes, by 2008, he'd won me over. I ran and was an alternate, and then a delegate, to the Democratic Convention that nominated him for the presidency of the United States. I was proud to do that again in 2012 and attended both of his inaugurations.

Tre Tailor: You, now, you have parlayed your civil rights activism and it's gone through so many phases, from marching, to working with the sit-ins, to filmmaker, to political activism. Now, to me, the culmination of all of that is what you're working with now at the USC Collaboration for Race and Reconciliation. Bud, tell me, what made you want to do that and what that's about? What you're doing with that.

Bud Ferillo: In the last film that I participated in as assistant director, at South Carolina ETV, with the ... Which was funded by the late John Rainey, who had helped raise the money for "Corridor of Shame". Betsy Newman, the director, asked me for help getting access to certain individuals in South Carolina who might be in the film. She actually turned over the director's chair when we went into the rural school, as part of the film. When I interviewed a number of very prominent South Carolinians, who I knew, who she did not know. It was a great privilege to sit, again, in a director's chair. That film came out, was finished, in early June 19, of 2015. As we all know, a great tragedy occurred in Charleston on the 17th of June.

The shooting of nine innocent people, in the same basement where I made those sandwiches and made those signs in the 1960s. Now, it was a beautiful sanctuary of prayer and meetings. Back then, it was all, a regular basement, brick back walls, and so forth, in the sixties. It'd become a beautiful part of the church. One would never imagine the tragedy of that night. Well, Betsy and I went to work and we took some footage out of the film. We added in Mother Emanuel. Which, by the way, I had gone back to Charleston to help organize public displays of support and sympathy, and the funeral of Clementa Pinckney.

And then we had the amazing experience of covering Governor Haley's news conference. The calling for the taking down of the Confederate Flag. After thousands of people gathered in front of the State House and urged her to do something that was extraordinarily significant and long neglected. That was the final removal of the Confederate Flag, in any shape, from any location on the State House grounds. We added that to the film. So the film, even today, it's completely up to date. It's based on the Mississippi Racial Reconciliation Institute named for governor, former governor, William Winter. Who was a contemporary of Governor Riley's. He's still alive

and very active.

The late John Rainey wanted very much for his next project to be the establishment of a project like this in South Carolina. He tragically died in March of 2015, didn't get to see the film. He had met Governor Winter and the Executive Director, Susan Glisson, and brought them to South Carolina to begin negotiations about setting up this project. So, it is now housed at the University of South Carolina. It reports to the Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. John Dozier, and up the line to the Vice President for Human Relations, and to President Pastides. Who's made it a priority of his administration. I suppose you would want to ask me, now, how it works.

Tre Tailor: I was going to ask, I was ... Actually, I wanted to ask what type of ... What are hearing through the conversations?

Bud Ferillo: The conversations are conducted, usually, right now, on campus to train 10 facilitators. Whose training came from the Winter Institute folks, a year ago. Just this past fall, we had five welcome tables. Half African American students, staff and faculty, half white, to keep the balance there. I've noticed that there is no hesitancy on the part of African Americans in South Carolina to talk about this history of oppression and prejudice that has colored our state for 350 years. White folks are uncomfortable about it, initially, even though many of them have moderated their views. They know where their ancestors stood during the Civil War and during the times of slavery. They're caught between the dilemma of evaluating what that meant back then, and its relevance today, with their own feelings and convictions about social justice.

Out of these conversations come the most amazing breakthroughs. It's the first time that white people had to listen, had the opportunity to listen, to the story of what it was like to be ripped out of a village, sold by a village chief, to make a little passage crossing. Where half the people died in the bottom of the ship, lying in feces and not fed, and thrown overboard. To arrive at a port like Charleston's and be to put in a pest house. Where you had another quarter of the population die. Then the last, would put on the auction block and then sent out into some of the most miserable places on the coast to grow rice, and indigo, and cotton on the islands. Paid for nothing, often families broken apart, and then to have all of that taken away by the

Emancipation Proclamation and a winning of the Civil War.

Which began in South Carolina but took the lives of one of every five white men, paid a terrible price. That once wealthiest colony of South Carolina and of all the 13 colonies, and wealthiest state, became among the poorest and remains so to this day for the investment in human bondage. That is a story that black people can tell well. Some of us who've studied it, objectively, can tell well. To listen to that and those intimate, special places, guided by trained facilitators to move the conversation along, is an education and communication of the highest level. That must continue and spread across this state and it is the best way, at the local level, to tackle our historic problem of racism in this state, that is our original sin.

Tre Tailor: All right, I just want to ask a couple of more questions. I want to go backwards, and, quickly, Karen had some questions down here. While you were working at USC with the Young Democrats, what was that experience for you?

Bud Ferillo: One of the interesting things that I did in 1966 was to work with Young Democrats, state presidents, and presidents at universities, to go up and see Senator Robert Kennedy, to ask him to consider running against the democratic president, Lyndon Johnson. Who had signed the Civil Rights Act but had now enmeshed the whole country into Vietnam. We wanted him to challenge. We identified with him. He was a very young man. He was very vigorous in enforcement of civil rights and he had a passion about him that a lot of us felt.

We went up and had a wonderful meeting with him at his home. He said, at the time, he said, "I'm afraid I would divide the democratic party and with another year or two, I believe we can cut off the funding for the war." Of course, in two years, he did decide to run for president, did make a great challenge to Lyndon Johnson, who decided not to run for reelection. Then he was killed, shot, in the Ambassador Hotel, June the 4th. June the 8th, by then I'd been drafted. He was dead soon and I was in Vietnam.

Tre Tailor: Now, you were at USC at the same time as those first group of African American students desegregated the university. Do you have any personal experience or memories of what that time was like and what

those students, and even you, were experiencing from some of the other students.

Bud Ferillo: Well, there were only three, you know, who came in in the fall of 1963. James Solomon, one of them, and Henrie Monteith are still alive, and they're friends of mine. Harvey Gantt, my sandwich maker buddy from Mother Emanuel my sign maker, had entered Clemson in January of '63. They were very lonely people. They were not warmly embraced on the campus but there was no violence. There were no major protest as there had been at the University of Alabama and University of Oxford, Mississippi. Of course, nothing like the integration in schools in Little Rock in 1955. I would imagine they felt very isolated. After I came back from Vietnam in 1969, I spent one more semester at the university before moving to Charleston, to run the Clyburn campaign. The campus had dramatically changed. There were many more African Americans over those six years than the first admission.

They had their own groupings. They were still very much a minority. I don't know what percentage of the student population it was then. It's now about 15, 16, 17%. It's the largest percentage of African Americans in any public institution in South Carolina. It's very open and the faculty's very integrated. We have a very strong African American history project, I mean, department, and a new civil rights initiative directed by Dr. Bobby Donaldson. Who's a very great friend of mine. Now, we have the South Carolina Collaborative, which is training faculty members to, ultimately, to get out in the communities across the state to have these conversations. Which we believe will be the way that South Carolina, over time, leaves the original sin of human bondage and embraces true freedom and respect among the races.

Tre Tailor: Did you know the original three or have any interaction with them?

Bud Ferillo: Oh, sure. I did. They had heard about me. In 1966, the same year I was president of the Young Democrats, three churches were burned near Greenville, Mississippi. I organized three carloads, all whites. No, none of the black students wanted to go with us because they didn't want to miss that much time from class. They were very concerned about the attendance and didn't want to give any reason for being possibly suspended, but a few of us were willing to go and help rebuild those churches. The first night we got there, they fed us, put us in an

Army tent on cots. It was pouring down rain at the time we made it there, about 11:30 one night. Just as I was about to turn out my light, in walked the great Harry Belafonte. He walked around and asked us each, where we were from, and why we were there, and thanked us.

He said, "I want you to meet some friends of mine." In came Paul Newman and Sidney Poitier. I later found out they made many, many trips to Mississippi and Alabama, and other southern states that were going through such treacherous times, just to keep the spirits of civil rights workers and volunteers up. I don't think I've ever seen three more loving, inspiring, and handsome people in my life, than late that night, after that long drive from South Carolina. We, later, much of the framing had been done on the church that we were working on. We painted and varnished the pews and did some work on the alter. We had people there from all over the country. It was a wonderful experience. It was a hands on experience in that time.

Tre Tailor: Thank you, Bud.

