



Father Tony Campbell

Interviewed by Gail Matthews

1. Cultural change on Pawleys Island (00:39)

Campbell: You drive down the road now and it seems like everyday, you know, there is something new popping up, so it's uh, it's almost like it's an assault on your senses, you know you got all this stuff, you know, popping up all over the place, so environmentally, your environment is changed, that rips out your sense of security, um, family structure being, you know, that takes away your sense of security, your culture is beginning to, you know, disappear as the young people move away, you know, some of the old cultural stories are not circulated anymore, um, the quilt making, you know is not being passed on from the generation to the next, um, it's uh, so there's a lot of depression.

2. Bringing people together (01:55)

Campbell: I think that what we did was we looked back to old, um, local culture, we've used that two ways, you know, through Gumbo Stew and different programs, one of the things we want to do is bring groups of people together and um, in bringing those groups of people together, one of the ways that we become human is that it's through culture, one of the ways we pass on our story, you know, I mean we pass on our story through history books but most of our, what is human about it, and what makes us um, uniquely human in a particular community, and in the individual is passed on through culture, the culture of an area; the music, the food, uh, the way people interact with one another, and so what we found is that we, you know, prejudice or the laws build up when people can't see one another as human-ness, you know, when they have a caricature of your human-ness, when I decide this is what you are as a person, or as a human being, I don't really see the genuine human that you are, so part of seeing the genuine texture of a human person is to be able to taste their culture, and so what we have done at Baskerville through the arts ministries is to give different groups opportunity to sample, to taste, to um, come to understand and know and appreciate other cultures and different cultures,

but the radical thing down here is to show, you know, the um, people who live here, you know, how much they have culturally in common, you know, how much they have assumed they don't have in common, have much in reality they do have in common with one another.

3. Creation of Heritage Festival (01:57)

Campbell: Gumbo Stew came out of a meeting that we had down there at Grand Hall.

Matthews: Yeah, tell me about that.

Campbell: There was a meeting...they wanted to incorporate part of Litchfield Beach, and um, what happened was that, um, we, I set up the tables and they asked if we could have the political meeting here at Baskerville so, set up the tables and we had both black and white people who were on both sides of the issue, we had black people and white people for corporation and black people and white people against corporation, but when we had the meeting, uh, all the uh, blacks set on one side and all the white set on the other side and what they did was hurl stereotypes at each other, we never really got to the issue of incorporation, you know, so it was bad, and uh, some real issues we should have looked at and talked about, you know, um, and land usage and things like that, but uh, so I, midway though this meeting I was just kind of going "Uh, this awful," you know, uh, didn't realize there was no opportunity in Pawley's Island black people and white people to come together and get to know each other as human beings, uh, the only time they came together was in conflict like this in some political meeting where there was some hot issues and people's emotions had already risen up or the other time that they got together was at uh, on the job, so there was really no interaction between cultures and to learn about cultures, so we started the heritage festival, and um, the first heritage festival was the coastal mount wall, Saturday night/Sunday morning, what we did was got a grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission and that was Saturday night, Sunday morning was the national tour group that um, National Endowment for the Arts put together so we got them to come down, we sold a few refreshments but basically we, uh, on a Sunday afternoon we put down Saturday night/ Sunday morning, uh, we about, that was a lot bigger than we thought it was going to be, we had about 500 people who showed up to that.

4. Festival named Gumbo Stew (00:17)

Campbell: We had named it the Heritage Festival, and when [Beulah[?]] came on board, you know, she had this idea about, uh, you know, naming it Gumbo Stew, and focusing on food and bring food as part of the cultural mix and selling the food and all this stuff and she said “Well, you know, why don’t we change the name to Gumbo Stew?”

5. Gumbo metaphor (00:50)

Campbell: People understand, you know, heritage is kind of like an, uh, it’s like an academic term.

Matthews: Yeah.

Campbell: You know, heritage, what does that mean to you? You know, what does it mean to me? I mean not only to people out there but to me. What is, what is her-, when I think about it, you say “Oh yeah, that’s profound; heritage,” this festival lifts up my heritage, but where I live culturally, day to day, if I eat, sleep, drink, have problems, stuff like that, Gumbo Stew hits me where I live, you know, Gumbo Stew breathes of the culture of this area, the sea, you know, the food that comes out to nourish our bodies out of the sea, the mixture that comes together of people and you know, you now, the ocean and the woods, and the for- Gumbo Stew is like life, you know, and so it hits at a very earthy level, you know, so that was one of the reasons why I just, you know, it was a good thing to do.

6. Appreciating different cultures (01:13)

Campbell: Gumbo Stew acts, acts like that, you know terms of the art form that is there, you know, we have bluegrass people, we have gospel singers, we’ll have Jazz, we’ll have, you know, a whole mixture of the form that day, you know, and I even find myself, I wouldn’t, I don’t listen to country music on the, on the radio, but you know, when it’s here and they are playing and you hear it, you begin to appreciate it and before I know I’m tapping my foot <tapping in background> and I’m, <yells YEAH!, Backwha!> you know, and um, I’m ready to go, you know, so that’s what it’s all about,

you know, I mean we get so afraid of things we haven't been exposed to, you know, we are afraid because if we move, we feel like if we move out of our house, we move out of cultural security, you know, that we won't be able to survive, and somehow our culture is the, is not only, is not only a safe-, but it becomes the culture, you know, this is normative, this is right, you know, and that's not true, you know, what is true is that, you know, all cultures are wonderful, all cultures are blessed and when we come to appreciate all those, the main thing that happens is that we come to appreciate ours even more.