

An interview with Raiford Scott, conducted by Jan Pfeil Doyle,  
on the afternoon of October 17, 2011, three days after Raiford's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, October 13, 2011.

Raiford Scott was born on October 14, 2011 in Gainsville, Georgia, north of Atlanta. When she was 6 years old, her family moved to Anderson, SC. Her father was an accountant for Sullivan Hardware but he switched jobs quite a bit and the family moved around. Sixth grade was the first time she spent the whole school year in the same school. She remembers the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918. For homes that were affected, a truck driver would leave soup on the porch and run. They turned the school into a hospital.

She graduated from high school in Greenville, SC in 1928 and started at Winthrop College that fall. She graduated in 1932 and taught school for one year in Greenwood, SC before deciding it wasn't for her. She had always wanted to study architecture. She saw the housing boom after WWI and thought she could design better houses! Several architecture schools she contacted were not friendly to female students: Penn said she could study architecture but could only earn an MFA; SC said she could only study it if her father were a professor; Georgia Tech said she could study interior decorating. Alabama Polytechnic (became Auburn) accepted her; she had wanted to study architectural engineering but her professors talked her out of it because they said she wouldn't be able to find a job. She graduated as an architect in 1937. She couldn't find a job because of the depression and WWII was looming—all the building materials were going to England for their war effort. She finally found a short-term job drafting factory plans from engineers' designs at the Hercules Powder Co. They asked her if she had any identifying birth marks because of explosions, which jolted them periodically. She worked 8 hrs/day, 6 days/wk. She froze during the winter—Virginia was the farthest north she'd been.

She moved to similar jobs in Shreveport, LA; Wilmington, DE; Atlanta, GA; Hagerstown, MD; and Bariboo, WI. The companies she worked for included Mason & Hanger, Robert & Co., Silas Co. and Fairchild. She learned to ride a bicycle when she was in her 30s and rode from Hagerstown to Harpers Ferry. In Bariboo she met another woman architect; they became friends and Raiford subsequently married her (the female architect's) brother. Raiford was almost 34 by that time. Her husband was a city planner. They were happily married for 42 years until his death in 1988. They had four children, two girls and two boys ("her greatest assets,") all of whom are musicians. She gives credit to Greensboro, NC's good music program in their schools. (Raiford claims to have no musical talent.) After her children were older, she worked for 10 years for a local architect making working drawings; she retired in her late 60s. She moved to Indianapolis in 1990 to be near her children.

The first house Raiford designed was for her parents. They built it after their children left home.

Raiford's current pastimes include gardening, listening to her children and their spouses play with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, reading and eating! She lives independently in American Village. She told me American Village was built on a peat bog, which was a determining factor in her choosing it because the soil would be so good for gardening.

Raiford was invited to join AAUW after she graduated from Winthrop. She is an honorary life member of AAUW and has enjoyed her AAUW contacts here in Indy very much, especially the afternoon book group [which Raiford has hosted at American Village for many years] because the discussions are open and people don't get their feelings hurt. Raiford has macular degeneration and reads Talking Books.

Raiford feels fortunate to have been born when she was, and to parents who saw that their two daughters went to college. She says that the 20th century was a very, very interesting time to live and that there were more changes and more opportunities than at any time since the industrial revolution. Raiford feels she's lived a charmed, happy life and was always interested in what she was doing. She says the main thing is that she's still enjoying life and is coping; she just got a rolling walker a few weeks ago. She feels her long life is truly accidental—she's done what she wanted when she wanted!

We wish you many more, Raiford!

Christmas 2011 – Birth of a New Tradition  
Forwarded by Mitzi Witchger

As the holidays approach, the giant Asian factories are kicking into high gear to provide Americans with monstrous piles of cheaply produced goods --

merchandise that has been produced at the expense of American labor. This year will be different.

This year Americans will give the gift of genuine concern for other Americans.

There is no longer an excuse that, at gift-giving time, “nothing can be found” that is produced by American hands.

It is time to think outside the box!  
Who says a gift needs to fit in a shirt box, wrapped in Chinese wrapping paper?

EVERYONE gets their hair cut!  
How about gifts of gift certificates for your local American hair salon or barber?

Gym membership! It's appropriate for all ages who are thinking about some health improvement.

Who wouldn't appreciate getting their car detailed?  
Small, American-owned detail shops and car washes would love to sell you gift certificates.

Are you one of those extravagant givers who thinks nothing of plunking down the Benjamins on a flat-screen TV not “Made in USA”?

Perhaps that grateful gift receiver would like the driveway sealed, or plowed of snow, or the lawn mowed for the summer, or rounds at the local golf course?

There are a gazillion owner-run restaurants, all offering gift certificates.

Your intended isn't into the fancy eatery, what about a half-dozen breakfasts at the local breakfast joint?

Remember, this isn't about the big national chains -- this is about supporting your home town Americans with their financial lives on the line to keep their doors open.

How many people couldn't use an oil change for the car, truck or motorcycle, at a local shop run by the American working guy?

Thinking about a heartfelt gift for Mom?  
Mom would LOVE the services of a local cleaning service for a day.

My computer could use a tune-up, and I KNOW I can find some young guy who is struggling to get his repair business up and running.

Ok, you were looking for something more personal.

Local crafts people spin their own wool and knit them into scarves. Craft artists make jewelry, and pottery, and beautiful wooden boxes.

Plan your holiday outings at local, owner-operated restaurants, and leave your server a nice tip.

How about a play or ballet at your hometown theater?

Musicians need love, too, so find a venue showcasing local bands.

Honestly, do you REALLY need to buy another ten thousand lights not “Made in USA” for the house?  
Of your five-dollar purchase, about 50 cents stays in the community.

If you have big bucks to burn, leave a nice big TIP for our mail carrier, trash guys or babysitter.

You see, Christmas and the holidays are no longer about draining American pockets so a foreign producer can guild another glittering city.

Christmas and the holidays are about caring about US, we the people, encouraging American small businesses to keep plugging away to follow their dreams.

And when we care about other Americans, we care about our communities, and the benefits come back to us all in ways we can not imagine.

THIS is the new American Christmas and holiday tradition!

Forward these thoughts to everyone on your mailing list, post it to discussion groups, send it to the editor of your local paper and radio & TV news departments.

This is a revolution of caring about each other, and isn't that what Christmas and the holidays are all about?

[Note: this is not anti-world-business, but encouraging support of local business!]