

National Council of Negro Women's Organization were planting seeds for freedom elsewhere in the nation.

Soon, Joe Louis

became the most famous American boxer in history to date. That was happening in Germany and New York, they said, this was North Carolina.

"You couldn't look a white woman in the eye for fear of being accused of something," Taylor said. "It was awful. Most blacks had the dirtiest jobs. Nobody had no money. My father always worked three jobs just to put food on the table. And, something was always breaking down. I had only three choices: go to school, become a teacher or a preacher, or go to jail. That was it. And I mean, that was it."

"What saved us was the strength of our families," Mrs. Taylor said. "They saw to it that we were educated. They instilled values. There was no such thing as talking about it, just do it — go to school, make something out of yourself. You didn't always have the money

Said. The next thing they knew, they'd fallen in love. "I just knew there was something about him that I liked. He really had something," she said. "He was good."

Vivian said he just thought he'd found the woman he would want to spend the rest of his life with. "It happened just like that," he said. "We had so much in common and we just liked each other and began to love each other."

By August of 1950, the couple decided to get married. They were in their 20s and both felt it was the right time. The two figured they would marry secretly.

"It was just one of those things you do when you are young and you don't think," Mrs. Taylor said. "The truth of it is, we didn't have enough money for our own place and I didn't want to live with his family and he didn't want to live with mine."

Taylor said he asked Lula where she'd like to live. "We can go to

shop and made plans to follow her husband as they had planned. By November, she received the train ticket and boarded for a new life with her husband in Jamestown.

"In those days, you had to sit in the back of the train until you got to Washington, D.C.," he said.

It would be five years until Rosa Parks would refuse to give up her seat to a white person, sparking the civil rights movement that was already in progress.

"I knew once she got out of the South it would be a better ride and she would be more comfortable," he said.

Except, Mrs. Taylor forgot to buy a winter coat or boots or a hat and gloves. She arrived in Jamestown half-frozen, wondering why nobody had told her how cold New York was in November.

"She was a sight," her husband said. The newweds stayed with Taylor's uncle for a short time at 169 Fluvanna Ave. Their first apartment was on Cross Street. Soon, Vivian got a job at Marlin Rockwell, the former Currier Ballbearing Co. He worked as a sweeper, a trucker and a shipping clerk over the next few years for the company. He retired from MRC 35 years later.

The Taylors celebrated the birth of



Above is Lula Taylor at the time of her high school graduation.

Taylor's already knew their children would go to school with all of the children in their neighborhood.

The Taylors lived at 35 W. 10th St. the year Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Ala.

While they worked and raised their children, they joined the PTA at the school and the YMCA and Mrs. Taylor joined a mother's group.

The couple said they were usually the only — or two of the very few — black faces at organized meetings other than their African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church functions. The church had been founded by abolitionists in Jamestown 100 years before the Taylors attended.

In 1956, Emmett Till, a young black Chicago teen, was murdered in Greenwood, Miss., for allegedly whistling at a white woman. James Brown recorded *Please, Please, Please*, in Augusta, Ga., and *The Nat King Cole Show* premiered on a television set that could only be seen in black and white.

By the time Motown Records was established, Althea Gibson won Wimbledon, Jim Brown played for the Cleveland Browns and Little Rock Arkansas was forced by the National Guard to allow seven black students to

led a 200,000-people march on Washington. He later received the Nobel Peace Prize.

By the time Malcolm X, a leader in the Black Muslim movement, was killed and Sidney Poitier won an Oscar for his talents, the Taylors were ready to become politicians.

Though they were not inspired by recent events, the Taylors said they were painfully aware of them and organized events to honor President Kennedy, King and Black History. Their motivation to make a difference was borne of family inspiration and feelings, by the headlines.

"Our children were growing up and in school so we were able to make more time for our community work," Mrs. Taylor said.

The biggest political break they had was for Lula to start work at the Proto Tool Co.

"There was a man who was running for a political office," she said. "He started to talk to me about it and show me how to go around and hand out information to educate the voters and possibly get their votes. I really liked doing that. Soon, I was an inspector at Proto Tool and I had to go around to the workers and inspect their work.

While I was doing that, I started talking to them and learning about their lives and families and making friends. I began to note when someone had a birthday or a new baby and I was able to send them a little card for that, and ask them to vote for my candidate."

For 10 years, the Taylors worked as members of the city Democratic Party Committee.

They learned the issues facing Jamestown and developed opinions and strategies about possible solutions to problems facing the city. During this time, "Black Power" rose, non-violent and violent protests broke out around the nation and African Americans, which was a new term for referring to Black people, attained high government and political offices.

The names, Stokely Carmichael, Huey P. Newton, Mohammed Ali, Thurgood Marshall and Bill Cosby became household names and King assassinated.

"Our hearts just died that day," Taylor said of King's death.

A few years later, an African American security guard caught a white politician breaking into a Democrat's psychiatrist's office at 1 Watergate Building.

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Above: Vivian and Lula Taylor share a hug. At right, Taylor stands with his



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