

Mary Jane Perkins Galer Transcript  
6th March 2012

[Galer, Mary Jane 1. 01: 01: 21]

**Catherine Oglesby:** It's Tuesday March 6th. I'm in the home of Mary Jane Galer, on Lullwater Road in beautiful Green Island Hills Columbus, Georgia. And uh, we'll try to concentrate it will be difficult for me because the surrounds are so beautiful, but uh, I'll start as I always start by asking Mary Jane, may I call you Mary Jane?

**Mary Jane Perkins Galer:** Please do.

**CO:** With what her first memory is? Your first childhood memory.

**MG:** Oh my first childhood memory was playing out in the yard, in the front yard where there were palm trees and walking across the street to stand on the edge of the Sabine Canal in Port Arthur, Texas and watch the tankers go by.

**CO:** Port Arthur, Texas. Okay. Alright. Um, and how old do you think you were?

**MG:** Five

**CO:** Five?

**MG:** Um hmm. I must have been around five when we left there so that I must have been around five. You know I don't think I could go back beyond that.

**CO:** Yeah. Okay. Alright. Can you describe yourself as a child? Either physically or just your temperament, your nature, what kind of child were you?

**MG:** Well as my childhood developed as I was very shy. I was very, I did not have a good opinion of myself. But otherwise I was a thin, very active child. Just because I was moved from one family to the other I developed this, this feeling of inadequacy.

**CO:** Okay. Well.

**Husband, Robert Galer [Bob]:** Here's your water and here's a glass in case you want to

**CO:** Thank you very much.

**Bob:** Here's your ice tea.

**MG:** Thank you very much.

**CO:** Thank you. Do I need something to sit this on?

**MG:** No it's glass.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Well the next question because that certainly needs hashing out. The next question is about your parents to describe your parents, your father and your mother. Do you want to use this opportunity to

**MG:** I don't remember much about them. My mother died when I was six and um, you know other than just being in the family I really don't remember much about them. Once she died, my father just abandoned us. So therefore I never did see him again.

**CO:** So "us" being you and your sister?

**MG:** My sister.

**CO:** Dorothy?

**MG:** My sister Dorothy.

**CO:** You call her Dorothy. Okay, so at six you, were you adopted by another family?

**MG:** No, we went off to my father was going to put us in an orphanage, you know the old fashion days they had these orphanages, and my mother's family said, "No you can't do that." So her brother had us come live with him and his family and they had three little boys. As those years went on we were there seven years with him, and then he died at the age of forty-five, and then we got sent off to my mother's sister's house, which by that time, she was not married in the beginning, but when this all started, but she was married later. So she had a husband and a big house, and she took us in our high school years and college years.

**CO:** Okay, so Alright. Well who do you consider your father, who sort of became the father figure in your life? The uncles?

**MG:** I didn't have anyone. Yeah, the uncles. The first one was a preacher and he headed up a school for problem boys, the juveniles out of the courts in New York City were sent up there and it was called the Berkshire Industrial Farm, and these boys were taught farming and how to get along in life and so forth. So he headed that school up and so, he was one. And the second one, the second batch, the second wave, that man was, that uncle, by marriage, was a doctor, so I had preacher upbringing and I set around the table later in time learning all about is it do you think we'll ever anything called health insurance. [she laughs] So that was the discussion around the table. When I was,

**CO:** And was this in New York?

**MG:** No, the Berkshire Farm was up in New York, Yes, I'm sorry it was Canaan, New York, which is about twenty-six miles south of Albany.

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** And the second one was, the second family was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Which is actually where my mother was from. That was where she was born and raised.

**CO:** So would you call those years your early adolescent formative years?

**MG:** Oh yes. Oh yes.

**CO:** You lived there from five to teenager?

**MG:** The first one was from six, age six to age thirteen, and then the next one was through high school and college, which is fourteen to eighteen or nineteen.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Um, Okay. But it was a professional household.

**MG:** Both of them right.

**CO:** Your uncle was a doctor, and your aunt, what about your aunt. What was that household?

**MG:** Well that was the one where her husband was the minister.

**CO:** Oh I see.

**MG:** The first one. The first one he was a minister. Well he was the brother of my mother. He was my mother's brother and he was a minister. And the second household was my mother's sister,

**CO:** Right.

**MG:** and her husband was a doctor.

**CO:** Oh I see. Okay. The doctor was an uncle by marriage.

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. I had that backwards. Okay. Um, well. I have a question about what influence both parents had on you, but do you think your mother had an influence on you?

**MG:** I really can't say.

**CO:** Okay. What about the other people who...

**MG:** Well, yes because they all did and I'm sure she must have because she would have the same upbringing as her other siblings. They did.

**CO:** Can you say what that might have been?

**MG:** Well they taught me values. They taught me how to treat people, and particularly the aunt in Pittsburgh, I recall so many times going with her. They were wealthy. They were well off, very well off, had a beautiful house and. But I would go so many times with her to visit people who were, I don't know what connection she had with them, but we would go to their house, I can remember going to a black person's house. It didn't mean anything to me at the time. I didn't know anything about race relations and all that sort of thing. She had good Polish friends, who were, you know the families worked in the steel mill, so she had a connection with these, "other" people. And taught us to respect everybody and everything they did.

**CO:** Okay. Where do you think that came from? She, she reached beyond her own class.

**MG:** I don't know that. I don't know enough about her past or you know. I do know that she claims she had been a secretary for one of the Mellon's, and the Mellon bank. And she claims also that she had gone to law school at night. I never saw any proof off that, but that's what she talked about. But otherwise I really don't

**CO:** So what about their, the extended family? Her, your aunt and your mother's parents? And

**MG:** Oh my mother's parents were gone long before that.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** I never knew them.

**CO:** So this aunt and uncle were, that was [the extended family?], what about cousins and, were you close to?

**MG:** Well, yes. The first family I went to the uncle the brother, my mother's brother had three little boys, and we were raised together for those seven years, and when he died that aunt, was not able to financially take care of my sister and me anymore. Uh, so because you know that was a very young death and so forth. So, that's when we got spun off to the next family. Um, but I'm still in touch with, well there's only two boys left, but I'm still in touch with them, and we do communicate, but otherwise there really is no other extended family.

**CO:** So what about your aunt that you went to live with?

**MG:** She had no children.

**CO:** No children okay.

**MG:** So we really don't have an extended family.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Do you know anything about your mother's relationship with her mother or your aunt's relationship with her mother?

**MG:** Don't know anything about that.

**CO:** Okay. So

**MG:** I do remember my aunt Mary telling me that during the war, she lost several boys. They had eleven in the family or something, and that grandmother was raising three children from another marriage. From a former life of, but she lost three boys in the war. In the second, in the first World War.

**CO:** The First World War, yeah.

**MG:** And then she lost a daughter----there were only three girls in that family of eleven and she lost one at the age of nineteen with the flu. That was during the flu that hit after the war.

**CO:** Yes.

**MG:** So that's what I remember about her, and she said that she died of a broken heart.

**CO:** Um, okay. This next question is, there are gonna be so many possibilities for you. [a train begins to pass by at 00: 49: 50] You can answer with more than one. The question is what was the most significant or memorable event in your life up to the age of twelve. You have many it sounds like with your mother's death and moving to another family.

**MG:** Well I can't, I don't know about,

**CO:** Well I'll tell you, let me just say that, that one of the things life review is about is discovering turning points. You know really identifiable turning points in life.

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** And so in childhood,

**MG:** Well obviously the death of my mother would be one, because that was all very sudden and you know as a small child it had a tremendous impact, and moving then, being taken up to this other family. So those first years were hard to adjust.

**CO:** Do you recall, do you recall how you coped and how you adjusted? Especially as you identified, you described yourself as a shy child.

**MG:** Well that came out of all of that. No, I really unfortunately I can't figure that out. I mean, that was so long ago.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. Okay. Alright. Um, the next question is about struggles. What were your---adjusting seems to be a huge struggle, but can you unpack that a little bit? What were your struggles as a child?

**MG:** I can't answer that either. [she laughs] Sorry.

**CO:** Now where were, when was your sister born? You were born in '28?

**MG:** I was born in '24. She was born in '22.

**CO:** Okay. She was born in...

**MG:** So she was two years older than I was.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. So what was your relationship with her like?

**MG:** Um, we were only two. Only two of us. It was pretty good. She seemed, apparently was much more adjusted. She seemed to, to uh... She was always the predominant one.

**CO:** So she was not introverted and shy?

**MG:** No. No. No. Right. And, she was, well we were treated the same. I was gonna say that it wasn't that we weren't treated the same. But she just took it better. Maybe

she was older, I don't know?

**CO:** Did she, did you get in retrospect that she felt any responsibility for you as the baby, as the younger?

**MG:** No.

**CO:** No? Okay. Um, you know today. Well in the past thirty or forty years perhaps there's so much about the conflicted nature of adolescence and how the transition from childhood to adolescence brings a lot of conflict and um, did you?

**MG:** Well, I'm just not aware of it. I mean,

**CO:** You didn't have it. Okay.

**MG:** Well, I probably did, but it's just, I just don't remember those things.

**CO:** Well, in the academic circles it's almost a given that there are mother-daughter conflicts in that period, but we find that that's not true. You know, that academics wanted to say that it was just an inevitable, some academics wanted to say it was just inevitable part of the individuation process of daughters, and you know so it was that individuation was in some ways born out of the conflict with the mother. But I am finding from talking to women of your generation if it happened they weren't aware of it.

**MG:** Yeah, I, you know. All I can think of is that woman, my aunt, my mother's brother's wife, took these two little girls to raise. And I don't recall that there was any, ever any conflict. I mean we did what we were told and that was it. We didn't question it.

**CO:** You just did it. You didn't have a, any sort of secret rebellion as a young girl?

**MG:** Well, let me put it this way. My whole life has been a secret rebellion. So it must have started back then, but I don't think I was aware of it. That may have been my turning point.

**CO:** I am so pleased I've found a rebel!

**MG:** [she laughs] Oh gracious! I'm the biggest!

**CO:** That's wonderful. That's wonderful! Um, well and so probably it did start in childhood, but it didn't manifest in...

**MG:** Yeah, that's what I think

**CO:** in disobedience to your

**MG:** Right.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Now you know, we couldn't be disobedient because what we were dealing with, we were always reminded that we were lucky that we had somebody to take care of us.

**CO:** So and did you, do you recall as a child wondering about your father?

**MG:** I got fed a steady stream of negatives about him, and I mean he was a boozer and womanizer.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** And so the family wanted no, they didn't even want him discussed, and there was a time, you see he never helped pay. He never contacted [us] until, we were ready to graduate, I was ready to graduate from college, and he contacted the Dean of Women at the University of Pittsburgh to see if we would contact him. And see that had to be sixteen and, twelve or more, I'm trying to think of the years here.

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** And my sister said no. And so we never did contact him again, but he had no part of us.

**CO:** Do you have any idea what he wanted?

**MG:** No. I don't. I mean he certainly didn't want money because we weren't even out of school. Dorothy was out of school, but I was not. And so I don't know.

**CO:** Did she also go to Pittsburgh?

**MG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Okay. Um, so, uh. Um. What did your mother die from? Did you?

**MG:** She had appendicitis.

**CO:** Oh goodness.

**MG:** And because my father at that point was a Christian Scientist, he would not get her medical help.



**CO:** So you weren't especially closed to her or you just don't remember

**MG:** That's right, I just don't remember.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Um, well. I have questions about what was gender awareness in your household like but you had two, there were just two girls in your family of origin. What about in the other households? You were probably treated differently because you were sort of adopted in

**MG:** Yeah, Yeah.

**CO:** Is there anything you could identify, that was clearly because you were girls, do you think you might have been treated any differently if you had been two boys, or if you had been a boy?

**MG:** Not those first seven years with that younger family. We did *everything* that the boys did. We all did it together.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** I mean we played. We skied. We had sleds outside the house. We had goats in the yard. I mean just pet goats.

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** and everything was the same. We were not treated differently.

**CO:** Was it a farm?

**MG:** That was, it was a farm. Like I say, the boys that came up from, that were housed there from New York, were taught farming and so forth and they had other crafts and things that they learned to do, but we were countrified enough that we had these pet goats and that sort of thing but it was the boys and the girls were all treated the same.

**CO:** Ok.

**MG:** We were not discerned differently.

**CO:** And did they, um. That was a, now that first household, your mother's brother...

**MG:** Mother's, yes. My mother's brother.

**CO:** brother. He was a preacher.

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** What kind? What denomination?

**MG:** Presbyterian.

**CO:** Presbyterian preacher. Okay and did his wife work outside the home?

**MG:** No. No, no.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** There was no place for her to work at the time. But she was raising these five kids.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. Alright. And you've already told me that, cause I have a question about disagreeing with your, the family's beliefs or values at all. Did you, did your, were the values and beliefs in your uncle's household different from what they had been in your own household since it sounds like your father was not cut from the same mold?

**MG:** Oh, I really can't compare 'em because I don't remember that kind of family life.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** I had it before that.

**CO:** Okay. Alright, but you didn't question this uncle's household? This family's?

**MG:** No.

**CO:** No. The values, okay. Were they conscious of the world outside? You have obviously an incredible consciousness of life beyond the domestic sphere, since you spent a large part of your life there. Did they have an awareness of what was going on in the world outside the household and talk about it? World affairs? World events or just what was going on in the news?

**MG:** I'm trying to think about it, but no. Not in that first family. I don't . . . you know we were all young and there wasn't much that I could remember about, you know the interesting thing was, or the steady thing was that we all ate, we set down at the table and we all ate breakfast together. We all ate dinner together, and then he opened the Bible and read a story out of the Bible. So it was a very steady, stable situation.

**CO:** Um hm. Okay. Alright, so when you went to live with them at six years old, the

Depression had just set in?

**MG:** Ah yeah. I think, let me go back a minute because we moved from Port Arthur to Saint Louis in 19-- about 1929. I am thinking that my father who was an engineer with Gulf Oil in Beaumont outside of Port Arthur, I am thinking that he must have been hit with the Depression which sent him to looking for another job.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** And I don't ever know about that. But to get into the next family, where we were raised in those first years. There was never any indication that there was any financial problem.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** The thing is that that uncle had a good job, and he was paid well, apparently through all of those years. It just happened that he had landed that job about that time, and he was apparently paid well.

**CO:** The job with the boys' home?

**MG:** Yes, the boys farm. Berkshire Industrial Farm.

**CO:** He didn't have a church?

**MG:** No, no, no. This was, he was the administrator for this farm, and this, he managed all the problems of those boys coming up from the...

**CO:** Do you remember them? Do you remember the boys?

**MG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MG:** One or two, one of them was particularly outstanding, and as a matter of fact that aunt and uncle took him on almost as a foster child, and he was older than my sister. So he hung around, as a matter of fact he was friends with them for years, even after uncle Harry died, he was friends with Aunt Bryson for years, she really treated him like a son also.

**CO:** So you called them aunt and uncle?

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** Okay. And you continue to refer to that first home, which was home until you were fourteen, thirteen?

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** And so how was the second home appreciably different from that?

**MG:** Extremely.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Extremely different.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Because there were no children involved. And um, and um, there I always felt like we were there you know for their benevolence, and that was about all they cared. They really didn't have. They didn't reach out with any love--- or, well, love.

**CO:** So you didn't feel about, she was not a mother figure to you?

**MG:** That's right.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Except to say for the things they taught us.

**CO:** Um hm. Alright. They modeled by example? Is that?

**MG:** Well I would say so. Taking care of people and seeing that everybody was treated justly.

**CO:** Okay. That seems almost incongruent that she would have this big heart for, you know people out there

**MG:** Well, it's true. [she laughs]

**CO:** You know outside the home, and not have a, so it sounds like there wasn't much affection?

**MG:** Well that's true. That's very true.

**CO:** Have you ever pondered that apparent sort of incongruity there between?

**MG:** Well I've thought about it over the years.

**CO:** Well, I mean it is, I, there are so many reformers who, you know, want to save the world, but don't make the best parents. So it's not an uncommon contradiction. Um, well so in that household if she, if your aunt was a sort of altruistic kind of person, was that household aware of world events or just being

**MG:** They were more so, right. There would be more discussion at the table about different things in the world. Like as I said that one discussion about whether we should even have insurance for medical care kind of thing, that sort of thing was under discussion quite a bit.

**CO:** And so what did they conclude?

**MG:** I don't think there was ever any conclusion. I don't know what they really thought. I mean whether they said we shouldn't do it or what, but I just remember that, I remember sitting at the table and all these conversations going on.

**CO:** Now your uncle, that uncle, your aunt's husband

**MG:** was the doctor.

**CO:** was the doctor. Did she, was she a professional?

**MG:** She like I said, I said earlier she had worked as a secretary or something to the Mellon bank.

**CO:** Mellon

**MG:** at the Mellon Bank, and she claims she had gone to law school at night. There's a misconnection here because I don't know where she got an undergraduate degree if she ever did.

**CO:** How well did you know her before you went to live with her?

**MG:** Oh, I didn't know her at all.

**CO:** No you didn't.

**MG:** Um, I know more about her now because I've delved into some family history and I do know she was one of the older ones and she took care, after her father and mother were gone, she and some of the older brothers helped educate the younger ones. I do know that.

**CO:** How many siblings in that family?

**MG:** There were eleven.

**CO:** Oh my goodness. Okay.

**MG:** And she helped the younger ones, uh. She claims, and I say these things because I've known her to not be too truthful all the time. She claims that my mother had graduated with a PhD in chemistry, and I do know that my mother was a researcher at the Mellon institute in Pittsburgh when she met my father and married him. But I've never been able to prove her college because I've contacted the college a couple of times and they don't seem to have a record on her. But she was a researcher and so she had to be, have a pretty high degree to do that.

**CO:** Well, and so where was your mother in that birth order?

**MG:** I don't know.

**CO:** Okay,.

**MG:** But your aunt was older than your mother?

**CO:** Yeah, she was.

**MG:** Okay.

**CO:** Alright. Wow! So it was a well-educated family?

**MG:** Well they, they helped each other. Like I say, I don't know what her education was. As long as I was there, I don't know what it was.

**CO:** Did they encourage your's and your sister's education?

**MG:** Oh yes, oh yes. That was just a given.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Although, my sister went to Pitt and I don't, I think she must've had some jobs to help herself through. I know that *I* worked *my* way through Pitt, I think that the, some of the tuition was reduced because my uncle the doctor was on the faculty of the medical school, and at that time they gave reduced tuition, but I worked all the time I was going to school. And I guess Dorothy did too. I just don't recall.

**CO:** Hm. Okay. Did you share your ambitions with your family? Did you know, first of

all did you know as a child what you wanted to do?

**MG:** When I was in high school I did. I decided I wanted to be a librarian, and then at one point. I wanted before I graduated from college, I decided maybe I wanted to go for law school and I went over to the law school, talk about defining moments. And they said, "Oh! You don't have a 4.0 GPA and we can't let any woman come over here that doesn't have a 4.0 because it infers that she's not serious." So I went on to library school and after library school, they had a job opening in the library. So I went over there to apply for the job, and he said, "Oh, Honey! We can't give you that job! You're too pretty and you're just are going to upset all these men, and they're so serious about what they're doing. You'll be a distraction." Defining moment.

**CO:** *That's* a defining moment.

**MG:** [she laughs] So, I went on and worked for the Army in Korea. This is when my rebellion started.

**CO:** Oh.

**MG:** But anyway, that was

**CO:** Now did you happen to ask the people at the law school,

**MG:** I didn't ask them anything.

**CO:** Why the 4.0 wasn't required of male applicants?

**MG:** That was way before, that was way before.

**CO:** Right. Right.

**MG:** This was just normal procedure.

**CO:** So did it make you angry?

**MG:** Resentful.

**CO:** Okay. Alright and then not getting the job as the librarian,

**MG:** That too.

**CO:** Okay. Okay. Alright. Um, did you talk to your aunt about wanting to be a librarian? Did she, what did she have to say about it?

**MG:** Oh they thought that was a good idea because that's, that would allow me to earn a living without a husband if I had to.

**CO:** What did they think about that? Because

**MG:** It was Alright. It was Alright with them.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Yeah. They because going into, I had to go into education to do this, you know. School librarian is what I was aimed at. One uncle was a school teacher, and so he was all for that. They, it was important to them.

**CO:** That you be independent and not on a man?

**MG:** Yeah, not have to get married to have somebody take care of me.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** This would take care of it going into education.

**CO:** Because for so many women, I would say probably the majority of women, the expectation was they were groomed to marry.

**MG:** That's true.

**CO:** Yeah, but that wasn't true for you?

**MG:** That's true. Not here no.

**CO:** Okay. Um, just before we leave the category of childhood, besides family do you have friends that you've kept up with over your life time?

**MG:** Not from that era. Not from that era at all.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Well now, that was, that was. Now where did your aunt live, you've probably said, and I didn't retain.

**MG:** Pittsburgh.

**CO:** So Pittsburgh.

**MG:** A suburb of Pittsburgh, nobody lived in Pittsburgh,



**CO:** So you really were shaped in a, outside the South, you were shaped, your

**MG:** Yes. Yes.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. We'll come back to that, but what did you all do at any point in your lifetime, what did you do for recreation or entertainment, vacation?

**MG:** Well, when we were in the first family, every year my uncle would take a two weeks vacation, and we would go to Adirondacks.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** So we were in the mountains, we were at Putty Pond, we were at . . . Oh, gee, I can't even remember them now, but every year, every year we went for

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** those first five or six years before he got sick.

**CO:** Did that give you an appreciation, well you lived on a farm, but did going to the Adirondacks give you an appreciation for nature?

**MG:** Well, it was just more fun.

**CO:** Um kay. So you did have

**MG:** Another fun thing to do.

**CO:** What about your family of origin do you recall going anywhere with your parents?

**MG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MG:** No.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** Oh with this group, this first family, you know there were three boys and two girls. He had, we had a seven passenger Buick, and we would take these trips, and in the back seat were, you know there was a seat where three kids sit across the bottom and there were two folding seats, that folded down off the back of the front seats.

**CO:** Uh.

**MG:** To be the five,

**CO:** Where did you wind up sitting?

**MG:** Oh, just about anywhere.

**CO:** Oh you set different places okay. Alright. Um. What about books, do you recall a particular genre of, that you liked as child and young girl?

**MG:** No, I don't have any memory about that.

**CO:** Books or music, it's okay?

**MG:** Un um. Music, my sister was musical. I couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, but she followed the music groups. She could even play the organ.

**CO:** Alright. Okay. Alright. Were, did you all um have, did you go to the theatre or did you watch movies?

**MG:** We didn't have a theatre. Those first years out there in the country. You know we were fifteen miles from Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and that's a "fur-piece" when you have to drive a bunch of kids. No we never went to the movies or anything like that.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** All was our own creation of our own activities.

**CO:** Yeah. So you had to be imaginative?

**MG:** Um hm. Um hm.

**CO:** Do you recall childhood with, how do you recall childhood. Do you recall nostalgically?

**MG:** No! I don't. And that's why I'm forgetting everything.

**CO:** Yeah. Well. Okay. Well the next subject is really about education. It sounds like you come from a household that was very steeped in the value of education, so uh. Can you just go back and recap that, you went to um. Your first years in school were in New York? Is that right?

**MG:** In New Lebanon, New York, which was a few miles down the road.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** A four room schoolhouse. There were two classes in each room.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** Except the seventh grade had a separate room. A four room school house.

**CO:** How did you like it? Did you like school?

**MG:** Oh, yeah. We got to play on the playground. [she laughs]

**CO:** Okay, so.

**MG:** And I had a teacher, I had a teacher that had green suede shoes.

**CO:** Oh my goodness. Whoa! That's memorable isn't it?

**MG:** So I can't remember that much about it.

**CO:** And so you went there for your?

**MG:** I went there from the second grade, I think, through the seventh, and then we moved up to the high school for the eighth grade, and then after that I got sent off to the North Field Seminary School for Girls. In North Field, Massachusetts

**CO:** Did you live there?

**MG:** At the school, right. And that was the year that uncle Harry died<sup>1</sup> and you know, so I was only there a year and then they pulled me back to go to public school and I got to Pittsburgh. Um, my sister finished there because she just had one more year to go, and so they allowed her to stay out there. I don't know who paid the bill, but somebody paid the bill.

**CO:** Well what was that transition like? Going from that female seminary they called them, to public school?

**MG:** That was just a one small year blip in my experience of that one year at that school, which was regimented and it was a Bible school, and it was regimented. We were very, we were directed. Every move we made was what it amounted to as far as behavior's concerned. Um, so going to, going back coming down to public school was a, was just sort of more freedom that's all.

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<sup>1</sup> 1937.

**CO:** Yeah, okay so it was not a negative thing for you.

**MG:** No, but you know. We lived about three, half a mile from the school, so I walked to the school every day and so forth.

**CO:** Okay. Um, and then you went to Pittsburgh to college. The University of?

**MG:** The University of Pittsburgh.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MG:** And then I went to Carnegie Institute of Technology for my library degree which is no longer there. The library school is now at Pitt and it is now called Carnegie-Mellon.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. Well how did you like college? Was that?

**MG:** Well it was just something that was the normal thing to do.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** And at the same time it was just, I went in there just as the war took off all of my high school buddies.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** So

**CO:** What, let me see if I can nail down a date for that. '40?

**MG:** I graduated

**CO:** '41?

**MG:** '41. I graduated from high school in June of '41 so I went to, started college in '41.

**CO:** Okay. Did you know, did anybody you know

**MG:** I need to call

**CO:** You need to make a phone call?

**MG:** Can you shut off the?

**CO:** Sure. Sure.

**MG:** for a second.

[The tape is paused 00: 18: 28]

**MG:** Did we miss something?

**CO:** Yes, we did. We did. Oh my goodness. What have we done since you made that phone call? We talked about, the stuff about education I wrote much of that down. Graduated from high school and graduating from Pitt going to Tucson to teach school, to teach geography. Oh, Dang. We missed your story. Can we go back and get that story you told about work for the um,

**MG:** When I was working at Pitt? They assigned me this job to work, to help with the NEA.

**CO:** That's right! Yeah!

**MG:** I came in.

**CO:** The National Educators Association.

**MG:** I am assuming that's what it was. Um, and a, one of the men who was running for president came by my desk where I was sitting and he said, "Now everybody that comes in here, you ask them to vote for Joe whatever his name was."

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** And I finally said, "Okay, if you give me a job when I graduate in February I will do that." And I presume I did what I was supposed to do because he did he came through with the job, and when I graduated I contacted him and he took me out to Tuscon, and he gave me, he put me in a classroom of eighth graders and teaching geography, and I had no background in geography, so I kept one jump ahead of these little eighth graders. And the eighth graders, we were on the sound end of town where all the Mexican children were, and a lot of those eighth graders were much older, sixteen maybe!

**CO:** Oh my goodness!

**MG:** And, I had to deal with that.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MG:** And I didn't deal with it very well, so I was glad to come back home.

**CO:** So you came back and then you went to library school?

**MG:** Yeah,

**CO:** And that when you graduated from Carnegie

**MG:** Tech, Carnegie Tech Library School

**CO:** In '47?

**MG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Okay. Alright and then you told me about the educations of your children, and we can get that we can get that uh, later um, your son in Roanoke uh, is a CPA.

**MG:** Um hm.

**CO:** after teaching music in high school

**MG:** For ten years yeah.

**CO:** Blacksburg?

**MG:** No, he taught down here. He taught in Albany and then in Columbus.

**CO:** Oh I see okay.

**MG:** And then he went to Blacksburg to get his masters in accounting because it was a good school.

**CO:** Okay and Barbara, you daughter who's in Alberta, is majored in business.

**MG:** Right. She has undergraduate

**CO:** And then Robin at Berkley, was the first, let's do go back over that,

**MG:** Okay, Robin

**CO:** Robin

**MG:** went to Georgia Tech.

**CO:** That's right.

**MG:** And she was the first woman to receive the undergraduate degree in nuclear engineering.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. Wow. That must have been, how did that feel? That must have felt wonderful for all of you.

**MG:** Well she was, she has more drive than I do. When she gets a bit in her teeth, and she got that bit in her teeth when she was in high school 'cause she was doing so well in math and all that. That's what she was going to do.

**CO:** Um, And then she went out to Berkley, they hired her out there, and then she got from Berkley

**MG:** Actually she was, where was, that was, she ended up in Berkley, but I don't know where she was. I think down around San Jose actually.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** And um, and they sent her to Berkley to get a masters in civil engineering.

**CO:** Okay, but she's in Berkley now, right?

**MG:** She is living in Berkley now.

**CO:** Do you get out there to see her much?

**MG:** We have. We have. We don't travel like that anymore, but we have.

**CO:** I love it out there.

**MG:** She bought a, she bought a, what'ya call it? Oh, this is my memory problem. Um, the houses, well never mind. It'll come back. I will download it later.

**CO:** Alright. Okay. Well then we moved on to the subject that caused Bob to get up and leave the room.

**MG:** [she laughs] Oh wait you mean that wasn't recorded and I have to back through that again? [she laughs]

**CO:** I'm so sorry. I'm really especially sorry that we missed his exit. But the subject of romance and I, it's so intriguing to me. And I think this speaks, not that it's, not there weren't people in the South in regions in the South where women's education was

valued, but it certainly was rare. Especially real genuine education. I mean girls went to something of a finishing school, there were some real academic degrees for women in the South, but anyway. The fact that your family, whatever else you did not get from them, you did get a sense of the value of a good education.

**MG:** Absolutely.

**CO:** And to become independent, taking care of yourself was and still

**MG:** That was important, right.

**CO:** From a, to some extent you have a less than traditional view of romance in your background

**MG:** I guess so.

**CO:** But you explained that you had in high school, you had pretty traditional dating.

**MG:** and romances.

**CO:** Romances and so forth, and that you, I asked you to describe your first love, and you said, so tell me that again.

**MG:** That was, what did you say, the disappointment was?

**CO:** No, that was the, in Korea, but you described someone

**MG:** Oh I did have a friend that I dated in high school um, and possibly would have ended up in marriage had he come back from the war, but he did and I don't mean that he was lost in the war because he did survive, but he went off and married somebody else is what I'm saying and, but this was just at the end of high school.

**CO:** Yeah. Yeah.

**MG:** We graduated in '41 and all my buddies went overseas right away.

**CO:** Right.

**MG:** So, but he was one that may have come back and had it all, had we not gone those ways, separate ways, it may have ended up in a marriage.

**CO:** But then after you graduated with your four year degree you went to work in Korea. What...



**MG:** After my library degree,

**CO:** After the library degree, okay. Oh! Okay so that was in the late 40s.

**MG:** '48.

**CO:** Alright, and that's where you met someone that you've, that you fell in love with, but it didn't work out.

**MG:** Right.

**CO:** Were you in the Army?

**MG:** No, I was a civilian. But we were in uniform. We had our own special uniform.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** And we were treated like officers.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** And the Army took very good care of us.

**CO:** And what did you do?

**MG:** And I say us---the librarians, there were two librarians in the 7th Division in Korea, which is the 7th Division ---it was the northern half of South Korea. And we had two librarians and we covered about 15 little kwanza hut type libraries all over that area. Um, and the other women that were in the same uniform were service club providers. They ran recreation service clubs for the soldiers.

**CO:** Did you enjoy that?

**MG:** Oh yeah! That was a great experience.

**CO:** So how long were you there?

**MG:** Well my contract was for a year. I would have stayed longer except at that point the Army moved out of Korea leaving behind what they call the MAG, uh, and they were advisors to the Koreans. And I moved to Japan for a year, I didn't stay quite year but I moved to Japan and um, then right after this was in '49, and then in '50 the beginning of the Korean War. And in other words we had really just left there and left a few officers back behind when the Chinese came down.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MG:** and started the Korean War. But I was back home in the United States by that time, but when I went to Japan I went to Hachinohe, which was a town, which was a little fishing village on the north east coast of Japan. Oh it was an Army post, and I was there. Not in the village, the Army post was there. And the headquarters of the 7th Division which is what I came over with from Korea to Japan with the 7th Division. And they had quartered up in Hokkaido, Sapporo. Which was across the bay. It's on the other island, north. So I stayed there a while, and then I went down to a camp right outside of Tokyo, [she pauses trying to remember] well a camp right outside of Tokyo.

**CO:** Tokyo's fine.

**MG:** But anyhow, but yeah I spent almost a year there. But I brought up the Hachinohe because when that, when Japan had that latest tsunami, tsunami?

**CO:** Yes.

**MG:** And it hit the eastern coast.

**CO:** Uh huh.

**MG:** I went on the internet to see what happened to Hachinohe, because I knew it was a little fishing village. Well over those thirty or forty years it had grown to the most important fishing port on that side of the island.

**CO:** Wow.

**MG:** And of course it was just devastated. I mean ships were sitting up on the bank and up the main street and all sort of things.

**CO:** Oh my.

**MG:** But apparently the Army base wasn't there anymore, but there is an airbase that was there. Uh, it was of interest to me because it had a lot of nice young pilots. Young single pilots that had a lot of fun and they were just a few miles away. And I saw by looking on the internet that they had gone down and were helping clean up the mess down in Hachinohe, but those boys brought in the first jets to Japan. I was at this Army post and we were only a few miles apart here, and they tell the story of when they brought those jets in and they landed in, there were like five or six of 'em came in at one time, single jets, and they landed in Hawaii, and they tell this story that, all the people in Hawaii came out to see these jets, because nobody had ever seen jets before, jet planes. And he said, "And just about the time the jets started up we had somebody behind them with a long paper taper and light the paper taper and stick 'em

behind the plane and the plane started up.”

**CO:** Oh my gosh.

**MG:** So they were fun fly boys.

**CO:** Did you have any relationships with any of these fly boys?

**MG:** No, just, I was just there a few months you know.

**CO:** Right, but this first love you met in Korea?

**MG:** Yeah, I'm sorry.

**CO:** And he came back to the United States

**MG:** Yeah.

**CO:** And then you went to Japan? Is that what happened?

**MG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Is that why you were separated?

**MG:** Yeah, uh huh.

**CO:** What, was there any, did you all discuss trying to work things out over a long distance?

**MG:** Yeah, we did but I don't, I like back now and I don't think he was as serious as I was, that was all. He was just

**CO:** And you call that a disappointment?

**MG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Was that a heart ache?

**MG:** It, it was a, it...

**CO:** And how long did that last?

**MG:** It was a couple of years. Oh do you mean the heart ache?

**CO:** Yeah.

**MG:** Bob showed up. [she laughs] Then there was Bob.

**CO:** Then there was Bob.

**MG:** Well you know, I was around the Army and there were no women, I mean it was all men.

**CO:** Um hm

**MG:** I mean, we had a handful of women.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MG:** So I had my choice and I just

**CO:** There was

**MG:** They came and went and I dated them and they came and went and that was it.

**CO:** Um.

**MG:** Um, until Bob ...

**CO:** So did was that coming and going with all of these available men, did that help you get over the young man you were in love with?

**MG:** Oh yeah, oh yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** Okay.

**MG:** As you see, you can tell from my history of childhood, I just put things behind me. And that's one reason I can't recall some of the things you're asking me.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MG:** I just put things behind me and I still do it to this day.

**CO:** Well, it's a coping strategy. It's an effective coping strategy. Um, Robert F. Galer, explain the rest of his name. Where he's from? coeur...

**MG:** Coeur d'Alene.

**CO:** Coeur d'Alene

**MG:** He was born in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, but when I met him he was out of Montana. His family

**CO:** In the Army?

**MG:** No, no. Well I met him in the Army, but his father had been in the oil business of selling oil for Conoco or somebody, and he moved around, and he moved the family around up in that area, up in Idaho and Montana, and they lived in Montana a while. Bob went into the Second World War from Montana, and got out when it was over. He came after four or five years it was over, he was back and he was in business. He had just started a business on his own, when the Korean War broke out. And they were calling for, and by this time he was a major, and they were calling for a major out of Montana to go train for Korea, and he volunteered because he was the only single one. Everybody else was married. So he volunteered and he came to Camp Roberts which was at that point where I had gone to set up libraries. They opened up Camp Roberts for training for Korea and I had to set up two libraries because we had blacks on one side of the road, and we had whites on the other side of the road. We had to have a black library over here and a white library, that didn't last long, but that was the fact at that point.

**CO:** So this was in '51?

**MG:** '50. Well we married in '51. Yeah, I went down there in '50 right after the, in order to open it up.

**CO:** But did you have a, I've definitely, we'll talk about race relations, but did you have an opinion about that segregated set up at the time? I mean

**MG:** Well yeah, I did because at that point in my life, uh everybody was the same. I didn't have a problem with it. So when that happened, I just did it because I had to do it, but yes I did have some opinions about that.

**CO:** Now, I'm really a bit surprised by that because the, the uh, the military was desegregated

**MG:** They had not desegregated, I mean it was about that time that they did it.

**CO:** Well it got started shortly after Truman, um, ah, came into office. I was pretty sure, but anyway, but in Japan it remained segregated. That's interesting.

**MG:** No, by this time ---I'm sorry---I am confusing the issue. By this time I was back home and I was in California.

**CO:** Okay. Okay. This is California and um, that's still interesting though. I mean 1950 segregated libraries, that's

**MG:** They housed the blacks on one side, over across the road. They housed all the blacks, and that's why we had the library over there.

**CO:** Well now what was the segregated library like? What was the [unintelligible at 00: 00: 38]

**MG:** Oh no difference. No, no difference. It was exactly the same.

**CO:** Oh.

**MG:** But it was just that it was over there where the blacks lived. They had their own library.

**CO:** Um hm. Okay. Alright. Alright. Well and so, okay and that's when you met Bob?

**MG:** I did. He was called back in.

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** And he came to Camp Roberts to retrain.

**CO:** Um hm.

**MG:** To get ready to go to Korea.

**CO:** Okay. And so how did that become a relationship?

**MG:** Well it just did. It just blossomed. I think it had a little encouragement from some of his, his buddies that were in the same unit, but they would come. He would come.

**[BREAK BETWEEN TAPES]**

. . . . itself was in a regimental area. In the Army, regimental areas had certain buildings for certain things and, uh, all things are in order. And this building – I don't know what it originally was supposed to be – but they made it a library. And so it was right in the regimental area where he was a Major over here in this building over here and he would drop in the back door for coffee.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** And, um, and I think that he was encouraged by some of his buddies. He finally

asked me out and we went – this was over Labor Day weekend – and we went deep sea fishing. And when we got back, these guys and Bob all took the, all took the, they took me home and they took all the fish and went up to the nurses' quarters and cooked the fish.

**CO:** Oh my goodness.

**MJG:** (laughs) Um, but that didn't last. That didn't last after that. We had several dates of some kind and, uh, that was, that was over Labor Day weekend. October the 7<sup>th</sup>, I would say, or 10<sup>th</sup>, he proposed, and we got married on November the 7<sup>th</sup>. In 60 days.

**CO:** And how old –

**MJG:** I was 27.

**CO:** You were married when?

**MJG:** In 1951.

**CO:** You were, um, 27?

**MJG:** I was, and Bob was 33.

**CO:** Okay. Was it, um, was it...What was that like? How long did it take – well, obviously, it didn't take you long to know you were in love because you were married within 2 or 3 months (laughs).

**MJG:** Well, it was just one of those things that hit both of us at the same time. And he, at 33, he was still single, so, you know that he...

**CO:** So how did...so tell me about your wedding. Because you, you know –

**MJG:** Well it was done right fast! (laughs) But I did have a big – we did have a big wedding. I had a nice satin dress.

**CO:** And who served as your family?

**MJG:** Um, Bob's commanding officer was his, was – I guess they served as my family. And, um, and then all of his other officers were his best men and so forth, and ushers. And I had the librarians and, uh (laughs)...

**CO:** So your aunt and your sister weren't there?

**MJG:** No, no no no.

**CO:** Did you let them know?

**MJG:** Oh, of course (laughs).

**CO:** Ok (laughs).

**MJG:** As a matter of fact, we went – at that point, Bob was put on orders to go to school back in the east somewhere. So we drove across the country – actually, it was our honeymoon – we drove across the country and we had Thanksgiving dinner with the family.

**CO:** Your family?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah. My sister's house. And her husband. And the other – and my aunt and uncle and so forth. And there were other aunts and uncles. And they expected Bob to walk in in cowboy boots and a big hat because he was from Montana. And they were right shocked to find (laughs) that he was a very fine gentleman. And educated and refined and all those things.

**CO:** Wow.

**MJG:** But anyhow, they didn't know what to expect.

**CO:** Well, did, did you all talk about...so you had a short, uh, courtship.

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Did you talk about family? What your expectations were for family and...?

**MJG:** Oh, we probably did but the thing was this was another war time wedding, see.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** Because he was – he knew, we knew he would be going right away to Korea so that was, uh...So you don't do a lot of planning and all that sort of thing that I can think of (laughs).

**CO:** But did you know...did you have an idea of how big a family you wanted, how many children you wanted?

**MJG:** Oh, I think I did, I think I wanted six.

**CO:** Oh, okay.

**MJG:** (laughs)

**CO:** Did you talk to him about that? (laughs)



**MJG:** (laughs) Yeah, I'm sure I did.

**CO:** I had one other woman tell me that she wanted six children and she wound up with three and she said every time she had one, she reduced the number she wanted (laughs) in half.

**MJG:** (laughs) Well, mine, mine didn't result in, in that but mine resulted in the fact that they started off at eight pounds, six pounds, and four pounds and I said "I better quit while I'm ahead." (Laughs)

**CO:** Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** Quit while I'm ahead.

**CO:** Wow. What happened?

**MJG:** Well, the eight and the six pound were quite normal but she was just a premature – that was Robin – she was just a premature birth. And I said "Oh, I'm gonna quit" because, see, I was 32 by that time. And...

**CO:** So what are their dates? Their birthdates?

**MJG:** Uh, '52, '54, and '56.

**CO:** Okay. What is your son's name?

**MJG:** Uh, Frank Fulton.

**CO:** Frank. You call him Frank?

**MJG:** Fulton. We call him Fulton. "F. Fulton Galer" is what we call him.

**CO:** Oh, okay. Okay, so did you ever consider not having children?

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MJG:** No no no.

**CO:** Well, now –

**MJG:** That's the normal thing to do.

**CO:** Of course.

**MJG:** Even though I'm rebellious! (laughs)

**CO:** But your life is not normal! (laughs) So...

**MJG:** That's true!

**CO:** Uh, okay, you came from a, um, a household that was, um, nontraditional household, because you came from three different households.

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** Did that make you determined that you wanted your children to have a certain kind of...

**MJG:** Absolutely.

**CO:** Okay. Can you talk about that?

**MJG:** Well, we just were good parents.

**CO:** You determined that, that was gonna be your...

**MJG:** Yeah, yep.

**CO:** Did you –

**MJG:** And Bob was a great father. And we did – anytime they wanted to do something, we did it together. Uh, cub scouts, Bob was the master or whatever you call it, and I worked with...And every time we did that we won. We won prizes. The girls were into horses, and I was the Pony Club district whatever. And, and we did it together. We took care of the – we got in the car and we drove those kids hauling horses all over the south. But we did it together. And won every thing in sight. And not only my girl, our girls, but the Pony Club that we...

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** But anyhow, we just, those are two examples of the way we operated.

**CO:** Now, did, was his house, his family of origin more traditional than yours? Did he grow up with the same parents and...?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** The same household?

**MJG:** Very much so, very much so.

**CO:** And so did you, did you talk to him early on about your, sort of, unsettled childhood?

**MJG:** No. There wasn't any need to.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** I mean, I was an adjusted adult by that time and...

**CO:** But you, but you have to understand that, that a childhood like that could mark somebody. And make it much more difficult...

**MJG:** Well it did! (laughs) It did, in some ways but it also made me much more determined to have a very functional family which we have.

**CO:** Mhmm, mhmm.

**MJG:** Very, very.

**CO:** Now, how many grandchildren?

**MJG:** We have two.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And they're Barbara's. The other two are not married. I say we have a functional family but we didn't, we didn't teach them about getting married (laughs).

**CO:** Well –

**MJG:** 'Cause they're both single. It's not that they haven't had, uh, love affairs but they didn't work out.

**CO:** They didn't have children. But you've got your grandchildren. How old are they?

**MJG:** They're in their early twenties. Both of them.

**CO:** Okay. Do they have children?

**MJG:** No, they're both single.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. Um, what now, okay...You did all these things with your children, you made sure that they had – I'm glad you used that term – “functional,” um, home-life. Did you work outside the home while they were children?

**MJG:** I did.

**CO:** Now how did you do that? How did you handle that “double burden” of...

**MJG:** Well, um, I *had* to do it. I *had* to get out of the house. I stayed home for nine years.

**CO:** With them?

**MJG:** Having babies and getting things in order.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** Uh, when we got to Fort Benning, I – we had a little trouble with the school system. And they didn't agree with us on something so I said “we're going to try to put our kids in private school downtown.” Well, the minute we did that, we had to have more money. So I went to work. But I, I had to get out of the house. I could no longer – I was, I was suffocating.

**CO:** Okay, okay.

**MJG:** Uh, so, I went to work at Fort Benning for the Army as a librarian.

**CO:** As a librarian. Alright. Um, so, but that means that you had household as well as the –

**MJG:** I did. A live-in, a live-in house help.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And she saw to it that the breakfast was on the table, and she also cleaned up after dinner and...But she was there for the kids to come and go to.

**CO:** So you had – alright.

**MJG:** She lived, she lived-in.

**CO:** That, uh...

**MJG:** That was an advantage. Yeah.

**CO:** You knew, you knew that, okay. Did you do anything, were you becoming publicly, um, active in the, in politics in that...?

**MJG:** Not quite.

**CO:** Not at that time? No?

**MJG:** Not quite. But I had another defining moment.

**CO:** Oh, good.

**MJG:** Uh, I'm sure I had others along the way. (laughs) But these, these are the...Um, when I was at Fort Benning, working for the Army, um, I was in a position, had enough experience, et cetera, to take the top job, be given the top job when it opened up. And they came along and they gave it to a man who was, uh, with a high school education.

Because he needed the job. (laughs) Defining moment.

**CO:** That is a definitely a defining moment. Now when, what year, do you know? Roughly? '60s?

**MJG:** Oh yeah. It was in the early '60s because I was there from '60 to '65. So it was around '64 maybe. '63, '64.

**CO:** You had a, a graduate degree. Or you had a library science degree.

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** And they gave someone with –

**MJG:** And I had years of experience. In the Army.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** Yeah, because he “needed the job.”

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** So, anyhow, (coughs) I don't know what diverted me to tell that story.

**CO:** Well, I gasp at things like that, but we know that it happened. We know that it, it –

**MJG:** Well, this – Oh, I know, you asked me about the political, political...

**CO:** Right, right. Moving into the political.

**MJG:** Right after that, Betty Friedan came out with her book, *The Feminine Mystique*

**CO:** *The Feminine Mystique*.

**MJG:** I read it and I saw myself on every page.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** Because it had to do with retirement, it – you know I, I was not accumulating retirement because I was on and off. Non-app funds, non-appropriated funds, and then (????) (51: 55)...And I, so I wasn't – everything in there, in that book, I, I had experienced. So, um...

**CO:** So, so, could we just stop here for a minute? While I relish this?

**MJG:** (laughs)

**CO:** Because you're the sixteenth woman I've interviewed. And the *only* one who has

appreciated that book.

**MJG:** Oh! (laughs)

**CO:** And I've interviewed some women with, uh, with – very actively involved, but they just did not find that...It did not resonate, it just simply didn't resonate.

**MJG:** Well, maybe they weren't working out in the workforce like I was, you know?

**CO:** They were – they had not experienced discrimination.

**MJG:** Because most of them – most of the experiences were in the, in the workforce.

**CO:** Well, uh, well I think they were also in the home and some, for some women, but these *were* women – some of these women were, were very actively involved in the public, whether that was in the, uh, labor force or professions or...But they just had not experienced the – what you described as “classic”, which is you can't have that experience and not resonate with the story of discrimination and so, um, so I, I just want to appreciate this experience of having literally..That book resonated very deeply for you and so that must have been – was that, would you call the reading of that book a defining moment?

**MJG:** Oh yes.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** I also thought, just thought of another one.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And that was when I was working at Camp Roberts, and married Bob and left and he left me pregnant. So...(laughs) immediately they knew I was gonna – they were going to have to – I was gonna have to terminate the job. Because they did not ever hire anybody that was pregnant. But, on top of that, in order to hire – then they went out to try to hire somebody that I was, for the job I was gonna leave, and they couldn't get them at the, at the...I was a, I don't know, I would say P1, whatever you call it, professional 1, whatever. And they had to raise that job to a P2 in order to get somebody attracted to get in there and get that job. But they would not raise me at the time because I was leaving. And I was pregnant. So, you know...there's another one. So, anyhow, but what actually happened, after the Betty Friedan book, along came the civil rights law, in '67...

**CO:** Well....okay...

**MJG:** Was it sixty? No, wait...

**CO:** '64. Yeah.

**MJG:** 4, I'm sorry, '64. We came back here in '67. I'm getting my dates mixed up.

**CO:** That's okay. Wait, I thought you were in, you weren't at Fort Benning in...?

**MJG:** Yeah, we were. We were. We were there but Bob retired at the end of '64 from his military experience. But he had been the Inspector General, and while he was the Inspector General, we were working up to the civil rights and he was having to go out across the state and tell people out there, restaurants, the military's going to put you off-limits because you will not feed our black soldiers, and this was before the Civil Rights Act...you know, he had to do those things in his job, so he was well-adapted to dealing with the race relations. So he retired in '64, the end of '64 in December, he went down to Tallahassee to get a library degree because there were lots of library jobs open and he had to have something to do because we had these little kids that weren't even out of grade school. So he did all that and then after the end of that experience, um, Fort Benning was then establishing the Equal Employment Opportunity job. And they wanted Bob back. Because they knew exactly what his history was, working with blacks. 'Cause he would have to come downtown, you know, and tell them, "You're gonna let those boys in the front door, or else." And, you know, he's – and he's really skilled at this kind of thing, I mean so skilled. And, so they asked him to come back, they begged him to come back here. So we came back and he didn't ever do a library job. Well, he did but we came back here. And –

**CO:** So now what was the position he came back at Fort Benning...It was a civilian?

**MJG:** To – Yeah, to establish the Equal Opportunity...

**CO:** Oh, I see. Okay.

**MJG:** At that time, at that time equal opportunity was for both military and civilian, and during the time he was working, they got it divided and they divided it separately so military is one thing, equal opportunity, and then...Which was right, anyhow, you know?

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** And the civilians were another. But the point is here that he – it wasn't just race, it was sex.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** That he had to see that women were promoted. So I became very intimately

involved – not involved, but aware, of what was going on in that area. And the same time, one of the, um, a couple of women here in town – one was an Army wife and the other was a local woman – and they were very into the feminist movement. And they started educating us, those of us that were eager to be educated. They started that, they started giving classes on women's history. Now this was before your day, when they – now doing women's history. We got the women's history put into the college curriculum. But they were, they were giving classes on women's history and...

**CO:** Who was this? Do you mind telling me?

**MJG:** One was Betty Hart and she's been gone for years. And the other was Agnes Beganza. Agnes Beganza's dead. But she was married to a doctor, and somehow they left town for some reason and Betty, Betty's husband got rotated out, but...she was...

**CO:** Now what was their training?

**MJG:** Gee, I don't know. Betty was, Betty was brilliant. Betty was just *brilliant*, you know? So she obviously –

**CO:** They were at sort of –

**MJG:** They were the organizers.

**CO:** ...of the feminist movement?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** In the city? Or in the part of the state?

**MJG:** Yeah, just the city.

**CO:** In the city. Were they southern?

**MJG:** Actually, Agnes may have been. Betty was not. She came in with the military. But they did all those things for those of us who wanted to be educated to the issues. And they were a front for me, because I never had to stand out on the street corner and say – I'm just being literal here – “This is what I want.” They were the ones that made the bad reputation of the forward women. Aggressive women. And at the same time, I was busy with AAUW, and I took over the leadership of that. I worked a lot with the League of Women Voters, and these two organizations...I mean, I worked through AAUW for women's issues and the League of Women Voters gave me all the education I needed on civic affairs, and voting and that sort of thing. The whole thing congealed with Bob's job and these women with their women's movement tactics which gave me – I was on the faculty at what was then Columbus college.



**CO:** Okay, when did that happen?

**MJG:** Oh, okay...About '67, because that's when we came back after Bob went to school, and we came back to Fort Benning and they needed someone to work in cataloging at the library and part-time was okay; and I was still needing part-time with my kids because by that time they were teenagers. So I went to work over there.

**CO:** At the college library?

**MJG:** Mhmm. But it was after that, that was '67, about '72 I think I went on full-time. And –

**CO:** And was it between '67 and '72 that you met Betty and Agnes?

**MJG:** Yeah, it was during that time. Yeah. And I went – I became active on the faculty senate, which no librarian had ever done. (laughs)

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** So I was active on that and then one of the professors – I guess I took a course from her, I don't know – anyhow, Ferinez Phelps was one of the professors over there, she was a doctor, and she had been some kind of judge out in California.

**CO:** What was his name again?

**MJG:** Ferinez Phelps, and she's since died.

**CO:** could you just spell that?

**MJG:** Ferinez, F-E-R-I-N-E-Z, I think. And it's Phelps, P-H-E-L-P-S.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** But we became very close. She appreciated my independence because –

**CO:** Now what was her field?

**MJG:** Uh, political science.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And she had become – she was very independent also – but she was a constitutional law professor so she knew common law. That's what it...! I took a course of common law from her. Well, anyhow, she kept encouraging me. She saw my potential and I see it now. Because she had been in politics before she came here. And she...(laughs) So all of those things put together is what propelled me to run. But

the final, the final defining moment was when the city had appointed a committee to determine for the DOT where this bypass, north bypass was gonna run, which was coming through here. And I asked a friend who was appointed to the committee, I said, "Do you think I could get on that committee?" and he tried, and when he came back he says, "They don't want no woman on this committee." (laughs) And it was right after that that I said to Bob, "I'm gonna run for office, are you ready?" (laughs)

**CO:** So this was seventy...?

**MJG:** Well, I ran in '76.

**CO:** '76?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** There were about 8 or 10 years in there where I was being prepared by these other women and I'd had, as you said, as I told you, I had all these defining moments...

**CO:** Accumulated, the effect of it accumulates. So how – yeah, it's probably time to go – how many women in Columbus were on board with this?

**MJG:** Oh, quite a few, actually. Quite a few.

**CO:** Oh, I see.

**MJG:** I'll talk about it later but I'm gonna have to run back to the bathroom.

**CO:** I need to find one as well.

(continues later in the middle of a sentence)(39: 55)

**MJG, CO and BG have lunch together.**

Someone: ...that you were given those honors.

**CO:** Why, what was that (cough) about? Being treated like –

**MJG:** In 1988, I was appointed for 3 years by President Bush to be on the –

(Waiter interrupts)

**MJG:** ...Appointed me to the Defense Advisory committee on women in the service. That's the Sec-Def, the Secretary of Defense. Advisory committee on women in the service, and I was there for 3 years, and I was awarded a Three Star General Rank when I went on a post, on a base to talk to the women.

**CO:** A 3-star general –?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Wow.

**MJG:** (Laughs)

**CO:** So you were treated like that?

**MJG:** Oh, absolutely.

**CO:** How did that feel?

**MJG:** Absolutely, one time I had a brigadier general escort me.

**CO:** Oh, my god.

**MJG:** And generally, usually I had a colonel escort me.

**Bob:** When you went on the base.

**MJG:** Yeah, when I went on the base.

**CO:** Oh, man.

**MJG:** And then when I had to stay overnight, they gave me the general's quarters.

**CO:** And being – Having the military pass that you had you understood the implications of all of that.

**MJG:** Oh yeah! (Laughs) I wore it very well.

**CO:** Oh, I love that story.

**MJG:** See you didn't get a spoon. Drink? You got it on?

**CO:** Yes.

**MJG:** During that time –

**CO:** Would you run back and say that again? That you wanted the president to –

**MJG:** No, the congress.

**CO:** You wanted Congress to pass a law allowing women in the Army...

**MJG:** (Long pause) The committee recommended that Congress pass a law to allow women to serve in combat. The other services, the Navy, the Marines, and so forth,

could do that on their own. They didn't need a law. But the Army needed a law passed so we passed that on and it never passed. No, they weren't about to let women serve in combat. Although I see now, thirty years later, twenty years later, that they are considering it. Because the women that are over there now are on the front lines all the time anyhow.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** But see, women had been flying combat planes for years in the service, and they've been on Navy ships but the Army has been holding them back so...

**CO:** But it mattered because –

**MJG:** Oh, absolutely.

**CO:** I mean, it matters for promotion, doesn't it?

**MJG:** Right. Well, that was one of our main goals for the committee, commission was to facilitate the promotion of women, to do things, to look at the regulations, to listen to the women tell us what they needed in order to be promoted or even have a better life and not discriminated against.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** And one of the recommendations I took in from Saint Mary's – the submarine base down at Saint Mary's, when I went down there to visit them – the women said, “We want, we need to serve on submarines in order to get anywhere.” I took that back, and passed it on and now twenty years later, they're doing that, too. They're about to modify. But that was a big issue there. Because if you were on a submarine, you know, they don't have extra rooms...

**CO:** They come up with all kinds of reasons though.

(Waiter interrupts)

**CO:** I bought a DVD a few years ago (long pause) produced by PBS on women in combat. John Stossel was the narrator, and it was supposed to represent both views of that issue. You know, pros and the cons of women in combat. It was so skewed against women in combat. I wanted to throw things at the screen, I was so angry that I had wasted my money on it...

**MJG:** Well, there were – we got women put on ships. But they still had to make modifications in order to get women on the ships but..If you've ever been on a submarine and you walk down and the bunks are right there and you just hardly have

room for your stuff to get down, and if you have to pass anybody, you're bumpin' butts. And these things...these are the problems. So I don't know how they're gonna overcome that or, at least on a ship they had an area where they cordon off and put women.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** But with these bunks just all down the line like that and as it is, they pretty much share a bunk in that one's on duty and one's off. One's using the bunk when the other's not. So I don't, you know, I don't know how they're gonna work that out. But anyhow, I was the one that took that in to the Generals and said, "This is what we need."

**CO:** But they use so many arguments, you know, all the biological arguments that it would be inconvenient for women to be serving; that men would be too inclined to protect women and so they would compromise the security and the safety of everybody if women were around.

**MJG:** Well when, when I was serving on that committee, we went on a ship that was a sub-tender, they go out and tend the subs, while the subs are down and the ship takes care of their problems, and they had quite a few women on this one ship and the captain said, "I could not do this job without the women." He said, "The women come on board; it's a good life for them because they have their laundry done, they have their cooking done," and he said they are just simply a joy, it's such a relief for them to be away from the home where they have to do all the cooking, all of the baby-sitting and everything else. He said, "They have it all done for them." He says, "And the men are complaining all the time, the women are saying 'This is – I got it made.'"

**CO:** Have you seen the special done probably in the late '90s on the WASPs, women and service?

**MJG:** Uh-uh.

**CO:** Oh, that's so good. It's excellent. It's really, really good. I even showed that to freshmen when we go over World War II. It's just – exclusively an oral history there, they're interviewing these women who were WASPs, I'm sure some of them are gone by now, it's just really, it's powerful statement of the ability of women. I mean, there was a plane – I don't know my airplanes but – there was a plane that men wouldn't fly, they were afraid to fly it because it had had some complications, so whoever was in charge put a woman in the plane (laughs), and they flew it. You know, like it was made for them. So the men, they had no choice.

**MJG:** (laughs)

**CO:** They had to go along.

**Bob:** Well, the WASPs, many, many planes (indistinguishable) –

**CO:** Yeah.

**Bob:** (indistinguishable)

**CO:** Yeah.

**Bob:** They were usually the bombers and things like that. They carried everything.

**CO:** You'd probably enjoy this documentary. They told the story of one WASP whose plane went down because someone had put sugar in the engine.

**MJG:** (upset noise)

**Bob:** Well, I don't remember how they figured it out, but I think they had rank, too, did they not? They had rank in the Army Air corps. Or they had the equivalent of rank, like you had the 3-star general –

**CO:** Yeah, right.

**Bob:** I think it was the equivalent – they had a separate corps.

**CO:** It was separate. They got nothing, like when the woman who died, they had to take up a collection to get her body back home.

**MJG:** Oh, my goodness.

**CO:** I think Clinton may have done *something* to honor them by way of monetary remuneration, I don't know. It might have just been recognition but I think there was some money attached to it.

**MJG:** Are we still running?

**CO:** We are. Do you want me to turn this off?

(cuts off, picks back up mid-sentence)

**CO:** ...just a matter of adjusting. I still get to do –

**Bob:** Excuse me, is there a wheel back there that, to that cart?

**CO:** I can't see it. I don't see it.

**Bob:** Let me close the door here.

**CO:** Okay.

**Bob:** I guess that wheel came off somewhere else.

**MJG:** At home.

**Bob:** Did it?

**MJG:** At home. Before you put it in.

**Bob:** At home? Oh, okay. I only have one wheel.

**MJG:** Yeah, it came off.

(door closes)

**CO:** So...

**Bob:** Well, that explains it.

**MJG:** I still get to do what I want to do. Some, a couple of years ago, we made a conscious effort not to move to one of these old-folks places.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** That we would stay where we are for as long as we can. And it was about the time when I got the kitchen rebuilt, you know, and so I cook every night – I'm able to get that done.

**Bob:** You certainly are.

**MJG:** It's certainly – it's only when I have to go places like this.

**Bob:** You're responsible for (????)(28: 10) health.

**MJG:** It's not – it don't slow me down. It except it *is* slower. (laughs)

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** I mean, it does not inhibit me from doing things.

**Bob:** No, unfortunately, this mill burned before it could be converted into something nice.

**MJG:** Apartments or something like that.

**Bob:** There's more of it down below, there's quite a few of those barracks-type mills.

The main one burned down here, ya know, homeless people, fires or something.

**CO:** It's very picturesque though, it's almost like Roman ruins.

(Man and MJG laugh)

**CO:** Well, may I just talk while we're riding?

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** May I ask a couple of questions so that we don't, in case I don't get to this? On aging, I watched a movie recently where this man – it doesn't sound like a very interesting movie, it was actually quite good. It was not as predictable as it seemed to begin with. The actor who plays – who is it that plays Gandhi? I can never remember his name, who played the part of Gandhi, the British actor.

Man and **MJG:** I don't know.

**CO:** Anyway, he plays the part of this college professor who falls in love with – An aging college professor who falls in love with a student, you know, very, very young and played by Penelope Cruz and, again, it doesn't sound like much of a movie, but it turns out it's not a bad movie at all but in one scene he says – You know, well, he catches glimpses of himself and he sees this, you know, 70+ year old man but in his mind, in his heart, he feels like he's still in his prime. He's 30 or so. And so I ask people, how old do you *feel*? In your immobility, if the physical weren't impaired, how old do you feel in your heart?

**MJG:** Oh, I would say 50 or 60 in mine.

**CO:** Okay...

**Bob:** Well, I feel 93, which I am.

**CO:** No, I bet you don't! (all laugh)

**Bob:** Yes, I do because I'm proud of it. I have – to use the classic phrase – if I go to the doctor, he says, “Well, okay, come on in, young man.” I say, “Up your ass, doc. I'm a proud old man.” (co & MJG laugh)

**MJG:** Well, I say that, too when they call me “young lady” but the answer to the question is how do you really feel in your heart? I said “Alright, I'm around 50s or 60s.”

**Bob:** Oh, yeah.

**MJG:** I mean, I may not be able to move around, but I still have lots of ideas, creative



ideas I'd like to accomplish.

**CO:** So you've still got a lot of energy in your mind and in your heart?

**MJG:** Yeah, it's the mind, it's the energetic mind that keeps me going.

**Bob:** Yeah.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** Because if I didn't have that, then I would just be in depression.

**CO:** I think that's maybe how I should ask the question. Well, so is there an age that you look back on nostalgically? Is there –

**MJG:** Um, I would say my 50s. Because that's when I changed my way of life, our way of life.

**CO:** Uh-huh.

**MJG:** I'd been married for, we'd been married for 25 years, and raised the kids and then I stepped out on my own.

**CO:** You did what now?

**MJG:** Stepped out on my own.

**CO:** Oh, uh-huh...

**MJG:** I was 52 when I ran for office.

**CO:** Ah-ha.

**MJG:** So that whole era –

**Bob:** You were that old? (laughs)

**CO:** You were 52.

**Bob:** 52? Wow.

(sirens)

**MJG:** You're going the wrong way, the smoke's down there. (laughs)

**CO:** So 52, and how long did you –

**MJG:** I was in there six terms, 12 years. I was 64 when I came out.

**CO:** Well, that was really the prime of your professional life, your...

**MJG:** True.

**Bob:** Oh, yeah. Kind of a combination.

**MJG:** Well, I got fired from Columbus college when I got elected.

**CO:** I read that.

**MJG:** I had tenure, I want you to know!

**CO:** How could they do that?!

**MJG:** Well, they tried to push me out and I wouldn't go, and when they said I had to quit coming in, I took them to court. I took the Board of Regents to court. I didn't take these guys to court. I decided these were nice guys, they really didn't mean it, I wasn't going to smear them in the courts. So I took the Board of Regents to court.

**CO:** Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** And the courts threw me out, because they said I could not hold a state job and a university job. That was a conflict of funds. Couldn't be paid by two different funds.

**Bob:** That was at the Supreme court or...?

**MJG:** Georgia Supreme court, yeah. It was a landmark case.

**CO:** Yeah, that's what I was reading about. How was that regarded locally?

**MJG:** Well, there wasn't any deep thought about it, I don't think, you know. The press – you know, my friends were furious. And the press thought it was a curious thing but they did not –

**Bob:** (laughs) It wasn't universal because it doesn't happen very often.

**MJG:** Yeah, well, it was unique and that's why the press was interested in it.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** So I don't, I don't know the depth of the like or dislike, I mean, I don't think anybody really understood much, except that I got put out of my job. (laughs)

**CO:** Now, did you know when you were running for public office that this might happen? Did it come up then?

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MJG:** No, because when I decided to run, I went straight to the president. I had a long talk with him and he said, "I don't see any problem with it." And I had someone at the state level go in and talk to the chancellor anonymously, and didn't know who it was but someone's gonna run and he didn't have any problem with it. But the minute I got elected, they all had problems. They went up the wall. They did not expect me to win

**Bob:** I don't think they thought you'd win.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** Now, here's this woman down there in Columbus –

**Bob:** Never had it happen before.

**MJG:** A woman who's running for the state, and, you know, "What's she doing?" But she's alright, you know, we'll get along with her. Well, they didn't like it.

**CO:** Now, if you – If he had told you it would've meant your job, would you have pressed on and run anyway?

**MJG:** I probably would have.

**CO:** Oh, good.

**MJG:** You know, I was militant by that time.

**CO:** Right. You see, I can't even use the word "militant" –

**MJG:** Oh, I know, I know it.

**CO:** It's just like, it's as bad as the word "feminism," "the F word." You know, you can't use that word. People just can't handle it.

**MJG:** That's right.

**CO:** Wow, what a story. So, but you weren't the first woman to serve in the state...

**MJG:** No, no no no.

**Bob:** From here.

**MJG:** From Columbus.

**CO:** From here, yeah.

**Bob:** Elected from Columbus.

**MJG:** I was actually about the seventh one to arrive up there. **Bob:** In the state?

**MJG:** Yeah, in the state. In the House, State House.

**CO:** Now, what did you do for work because the position doesn't pay enough?

**MJG:** I didn't have a job.

**CO:** Oh.

**MJG:** I didn't have a job, I had "Go Bob!(!)" (19: 55). At this point, I had to depend on the man.

**CO:** Ugh.

**MJG:** As a matter of fact, he even had to pay the court costs. (laughs)

**CO:** Oh, no.

**MJG:** Yeah, we tried to get people to help with the court costs.

**Bob:** But while she was in the legislature she did draw enough money to meet her expenses.

**MJG:** Yeah, but nothing like we had.

**Bob:** The rest of it was up to me.

**CO:** Well, God bless you.

**MJG:** Yeah! (laughs) Well, we talked over a lot of things, we didn't ever talk that over but we had talked over a lot of things before I just really jumped in. And one of them was, an awful lot of people go into elected offices and then they get divorced.

**CO:** Uh-huh.

**MJG:** And I said that won't happen. And they kept me straight, my kids and my husband. The minute I even indicated I was little haughty or a little arrogant –

**CO:** They took you down a notch?

**MJG:** They slapped me down!

**CO:** (laughs) As only a family can do.

**MJG:** Well, they kept me straight. But we never reached the point of...

**CO:** Now, most of the issues that you were impassioned about when you were

serving were gender/discrimination? Was that most?

**MJG:** Actually, all of those things were not that could be solved in the state legislature.

**CO:** Mhmm, okay.

**MJG:** It was just the unfairness to women that caused me to go in, but I did work on family issues like child support.

**CO:** Uh-huh.

**MJG:** And...

**Bob:** Visitation.

**MJG:** And grandparents' visitation rights.

**CO:** Oh, good, thank you for that.

**MJG:** Um, I've got a list of them –

**Bob:** Well, you had to clean up –

**MJG:** Guardianship laws.

**CO:** Well, what about policies for aging? Did any of that come up while you were...?

**MJG:** No, I didn't get into that. I did support the (thinking) “living will.”

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** Which was quite controversial. I was a signer but I was not the lead person on that. And as a result, knowing before that happened, I passed a law, that was *my* law, my bill, the Durable Power of Attorney which you sign for someone to take care of you and make your decisions when you are not able to make them. Well I got that passed. So, you know –

**Bob:** You also got passed the one where you didn't have to track down people that witnessed your will.

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. One of the big ones for this area, which is a military area, it used to be when you witnessed, had a will with witnesses, they had to track down those witnesses somewhere. Well, they could be anywhere in the world.

**Bob:** When a person died...

**CO:** Oh, my goodness. Whoa!

**MJG:** Before they probated the will. So I got that changed so you didn't have to do that. So the Probate will could be probated.

(cuts out, continues)

**CO:** ...turn this back on. So, do you have on a vita all of this...?

**MJG:** I should have. I should have, I'd have to pull it off the computer.

**CO:** Okay. Now, see I didn't realize that you were on e-mail. That really simplifies things. You could've actually sent me that form over e-mail. But if you, if we can't find it before I leave today, if you could send it to me as an attachment to an e-mail, that would be...It would just be –

**MJG:** I mean, I could find it, but it'd just take time to print it out.

**CO:** Oh, sure. No, but I'm saying if you could attach it to me and send it over e-mail, that would keep us having little, spend time looking for it. Because I do want to get all of this.

**MJG:** (indistinguishable)(15: 44) That I extracted that information from the hand-written city council records from 1928 to about 1866. But this is the one I told you would get on Historic Columbus – on the Member. See, it's just mostly a picture but this publisher –

**CO:** Yes, I know.

**MJG:** You recognize it? Yes, that's what – I couldn't remember what it was, who it was.

**CO:** Arcadia?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** Now these are two, these are not listed anywhere. But these are two, um, self-guided tours. This is the one from the cemetery. And that's the one on the Civil War.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** And this one is on the Irish stone carvers. Now I researched those stone carvers when I discovered, when I was working out there one day that, over 130 of these stones are signed by the artisans who carved them.

**CO:** Wow.

**MJG:** So I said, “Well, I have to find out about them.” So I was digging around and I got, I did all the research on that. But that's my legacy.

**CO:** And this was fairly recent?

**MJG:** Yeah, this year, I just finished the one on the Civil War in January, February. And then the other one I did the year before. Just so you know that I was busy.

**CO:** You have been busy! Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** And I'm gonna give you this. I don't know if you've ever seen this.

**CO:** Well, I certainly should. *Georgia Women: A Celebration*.

**MJG:** It was published in 1976 and the AAUW, I think they produce it, I'd have to look better, more closely but I know they distributed it. Because that's why I had extra copies on my shelf.

**CO:** Yes, it is. AAUW.

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Wow.

**MJG:** So that's for you.

**CO:** Thank you so much. And you helped, did you help –

**MJG:** No, I don't recall ever doing anything about it. Let's see that was published the year that I ran for office so I was involved with them at the time so...

**CO:** Wow, you really have spent many hours and days and months and years dedicated to public service.

**MJG:** (laughs)

**CO:** And to the – bettering the lives of so many people. Turn my phone off so it won't be obnoxious and..Well, I'll tell you what, I will have to cut this short if we've got to finish by 4:00.

**MJG:** Okay.

**CO:** But I will ask you –

**MJG:** Go on, go on, as long as I can last! (laughs)

**CO:** I know, well –

**MJG:** We don't have anything else we're gonna do.

**CO:** It goes on though. It can go on endlessly. I would ask you about – because we never really finished up that, the section on children and marriage – what could you say what you admire most about your 3 children? Switching gears, I'm sure.

**MJG:** No, they all three have a dedication to what they're doing. They have a – they seek out what they want to do, and they do it. They get it done. No matter what it is, what job it is.

**CO:** So they're determined and follow through?

**MJG:** Right, they're organized, and they accomplish what their dream is.

**CO:** Okay, if you could go back and do the mothering thing again, would you do anything different from what you did? Sounds like you did a pretty – you were pretty conscious of your...

**MJG:** I doubt it. You know, we gave them every opportunity that we could, and we got behind them and helped them do it if they wanted to do something.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** I don't think I'd change anything. They all have distinct personalities. And there's a little, uh, rivalry among them from time to time, but nothing severe, nothing so severe that we don't all get along.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** And there have been a couple of occasions in life when we have been severely ill, or needing hospital care and they're right on the doorstep.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** Barbara, Barbara has been known, when I called her to get off the tractor mowing the hay, going right in the house, grabbing the suitcase and going to the airport in her clothes that she was mowing the hay in. That's...

**CO:** Oh my goodness.

**MJG:** She'll be the first one here from Canada.

**CO:** What was, were you ill?

**MJG:** I don't, I don't remember which one it was. It could've been Bob. But anyhow, it



was just...They're just, they're here. And after it's – after we come out of the hospital, they almost take turns, I mean, one will be here for a week and then the other one will come in for a week and, until everything gets back to normal.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** So they're just, they're just great kids.

**CO:** So it must feel, well I don't want to put words in your mouth, but after having what you probably consider a dysfunctional background to being sort of –

**MJG:** (Laughs) Cast off.

**CO:** Yeah. Is that among your greatest satisfactions, knowing that you then provided a functional household for your own family?

**MJG:** Yes, yes. Making sure that they are comfortable and loved and part of a family.

**CO:** Okay, so...it's so hard to switch gears from serving in the state legislature to the, you know, the nursery at home. But, it sounds to me like from your, when you talk about your childhood, it was almost clinical. You know, there was a distance from that. And so that sounds like a person who didn't have a lot of affection and, you know, there was not a warm household where...But it sounds like you definitely provided that for your children.

**MJG:** Absolutely.

**CO:** Because so often, when somebody is not nurtured, they can't find the way to nurture, you know? They don't have a – where do you think you found that? How do you think that you – ?

**MJG:** I don't know. I just became a very adjusted adult. I overcame the shyness when I was in my early 20s and when I started off to work for the Army, and I flew on my own in the military bucket seats, and I had to wear a parachute all the way. And flew for days, virtually, because we had a touch-down and refuel at about 4 or 5 different islands before we even got to Tokyo. So, it, you know, I came out of that retiring personality, and learned how to act like an adult. And I guess I'm a pretty normal –

**CO:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's – but not everybody has that kind of success at overcoming...In fact, you know, I've talked to some people who had a quite an idyllic background who were not, who did not arrive at adulthood or lived their adulthood nearly so well-adjusted. So it's interesting to me...

**MJG:** It could be that the reason, the answer to that could be that I had so many

different experiences in my young life, that I was able to just put it together. Because I could relate to people, no matter who had a problem or who needed help. I understood. You know, they need that. Because I had needed it at one time.

**CO:** Okay, to me that falls in the model of Eleanor Roosevelt –

**MJG:** Ooh! (laughs) I'll take that!

**CO:** Yeah, me too. Um, but you could go one way or the other with it. You can –

**MJG:** Well, but I don't know what tipped me.

**CO:** ...internalize and become neurotic, or you can reach out and so what it is that makes one person go one way, and one another way is a curiosity to me, I don't know, but...

**MJG:** I wouldn't know what tipped me the right way.

**CO:** Yeah, I'm sure you know her story; it's so well-known. But it's, it's a classic story of a almost tragic childhood, and she takes it and becomes, as you say, someone who then can relate at a very heart-level, and connect with anybody who's, you know, suffering, in any way, and so...Okay, well, the next section is on work and we've talked a good bit about, you know, at lunch and then on the way home we talked about your work. And so, and I'm hoping that I can get a vita where it has all your official job titles and jobs and so forth, but I would also like...Does your, does that include the legislation that you, that we just talked about, that you piloted through?

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm, it does.

**CO:** Okay, good. Then I want to ask you for those details but would you just say something about which jobs you've had that were most rewarding, and which were least rewarding? What gave you greatest satisfaction and gratification in your work life?

**MJG:** Oh, of course the legislature did give me the greatest because I was able to impact the greatest number of people. And help them.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** But I was, I always liked the jobs I had as a librarian. They were always, it was always building the collection, somewhere or other, until I got to Columbus College, and it wasn't building a collection but it was, it was creating a catalog. Because they were transposing from – that's not the right word. From the Dewey Decimal System to LC, Library of congress. And this is before computers. (laughs) They're all now, it's all computers. There isn't even a card catalog over there...I used to call it Mary Jane's

catalog, because I had done, completely redone all of the cataloging in that library and...But anyhow, I was always very happy with what I was doing. It was always a challenge no matter what I did.

**CO:** So, it sounds like you were...because one question I ask is if you could, obviously you chose the right profession for you, but if you could train for another profession, is there something you would've liked to have done that you didn't get around to doing?

**MJG:** Well, it was, it would be a lawyer. But I, you know, I got thrown out of that early on so it was too late to do anything about that.

**CO:** Okay, so what kind of law would you have liked to practice?

**MJG:** I don't even know that. (laughs) I just, it's just that I wanted to be a lawyer.

**CO:** Yeah, well, and, you know, you could do some great things with that, civil rights law.

**MJG:** I really hadn't thought my way through that, I don't think. I was young and I just thought it would be a great thing to do.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. (pause) What was it like to retire from work?

**MJG:** (sighs) Well, actually I was sort of semi-retired because when I got fired from the college, it was a few years that I didn't have the career going, and then Troy State University at Fort Benning called me, and asked me to work there part-time, which I did.

**CO:** Teaching?

**MJG:** No, as a librarian.

**CO:** Oh, a librarian, okay.

**MJG:** They did not have, they were facing an upcoming accreditation and they did not have a professional librarian on board, so I went in there and, you know, surveyed the situation and told them what we needed to do in order to be accredited and proceeded to do so.

**CO:** So, and they're not in Georgia, right? Aren't they based –

**MJG:** They're based in Troy, Alabama.

**CO:** So it was not a conflict with the Board of Regents –

**MJG:** Oh, true. I always laughed about that. I said to people, "I can't get paid in

Georgia so I go to Alabama to get paid.” To be in the legislature of Georgia. Lots of jokes about that.

**CO:** I'm sure, that *is* comical. Okay, you've really already answered how you feel about your retired life now –

**MJG:** Oh, I didn't really answer you that...Um, I did retire from that job in '94.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** Bob said, “Don't do that, don't come home. I'm just having fun at home, I don't want you to...” (laughs) Which is the reverse of what (indistinguishable)(1: 15).

**CO:** Right, yeah, absolutely.

**MJG:** But he had retired from Fort Benning from his civilian work at Fort Benning in '88, and I – but anyhow, I came home in '94, and, um, I already had been at DAcoWITS.

**CO:** Been where?

**MJG:** DAcoWITS. The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service, remember we talked about? I had already done that for three years.

**CO:** Let me just say that for the student – Defense Advisory...

**MJG:** committee.

**CO:** committee.

**MJG:** On Women in the Service.

**CO:** On Women in the Service. And “DAcoWITS.”

**MJG:** D-A-C-O-W-I-T-S. DAcoWITS.

**CO:** Okay, alright.

**MJG:** Defense Advisory committee.

**CO:** That President Bush appointed you to?

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And, uh –

**CO:** President George W...I mean –

**MJG:** No, the other one. H. W.

**CO:** Daddy. Yeah, H.W.

**MJG:** He had three Sec-Defs. Caspar Weinberger was one year and the last year I was in there, Dick Cheney was his, uh, his Secretary of Defense. But I've forgotten who the third one was. Cas Weinberger...

**CO:** I have forgotten too.

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**MJG:** I've forgotten. But, um, another thing I did, after I came out of the legislature and I really hadn't retired from this part-time job out here, I came out of the legislature in '88, I was the first lobbyist for choice – for the Georgia Abortion Rights Action League. The abortion issue had not been an issue all the time I was in. But it was just beginning to raise its head. And so, Jay Rowell (???) (1: 05: 55) was looking a grey-haired lady living down state, that didn't appear to be too radical. And do the lobbying. So I did that for a couple years.

**CO:** Isn't it amazing what you can get away with if you don't look militant or radical?

**MJG:** Well, I think I made reference earlier when Betty Hart was here and Agnes Beganza, they were out there taking the hits. And I was just able to come along and be accepted as a sweet little professor – I mean, because I was at the college, that had a lot of prestige, and I stuck with AAUW because that had prestige, and I could get a lot of things done for women through AAUW.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** And so I was able to just maintain a low profile in the feminist area.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** That's how I got away with that.

**CO:** Okay, alright.

**MJG:** But on retirement, then after I, after '94 when I didn't have all this other stuff going on, I just slipped into...I told the organizations I belonged to – like DAR and some of these others, Heritage Organizations, you know, whatever – that I will work for you, just don't ask me to be to a meeting. I will do anything behind the scenes, just I'm just

tired of going to meetings.

**CO:** Meetings, yeah.

**MJG:** So I did a lot for them. I mean a lot. Where I could do it right here on my little computer and so forth and so on. But I...And then in '97, when the Historic Linwood Foundation set up, I was right in there. Bob and I both went on that Board right away. And I became president within a year, a couple of years.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** So I just been...That's been one of my focuses ever since is their welfare.

**CO:** The Cemetery Society? Alright.

**MJG:** Uh-huh.

**CO:** Okay, let's skip that. Just a couple of things about regional identity because you were not born in the South and not culturally raised a southerner but you definitely spent more than half your life here so that definitely qualifies you. If you were asked – and I know you've already told me that you feel fully integrated into this community as long as you've been here – but you definitely would have a different opinion on what it means to be southern. If you were asked by somebody from outside the country – I mean, people in the country typically have their own opinions about what that means – but how would you describe what sets the south apart from other regions?

**MJG:** (long pause) Well, they just have a different way of doing things. They're very helpful and very friendly. I will say that. And they're – that's my best description is they're more laid-back. Not as aggressive and assertive. I've been here long enough now to be irritated by some of these people from elsewhere, and being aggressive and pushy and...But very comfortable in their own skins, really.

**CO:** So you feel like southerners are more comfortable in their own skins?

**MJG:** I think so. They don't seem to have to prove anything to anybody.

**CO:** Mhmm, okay.

**MJG:** Where I think a lot of the more assertive people are trying to prove something maybe.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** Of course, I'll admit I was assertive, and I was trying to prove something. I was trying to prove I was as good as anybody, so...(laughs)

**CO:** Right, right. Because that's what it takes, you know, to get something done. And I'll tell you what I find, just to get your response to it. The thing that – and this is true even of women who are very enlightened, women from your generation – they just simply do not like, and do not believe in the need for protest. It's ugly, it's unattractive, it's...and in their world vision, it's unnecessary. But all these things somehow magically could just get done, you know? And so that just is...To me, there's a disconnect there, from their politics which are, for some of them, very enlightened and in some cases, like in the case of race relations, they could very enlightened but even there, there's a disconnect, there's a good way to protest, like, i.e. Martin Luther King was okay, but Malcolm X was not okay.

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** You know, anytime there's any, you know, any perception of violence, it's dismissed as just inappropriate, wrong, you know? And so...

**MJG:** Well, I've heard – I guess it was a comedian that said this – that Columbus is a hotbed of rest.

(Both laugh)

**CO:** Oh, my goodness. Is *that* not the truth?

**MJG:** And it *is* true! It *is* true because we can't even get a League of Women Voters going. We had one going when Agnes and Betty were here, they revved it up. And politically, the old-timers and the old families had one, but they were told to cool it because they were uncovering stuff like what went on in Phoenix City, they almost got, you know...In Phoenix City, the Phoenix City story where somebody was murdered over there, and there was a lot of corruption and a lot of scandal and a lot of...whatever. And they almost got themselves into that, and they were advised by their husbands to disband. And they never came back. But when Betty and Agnes came here, they started it up again and they, you know – We didn't have old-timers on that, we had young, you know, new people.

**CO:** Mhmm, mhmm.

**MJG:** But even now – and that petered out. I mean, we can't get anybody to start a League of Women Voters. So, it's a social, it's a...

**CO:** It's like there's no need for any more education on things, that we're educated enough.

**MJG:** And even though the whole, the place is infiltrated with outsiders. I mean, it's

not like it's the old-time, old families. So I don't –

**CO:** Right, there's something, though, about the inertia that manages to co-opt people that move in.

**MJG:** It does.

**CO:** That happens in Valdosta as well. Well, I do have a question that...It's another one of those questions that some people just look at me like I've spoken Greek, they just don't get it, but other people get it right away. One thing that historians are interested in, many scholars are interested in is when we become aware of racial consciousness– that race matters, that it makes a difference that your skin is one color or another. And I remember vividly, I didn't have any problem understanding this concept at all. I remember vividly when I got my first lesson in racial etiquette. I was five years old and, you know, the classic stories of that are told by black writers, you know, who – W. E. B. DuBois tells about his becoming aware of what it meant. He knew he was black but he was like five years old before he realized that that matters, you know? Do you – and, of course, you weren't in the south, you were outside the south where race...Race matters everywhere but where it was less tense, perhaps. Do you recall becoming conscious of your skin being, it making a difference that you had white skin, or that black skin mattered?

**MJG:** No, well...I would say when we came to Fort Benning in 1960 was my first jolt. Because I was always treating all blacks that worked with me everywhere equally, and like friends. And I was coming downtown, I was working for the Army, in my car was a black service club worker, and maybe she was the only one, but as we got into town, she ducked down behind the seat. She said, "I can't be seen riding with you." And that was in 1960, '61.

**CO:** And you were 32 years old.

**MJG:** Yeah, that was my first eye-opener of what the whole situation was. Yeah, because up until that point, no matter who I was with, I was like, I told you I was raised that everybody is to be respected and...Again, I also told you about my experience at Camp Roberts where I had...You know, I was aware that I had to do the black library, over for the black –

**CO:** Segregated, uh-huh.

**MJG:** Um, but I still dealt with those people like they were human beings and friends and everything else.



**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** And equals.

**CO:** So do you have – I know you *do* have opinions, obviously – How did you deal with such strident racial etiquette in the south where there were such prescriptive expectations of the two races? That if you were black, you observed these, like you ducked down in the seat because you didn't want to be seen – because you could *both* get in trouble.

**MJG:** Well, that was it. She was afraid of what would happen to me driving that car. Um, I didn't have to deal with it because I lived on post. So I wasn't dealing with people in town at the time. I lived on post, I associated with those folks on post and that was, it was all cut and dry. We were just careful not to be seen together in a, in a vehicle off-post (laughs). That's all.

**CO:** So were you anywhere where, in the '60s, when you'd be at someone's home and the maid had to come in the back door, or they refused –

**MJG:** See, I was on-post all that time.

**CO:** Eating together or...?

**MJG:** Yeah, I was on post all the time.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** So I didn't experience that.

**CO:** So you didn't have...I have a question about do your opinions on race differ from those opinions of your family, but it sounds like they were pretty open-minded with regard to...Do you think that was true of your father, whom you didn't know?

**MJG:** I have no idea.

**CO:** No idea?

**MJG:** No idea.

**CO:** Well, do you believe that having a black man in the White House has made any difference in race relations in the country?

**MJG:** (pause) That's hard to say. I see so much of the hatred that it's hard to say whether it has affected anybody positively.

**CO:** Yeah, okay.

**MJG:** But I would...my guess is that it would have, it would give the blacks a certain prestige and my first answer was from the whites' perspective, but the blacks would certainly have more prestige and, um...But again, I don't – I'm very cautious about any of those conversations because most of our friends....most of our friends that we associate with are very far right and it's just...(laughs) I stay away from them.

**CO:** Right, even knowing your politics were, or at least somewhat knowing your politics, your friends are...?

**MJG:** Yeah, mhmm, yeah.

**CO:** So you just, obviously you can't talk politics?

**MJG:** Yeah, I avoid it altogether.

**CO:** Mmm.

**MJG:** If somebody brings something up, I usually try to counter it a little bit nicely, you know? But we're very careful. See, Bob's with the Sons of the American Revolution, and they are...If you're patriotic, you're far right, you know?

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** (laughs) So here's Bob and me, patriotic as we could be. A couple of them know about our politics but they...We don't get into it at all.

**CO:** Mmm, okay. Moving on quickly to history. And I'll just ask you a few things about those middle decades but...What do you think is the most important historical event that you have either participated in or lived through?

**MJG:** Oh, I would say the Civil Rights movement.

**CO:** Okay, alright.

**MJG:** It impacted our lives because Bob carried that job and, you know, out at Fort Benning for 20 years. When you asked if we'd ever had toilet paper thrown, there was a time when there was some unrest about the black and white thing, and they knew that Bob was out here. And I never did know why he said this but he said, "Stay away from the front windows." So there was enough unrest that I think he thought we might be attacked from the front. I didn't –

**CO:** In this house?

**MJG:** Mhmm. This is where we lived all the time. I didn't want to bring that up when

you asked about the toilet paper because I think he might have, he might have not liked me telling that. (laughs)

**CO:** Oh, okay. That's when he was with EEOC?

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm.

**CO:** Okay. Alright.

**MJG:** Yeah, we have a little black baby statue, you know? You know, these black statues...?

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** ...that was put on our front step one time.

**CO:** Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** I don't know where they took it from. I don't know whose – He's sitting down on the...We have a sewer eye down here in this part of the yard, and he's sitting there and we stuck a fishing pole in his hands. (laughs) He stayed in this cupboard for years and years, because I would never let anybody that visits or anybody to see him.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** Finally, after about 20 years, I stuck him out there. (laughs)

**CO:** A little “Black Sambo” type thing?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah. Squatting down fishing. And he had a place for a fishing rod in his hands.

**CO:** Mhmm, mhmm.

**MJG:** So we got a fishing rod in his hands.

**CO:** Do you think it was directly related to Bob's job?

**MJG:** Oh, absolutely.

**CO:** Oh, okay.

**MJG:** Absolutely.

**CO:** So it wasn't just an awareness that you all had liberal politics?

**MJG:** No, no, no, no.

**CO:** It was his position? Okay, alright. Do you recall that – because we talked a little bit about the Depression already – do you remember if your family had strong feelings about FDR or Eleanor? Do you recall hearing about it?

**MJG:** No, no. Nothing ever said.

**CO:** Oh, okay. Well, so what do you recall – in the '40s, you were in high school and college –

**MJG:** I graduated from high school in '41. And then went into college. This was during the war.

**CO:** Yeah, so how do you recall the decade of the '40s? The war and the cold War that followed?

**MJG:** Well, there was a lot of turmoil.

**CO:** But you were shifting, I bet, in your own person. Well, you and Bob marry in '50...

**MJG:** '51.

**CO:** '51. By the time you and he meet, do you feel like you'd gone, that you'd arrived at this level of maturity and stability within yourself by the time you met him?

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm.

**CO:** So you were already this –

**MJG:** Because I was 27 so I had already...

**CO:** You'd already become...?

**MJG:** Yeah. Who I was gonna be.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. Alright, so –

**MJG:** So, the '40s – because that was a big, you know, for the '40s, from my high school through college, graduate school, teaching and going into the Army – you work for the Army. I mean, there was a lot of activity going on in that decade.

**CO:** Mhmm, okay. And that was – do you recall it as a...Do you recall that pleasurable? I mean, was that a good decade for you?

**MJG:** Mostly, mostly. Except for the guys all going off to war, some of them didn't come back. But when they did, it was a joyous time. But mostly it was not an

unpleasant ten years.

**CO:** For you personally?

**MJG:** Right.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. What about the '50s? Now that was early marriage for you. The kids...*and* you began having your children in '52.

**MJG:** Right away, yeah, '52, '54, '56. That was all family. That was totally family. Having the babies, and then Bob was off – Bob came home from war, and then after four years we went off to Europe so that, too, covered a lot of territory from my having to...I had the baby alone, he was in Korea when I had the baby, first baby.

**CO:** Oh, my gosh.

**MJG:** And then I waited for him to come home and then we went on and – He had a job in Clairmont, California at Clairmont College and Pomona College. He was the Professor of Military Science. So that was a very stable four years. And two babies were born then. So, but that was a happy time because I had this wonderful husband and these wonderful children. And then we went off to Europe together and that was a great experience and a great adventure.

**CO:** Where in Europe?

**MJG:** Uh, Würzburg, Stuttgart. Stuttgart first, and then Würzburg. And...

**CO:** But the children were babies. Wow.

**MJG:** Yeah, they were.

**CO:** You got three baby boomers.

**MJG:** Yeah, I do! (both laugh)

**CO:** Do they identify –

**MJG:** It's hard for me to think that my oldest child will be 60 years old.

**CO:** There is *nothing* wrong with 60! (both laugh) It looks *good*.

**MJG:** I know, but it's hard for me to believe that all that time has passed.

**CO:** Yeah, I expect. Well, how did you – well, okay. The '50s were the cold War. What do you remember about the cold War?

**MJG:** I was not involved in anything except taking care of my children and having a

good adventure in Europe is the way I...

**CO:** What about the peace movement? I mean, like the women's strike for peace? The anti-nuclear war...?

**MJG:** That was all in somebody else's world. I was strictly raising my children.

**CO:** Yeah. Well, the interesting thing about the Women Strike for Peace is that most of them were mothers of babies.

**MJG:** I know, I know that. I'm aware of that but I just didn't get into all of that. I didn't start to getting into this politics thing until...

**CO:** Until a little bit later.

**MJG:** Later, yeah.

**CO:** Well, they were probably a generation older than you because they were...Like you though, they were older mothers, as you know if you've read about them. I love that story. Okay, so the '50s was mothering, you were mothering in the '50s.

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm. And being a good Army wife. And *that* took a lot of work.

**CO:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** That took a lot of work, being a good Army wife.

**CO:** Did you ever feel like you compromised who you were or had you...?

**MJG:** Oh, yeah.

**CO:** Yeah?

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** To be the Army wife? Good Army wife?

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm. I put up with it but I was a little rebellious about all the things that they told me I had to do and the way I had to do it. And wear the gloves and pour the tea. (laughs)

**CO:** Yeah. Did that ever cause problems between you and Bob?

**MJG:** No. No no no. Oh no, I didn't ever – I didn't make much of it. But I just...Being the resent – I said “resentful” – being the *rebellious* person I was, you know, I just....I just had to put it aside. But I worked at it. I remember being put down at the end of a

table one time, they said “Now, you're supposed to pour the tea because he's the colonel.” I said, “Okay, tell me what to do.” (laughs) I just refused to read the book.

**CO:** Yeah, well, there are better things to do with your time. Okay, so that was busy enough for you. But you move into the '60s now, the kids are getting bigger, they're going to school. And you said by the time the first-born was 9, you went to work?

**MJG:** Yeah, 1960, I went to work.

**CO:** Okay. So, what was – The '50s was all about family. The '60s, was that about getting back in the work world? What was that like?

**MJG:** Yes. I regained my career, for one thing. And I had to work at it, the first year or so, to come back up, out of just spending time with little kids and speaking in one-syllable words.

**CO:** That's right, yes.

**MJG:** I had to come back – you know, bring myself back into being sharp and...and re-learning the job. That was in the early days, the first couple of years. The first year or so. But, um, the '60s were a turnover for us again and that was when Bob got out of the Army.

**CO:** Sixty...?

**MJG:** '64.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And then came back to Fort Benning in '67 to take this job. And, so there was a lot of churning but in an Army's – Army life is always churning.

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** There's always something going on and you're moving and you're doing these things. We had a very stable Army life because we had– When he came back from Korea, we had three years, maybe four, (counts quietly to herself) probably four years in Clairmont, California. And then we went overseas for three years and then we came to Fort Benning. So those were the three big moves. And, um, so we had a very stable, as far as that goes, a very stable Army life. But still, there's always churning and, you know...He goes out to the field and does this.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** And he does that and...

**CO:** It could be a bit unpredictable, couldn't it? In terms of what he was...

**MJG:** Mhmm, mhmm. And the Army wife is left with taking care of the children. No matter where he is, you've got the – you're saddled with those kids. So, so there's a great responsibility. I don't mean to play down the Army wife because I'm just talking about the ceremonial part.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. Right, right.

**MJG:** Because it *is* a great deal of responsibility. But we were very fortunate. When we left Clairmont, we had three babies. I mean, Fulton wasn't, wasn't even five, I don't think. And they allowed us to travel – Everybody didn't get to travel together, the families – but they allowed us to travel together because we had those little, tiny kids. And it would take two of us to handle them.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** So we were fortunate in that respect.

**CO:** Well that *is* – I can't imagine being alone with three that size. Well, okay, so you were already pretty much politically awake at the time of the Civil Rights movement?

**MJG:** Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** Do you remember the Brown decision? *Brown vs. Board of Education* in '54?

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MJG:** No. Later...

**CO:** By the '60s, when the effort to desegregate and register to vote and all of that...do you remember having reactions to that or...? Because you were *in* the South, I mean...

**MJG:** This is true and Bob, and Bob did, as I told you, in his job at the Fort Benning, he had to be out there...

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** Calming down things outside. So that's what I was aware of, the things that went on. Again, it didn't really touch *my* life at all other than knowing what Bob was doing.



**CO:** But you were more than just intellectually committed to it. It sounds like you had – I mean, it wasn't just a...You supported it more than from afar even though you weren't on the *front lines* protesting for civil rights but you were...I guess being on Fort Benning, on the base, might've isolated you somewhat or sheltered you somewhat?

**MJG:** Mhmm. I remember, we had an airstream trailer and we took a couple trips in them. And we were – in order to identify, do you know what an Air-steam trailer looks like? – and we would go to these rallies where everybody had an Air-stream trailer. You know, in order to identify us, we had a great, big Dixie flag on the back window.

**CO:** Oh, gosh.

**MJG:** And we were coming home from one of those things when the civil rights bill passed. Bob stopped and he says, "I gotta get that Dixie flag off there." And we pulled the Dixie flag off. (laughs) He knew right away we were gonna be in trouble as we drove into the South.

**CO:** Although it would have put you in good stead with the white folks, the Dixie flag.

**MJG:** (laughs) Yeah. But he just, he just knew it was, it was too divisive.

**CO:** Yes, it was. And so, desegregation, was that...Did y'all have strong feelings about how that would take place in the...?

**MJG:** Well, we were involved because the schools were desegregated when our kids were in them. And *that* caused turmoil.

**CO:** Mmm, yeah.

**MJG:** Uh, actually, our daughter, Barbara, was the one that was in the middle of that. And the school she was in, the senior class of that school, or maybe even the junior class, were sent to a black school. And the blacks came over to that school. And *that* caused a lot of turmoil among the teens. And that was a bad year. That first year was a bad year. And I had a, out here in the kitchen, at a counter where I had my sewing machine...and I spent a lot of time doing nothing at that sewing machine because I never knew when the kids in the neighborhood were gonna show up down on the dock. And then the school would call me and say, "By the way, Barbara's missing." And so I'd say, "She's on my dock, with so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so."

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** So there was a lot of turmoil going on. Skipping school and...

**CO:** Now, when did you move in this house?

**MJG:** 1970.

**CO:** Oh, my. You've been here awhile.

**MJG:** Yeah, we came back here in '67. Bought a little house down south, in the southern part, knowing we were gonna stay. So, then we shopped around to find, we found the lot first. And then when we paid for the lot, we began to build. We used the down payment...on the loan on the house, we used the lot as the collateral. And then we built the house.

**CO:** You've been here 42 years.

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** When I mentioned the sit-ins, the freedom rides, the church bombings, the murders in Mississippi, what happened when you heard about those? Did you...?

**MJG:** Well, I was horrified. I mean, the things that those, that those things would happen. But I also was aware of what went on in Columbus in that, um...anytime the agitators would come to town to stir things up, the leading blacks with the support of the white, white power structure, would meet the buses and say, "Get out of town." And that's the way Columbus was able to bypass most of the problems. I mean, there were some sit-ins –

**CO:** Because the blacks refused to allow the freedom riders or whatever to come in and organize the black community.

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah. But it was, it was in conjunction with the whites, with the whites who were in power. They all agreed that this is the way to do it. And then when they went to integrate the, the lunchrooms, you know, so forth, in the drugstores and stuff –

**CO:** In the town?

**MJG:** Yeah. The newspaper agreed not to cover it. Ask Rose about that. Ask Rose about that.

**CO:** Oh, definitely.

**MJG:** I bet she'll tell you a lot, she can probably tell you more than I.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. Definitely will have that conversation with her. It's amazing, though, when I interviewed black women, they're very guarded. I think they wonder if I'm trustworthy or, you know, exactly what it is I want to hear. But once they know that I'm more than sympathetic to the cause, then they will begin to talk to me about what the

experience was really...Or *closer* to what the experience was really like. Well, what about – I'm sure you remember JFK's assassination – ?

**MJG:** Oh, yeah.

**CO:** – and then Martin Luther King's assassination, do you remember that in Columbus? What happened in Columbus when King was assassinated?

**MJG:** Oh.

**CO:** Was there reaction?

**MJG:** I can't, I can't remember with how they felt.

**CO:** And Robert Kennedy?

**MJG:** Yeah, I...

**CO:** So you were still living on base? That was '68.

**MJG:** No, we were off by that time. We were off by that time. But I was still being a mother and so forth and so on, and a wife...

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** You know, I had evolved into being political, but I don't know what *others* thought of that particular event.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. Now, in the movements that were spawned by the Civil Rights Movement – the Black Power movement, the Red Power movement, the Gay and Lesbian movement, the Ecological Awareness...all of those that really don't come to fruition except the Black Power movement, but the others, not until the '70s, and certainly we already talked about the women's movement – but are there any of them that you have misgivings about their legacy and what they've...?

**MJG:** No, I don't. I don't think anybody even remembers them except for the Black Power...

**CO:** Except for the...Okay, alright.

**MJG:** And that one...

**CO:** Did you have strong feelings about Malcolm X and about the militant, the Black Panthers and...?

**MJG:** I didn't have *strong* feelings. I think I was not pleased with the way they

behaved but I didn't have any strong feelings about them.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** I mean, I think I subconsciously was aware that these things have to happen. You have to have extreme ends of things in order to get anything done.

**CO:** Yeah, okay, alright. What about Vietnam? How was your...?

**MJG:** Uh, we were spared. Bob didn't have to go. So...

**CO:** But now...Let's see, how old would your first-born have been?

**MJG:** Well, he was born in '52. Oh, he wasn't old enough to go.

**CO:** Yeah, alright.

**MJG:** But Bob was. I mean, he was still in...And I said that that's one of the first political statements I ever made, and I announced it loud and clear in some group at Fort Benning: "If they take Bob, he's already been to two wars, if they take him to the third one, I'm marching on Washington." (both laugh) Well, they didn't take him. But they were taking – he had had maybe a year until retirement – but they were taking other guys that had a year until retirement.

**CO:** Mmm! Oh my god.

**MJG:** We were just lucky. We were just lucky that they didn't hit him. But anyhow, so he –

**CO:** How did you feel about the war itself? Did you have misgivings about the war and the purpose of being there?

**MJG:** Well, I was aware of everybody – but, you know, being in the military, you don't really fight those things – but I was aware of the people who *didn't* like it and what was going on with Jane Fonda and people like that. But I didn't ever form any opinions myself. Just "don't take my husband." (laughs)

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. In retrospect, did you have any feelings about the war in Vietnam, as a moral issue?

**MJG:** Well, I can't see any difference. (exasperated sound) We go to war over nothing. And I can't see any difference between that and Iraq and, you know...

**CO:** Yeah, yeah, right.

**MJG:** They all, they all are senseless as far as I'm concerned.

**CO:** Okay, well that brings up the question – because, I mean, when I talk to some women about women in combat and the unfairness of women not being able to serve in combat and then you get this response, “Well, if you don't believe in war, you don't think *anybody* should serve in combat.” (MJG laughs) Because, you know...

**MJG:** Well, we're gonna have an Army no matter what. We've gotta have an Army for national defense.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah.

**MJG:** And women are gonna be there, so let them do what they wanna do!

**CO:** Right. Prove themselves capable of doing...Okay. But what do you think has been the legacy of the women's movement? We've talked about that and that's a hard question to answer in a sentence or two but...

**MJG:** Well, I – You know, women have come a long way, as far as being accepted as human beings in society. I think that we're taking a little step back right now but –

**CO:** In what way?

**MJG:** Well, with all this political stuff going on up there in Washington, discussing whether or not we should have contraceptives. I can't believe that's going on! And, I don't know how long that'll last. You know, but to have your presidential candidate say he wants to outlaw contraceptives...you know, this has just gone too far.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** But generally, since I have spent 30 years, or 40, trying to improve the status of women, um, I would say that I've succeeded in my accomplishment in that. But I – unfortunately, I see the younger women taking everything for granted and not knowing how they got where they are.

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** So they're not paying any attention to what's going on.

**CO:** Right! Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** They're not paying any attention to the political world.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** So, you know, maybe, *maybe* they're rising up again. When you see what happened to that decision that the Komen foundation made? For Planned Parenthood?

You see what happened there? Just virtually overnight they had to retract because of the internet and all of the things going out there. Do you know...are you watching what's happened with Rush Limbaugh?

**CO:** Well, I haven't been had a lot of access to the news but...

**MJG:** I haven't seen it today but he was so ugly, he called her – he called that young law student, you know? You know what the situation was?

**CO:** No, I know he called her a slut?

**MJG:** Yeah, and a prostitute. She came out of a law school, as a student, and went to testify. And so he's saying that she needs all these...she needs all these contraceptives for sex, you know? And he inferred that, and he went on like this for hours apparently, but he inferred that you take a pill and you only can have so much sex until you have to take another pill, you know? Just *crazy* stuff like that. Well, anyhow, nine or ten of his sponsors have pulled out.

**CO:** Yeah, thank god.

**MJG:** And as of yesterday, last I saw, maybe it was this morning, the second radio station has dropped it. And the president of NOW said either last night...she said, "I think he's going down." But you take, you know, that immediate reaction on the tweeters, people that are tweeting are killing him. That's how they got all of those companies to drop him. I know, because my daughter's involved in it, and she tried to get me involved in it but I really didn't want to. But thank heavens I was sitting up in Louisville in a tornado shelter when she was trying to get me to tweet. I can't tweet on my cell phone, I can tweet back here. But it was simply the – and I presume women – who got on them all. So *maybe* things are beginning to get revved up again. You know, that's even more than we went through in the stages of the last feminist movement, but then we didn't have the communication that these girls have. These women have.

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** So they –

**CO:** *That* you see as a positive, role for the internet?

**MJG:** Yeah, I think. Right, right. But I really believe that with that kind of reaction and they're reacting to all of this contraceptive stuff.

**CO:** That'll get women out. That will get women fired up.

**MJG:** So I think that they're coming to life.

**CO:** I hope so. Yeah. Well, it is very demoralizing to see apathy and, you know, inertia on the part of women. Well...

**MJG:** But I think a lot of it is just they didn't have any reason to get worked up, you know?

**CO:** Right. Oh, I know.

**MJG:** We paved the way. We made the work laws better for them. We made...They can have credit on their own. And they've got better pay and more recognition. And they're moving up. They're moving up.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** I mean, you take 50% of the women in – at least – in law school are women.

**CO:** Right.

**MJG:** And that sort of thing is happening. And they have no idea how they got there.

**CO:** Right. Or, what's even more frightening, they don't know how quickly they can lose the ground that's been won.

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** Because that's what history proves, that women sort of have to reinvent the wheel every so many years because the backlash can blindsides you, you know? And that's frightening. Um, we've only got 15 minutes or so...

**MJG:** Oh, I can keep going. I can keep going. We're not going anywhere.

**CO:** Well, the next category: do you feel comfortable talking about religion? Core values and religion?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Okay. I got this question off of NPR one day, they were doing a – it was a weekend, one of their weekend deals where they put on their website, they asked people what was the core value that has driven your life, the overriding core value. We have many values, each of us has. Could you name an overriding core value of your life?

**MJG:** I would say that my tie to the, to my religion would be the thing that probably is the overriding...I never really tried to assess it. But I went----you know, these families that took care of me ----and went to Sunday School, they put us in a car every – the

*first* family – put us in this five passenger Buick and took us to Sunday School over in this little town of Pittsfield every Sunday. And as I told you he also read the, read the Bible at the end of every meal every night. And, uh, that went on all the way through my teen years. I was – And I became a leader in the youth groups at church. And...

**CO:** Even as a shy child you could lead the group...?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah, actually. Actually, yes. And so I would say that that is one of the core values is tied to the religion and to God.

**CO:** could you – I know, Presbyterian – but could you tell me in your words what that means to you? What those religious values are? What those religious beliefs are? Could you tell me?

**MJG:** Oh, I'm not sure I could put that together. (laughs)

**CO:** Okay. Well, is your spiritual life something that you...like, do you have a spiritual practice, a daily routine that you go through that keeps your..?

**MJG:** Not anymore. Not anymore. Not since the children have grown and gone and we – other than my own personal, saying my prayers – but that's about it. We don't, we don't do that together. Bob is not as, as strong in his feelings as I am about God.

**CO:** Was he Presbyterian?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** Are you a church member?

**MJG:** Oh, yeah. We've been a member of this church down here since '67, since we came back.

**CO:** Oh, my goodness.

**MJG:** And settled in town.

**CO:** Okay. So do you...could you identify – some people would identify many – but have you had what you would consider a profound spiritual moment or spiritual experience?

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No? Or anything that you would consider a miracle?

**MJG:** Uh, yes, actually. When Bob was sick and he was dying and he was supposed to die one night. And we got there in the morning and he was not dead. He came back.



But they had found the medication to bring him back. But, yeah, I think that was a miracle.

**CO:** Yeah, yeah. Now, how long ago was this?

**MJG:** 2-0-0-1.

**CO:** Mmm, okay.

**MJG:** Ten years ago. *Eleven* years ago.

**CO:** Wow. Have your religious beliefs changed over time? Or do you think you still have the same beliefs your uncle had?

**MJG:** Yeah.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** I've had no...Although I am having a few misgivings right now. Because our church – apparently there's been a change in the Presbyterian Church at the national level. Apparently they are going to allow ordination of gays and lesbians or whatever?

**CO:** Mhmm.

**MJG:** And our church just, our session just voted not to do that. So I'm just sort of...I don't attend church anymore. I watch it here. They're on TV on Sunday morning. So I'm having a few little thoughts right now about...not so sure.

**CO:** Because they've refused to...

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** ...Allow the ordination.

**MJG:** And then they say, then they come on and say, “you're a friend, you're a neighbor. Just come and join us, we'll take you as a neighbor.” And I'll say, “Yeah, just don't take them in as leadership.”

**CO:** Right, right. Alright.

**MJG:** So, I'm doing a little, a little rethinking there. (laughs)

**CO:** But that, that hasn't really affected your *beliefs* so much as its affected how you ..

**MJG:** No, no no no. That's just a personal...individuals right here. No, no, that hasn't changed my beliefs.

**CO:** Okay. What single experience has given you the greatest joy?

**MJG:** Uh, probably marriage to my wonderful husband.

**CO:** Mm, okay. Alright.

**MJG:** That's been my whole life! (laughs)

**CO:** Do you feel at peace?

**MJG:** Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

**CO:** What do you think gives you that peace? Because you had a very troubled childhood. What gives you the peace?

**MJG:** I've had a very successful life. And I have no reason to, to have anything to prove or anything to...(pause)

**CO:** Anything to resent anymore?

**MJG:** Uh...(laughs) I think I could resent some things. But, personally, as far as I'm concerned, I'm at peace. Nobody could say anything that hurts. Nobody can say anything that shakes me up. You know, I've had plenty of that. I've had plenty, been picked at plenty. Especially in politics. But, I just.....everything is cool.

**CO:** Yeah. Now, how much do you attribute that – I realize that you became responsible for yourself very early – how much do you attribute your success to having a relative degree of financial support in your background? I mean, even when you didn't have relatives who were...

**MJG:** Loving and everything. They *did*, uh, they *did* see that we were taking care of, yeah. They *did* provide that base: the food, the necessities. They *did* take care of those things. And, yes, I think that has a lot to do with...

**CO:** Have you ever worried about debt at all? Has that ever been an issue?

**MJG:** No, it hasn't. But, then, my husband and I are good money managers.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** If we didn't have it, we didn't get it.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** So we didn't have anything like that. We had to do a lot of maneuvering when the three kids were in college at the same time, we did a lot of maneuvering and so

forth. But never seriously in debt.

**CO:** Yeah, okay. Alright. Are you certain of anything?

**MJG:** Certain of anything? Yeah, I'm certain of death. (laughs)

**CO:** That's the most popular answer. (both laugh)

**MJG:** What *e/se* can you be certain about?

**CO:** Well, some evangelicals are certain they're going to heaven.

**MJG:** Oh, I see, I see. I'm sorry, I'm not an evangelical.

**CO:** Yeah. Well, okay. Alright. And this question, it may be a bit...It's even hard to ask. People always looking for cause and effect, you know? The consequences of certain things. Your life *is* a life of success. It's a wonderful life.

**MJG:** It is!

**CO:** It is.

**MJG:** It has been.

**CO:** It is. It's very inspiring. But if you...some of that's been to things completely beyond your control and some of it's been to wise choices, timely decisions, right decisions. If you could say which of those two was most responsible for where you are today, could you say? Would you say cause and effect in your life is more about your decisions? Or is it more about circumstances beyond your control?

**MJG:** I think it's equal, because, you know, we've made the decisions. We're both smart enough and have enough common sense to get things done. And yet, the fact that we've had no serious accidents, nothing, no serious tragedies, that's beyond our control. You know, we had a daughter that was going a little bit off the track, but we got her back in a hurry.

**CO:** Which one was that?

**MJG:** Barbara.

**CO:** Barbara?

**MJG:** Barbara. But –

**CO:** Was that in her teenage –

**MJG:** Yeah, teens, teens. The drugs were just coming in.

**CO:** Yes, yes.

**MJG:** She got a little...Very briefly, very, just on the fringe of getting tied up in that. So, like I say, we, we just put out the lifeline and brought her back. And that's...

**CO:** You know, I asked you about relationships between you and your mother and your mother and *her* mother and so forth, and you didn't really know enough to respond to that. But what about your relationship with your daughters? Was that, besides the time that Barbara had this temptation or whatever, did you and your girls have any conflicted...?

**MJG:** Oh, I think maybe a little bit. I know Robin used to get, get awfully irritated at me when I was talking women's lib so much. And she was in high school. And she'd say, "Mother, get off that." But when she hit Georgia Tech, she'd call up and she'd say, "Hey Mom! Here's what's going on." And so we would spend a long time on the phone coaching her. So, so she came around in a hurry. But, no, there was never any...

**CO:** Serious conflict?

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** Yeah. When we talked about the age that you look back on most nostalgically, I've got a question here. What period of time, anywhere from a year to a decade, was the happiest period for you? Happiest, most gratifying, most rewarding?

**MJG:** (exhales) I don't know. Each decade has been something special.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** Well, again, I think that the years I went into the legislature probably were most fulfilling other than my family, having raised a family. That gave me, gave me a way to express all of this, this resentment or this...

**CO:** Right. Channel it in a...

**MJG:** Yeah, channel it in a way and make it, make something of it.

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** Yeah, I was –

**CO:** So that was the decade of the late '70s?

**MJG:** See that was the...the fif – Yeah.

**CO:** Because you went in in '76. So you were in your fifties.

**MJG:** Yeah, yeah.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. So what period was the unhappiest or the most trying? Most difficult?

**MJG:** Well, I'd say those...You have the years you're talking about?

**CO:** Well, I mean, for you I would assume you'd say your childhood.

**MJG:** Yeah, that what I was going back...But I thought maybe you were kind of...

**CO:** No, no. No, no, no.

**MJG:** Yeah, that would be the most difficult. Because that caused me, you know, to do what I do in life.

**CO:** But for that, I mean – when you look at it that way then you can...It's like, it's redemptive. Because it made you the person you are. You know? Who's to say if you had had an easy life, would you have developed those...?

**MJG:** Yeah, I really don't know.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** I really don't know.

**CO:** Yeah, okay.

**MJG:** I would say, no. I would say that the character comes from that.

**CO:** Yeah. Yeah, I would think so. What about – I asked about the hardest – what about the saddest? Is there a period that particularly sad for you?

**MJG:** I would, I would guess when my mother died. It had to be. Because I haven't had any real sadness in life. I mean, these people who raised me, different people have died. But it was just sort of a natural thing. But I think that the mother dying so young and so early, she was 35. So that was, that's probably it.

**CO:** Okay, alright. Well, now you – every time since I asked you at the beginning – you did so obediently point to defining moments and turning points. So you've already named probably a half dozen, if no more...but if you had to name the three most important turning points in life, what would they be?

**MJG:** Well, the things that I gave you were the things that led up to my being political. So stridently political. Turning points in my life? Hm...Well, I guess getting married

would be one of them. Having my first child was another one because I had him all alone. And, um....(long pause)

**CO:** That's huge, having a baby by yourself.

**MJG:** Oh, yeah. And, um...(long pause) I don't know, I've had so many! (laughs)

**CO:** Yes, you have.

**MJG:** I'd say, I'd say going off on my own to Korea in 1948 was probably a real turn.

**CO:** That is huge to, you know...Okay. Do you have regrets? Do you have any regrets?

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MJG:** I don't...I'm very – I may sound smug and satisfied but, you know, if I came to a crossroad, I took it. (laughs) And, you know, whatever, where ever it took me, I made of it what was handed to me. And that's...So I'm happy with what's gone on in my life and with the way my family's turned out. God, how many people have a husband for sixty years?

**CO:** I know.

**MJG:** (laughs) And still speak to him.

**CO:** I know, so affectionately too.

**MJG:** He is a honey!

**CO:** He is darling.

**MJG:** But it works both ways, you know. You see he's blind, so I have to do all his driving and any place he wants to go, I take him.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** And I'm with him when he goes to all these SAR meetings and stuff. I mean, that's where we were last weekend, he goes to these national meetings up in Louisville. And that's where we were. And we were in a tornado shelter because that's where all the tornadoes came through. That's why when you called last night, I was in bed.

**CO:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**MJG:** But I wanted to say, "Hey, it could've been!" It could've been because we sat in that shelter for 45 minutes.

**CO:** Well, I called because it would've shifted what I did, you know?

**MJG:** That's understandable but, you know, I had warned you that I needed your phone number just in case? Well, that was a "just in case" moment.

**CO:** Yeah.

**MJG:** But they served us...the hotel served us free wine while we were in the shelter so that was, that made it worth...

**CO:** Made it worth it? (both laugh) Well, you all are so...you're best friends and you're partners in every way.

**MJG:** Absolutely.

**CO:** Um, is there anybody to whom you'd like to make amends for anything? Anything you'd like to make amends for?

**MJG:** Well, I'd have to think pretty hard. You mean, like I'd done 'em dirty? (laughs)

**CO:** Yeah, you'd done something that you felt like you didn't get to say you're sorry for or...

**MJG:** No.

**CO:** No?

**MJG:** No, if it was, if it was, it would be long, long ago. Because there's certainly no time now that I do anything to hurt anybody.

**CO:** Okay. What do you think is the most valuable lesson you've learned in your life?

**MJG:** To be good to everybody and treat them all equally.

**CO:** Okay. Alright. What gives your life unity or meaning or purpose now?

(Train whistle)

**MJG:** Well, for one thing, my religion. My trust in God. (long pause) But otherwise, just taking care of Bob.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** At this stage in our game.

**CO:** Right, right. And what is your biggest worry now?

**MJG:** I don't have a worry but I certainly dread the day that one or the other of us dies

which won't be too far in the future.

**CO:** Well, I've interviewed somebody 106.

**MJG:** Well, Bob's 93 and he'll be 94 in July and I'll be 88 so...Anything. I'm trying to...My father, according to my genealogy records that I have, he lived to be 90. So I'm trying to outlive him. (laughs)

**CO:** I bet you're going to do that. (MJG laughs) What has been the greatest source of inspiration for you or motivation? I love inspiration, so I use that one but what has inspired you most in the past?

**MJG:** (pauses) Uh, seeing what I can do to help somebody.

**CO:** So being able to help people inspires you?

**MJG:** Mhmm.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** And, and as far as my looking – I'm always looking forward. I don't – that's why I forget a lot of these things you've asked me questions...because I just put it back there.

**CO:** Mhmm, yeah.

**MJG:** And there's no point in dwelling on it. If it has been unpleasant, it goes. And so I'm always looking forward. I just *can't* live in the past.

**CO:** Do you find the ability to do that is a gift?

**MJG:** It is just, it's just something I've lived with. So whether it's a gift or not, I just, I've just done it in order to put all the hurt out.

**CO:** Right, right. Okay. Of what are you proudest in your life? I don't mean that in the simple prideful sense.

**MJG:** (pauses) Well, that's hard to say too.

**CO:** Right, I know. There's so much.

**MJG:** I mean, I'm proud of my legislative record. I'm proud of my children, and I'm proud of the fact that I have a husband of 60 years. (laughs)

**CO:** Right, right. Those are wonderful things to be proud of. How would you like to be remembered? What do you want your legacy to be?



**MJG:** I want on my tombstone, “She devoted her life to improving the status of women.” I've already said that's what I want on my tombstone.

**CO:** Aw.

**MJG:** Maybe not just – it could be shorter than that, but that's, that's the deal.

**CO:** Say that again, and say it a little louder.

**MJG:** That on my tombstone, I want, “She devoted her life to improving the status of women.”

**CO:** Okay. If I'm around, I'm gonna be sure it's there. (MJG laughs) Okay, is there anything that – well, you've already said you want your children to have the story of your life – is there anything they don't know about you that you would like them to know?

**MJG:** Uh, I don't think they know anything about my youth and my past. My work in Korea and Japan. I don't think they know anything about that. I mean, they know what, what it's been like since they've been born. I mean, they know what the family's done but...I don't believe that they know any of that.

**CO:** Well.

**MJG:** Because, you know, at one time they didn't even know Bob had been in World War II. We just don't talk about those things in the past.

**CO:** Right, right.

**MJG:** And they suddenly discovered he'd been in the war.

**CO:** Yeah. That's unbelievable though. I mean, that's a huge...That's such a –

**MJG:** Yeah, well, of course the men in World War II did not talk about it.

**CO:** Oh, I know.

**MJG:** They don't talk about it.

**CO:** I know, they didn't. Now, the past 15 years, they've been talking, they've been spilling their guts but...

**MJG:** Yeah, I know, but Bob still won't do that.

**CO:** Oh, my.

**MJG:** I mean, it took me a long time to find out some of the things that he's recently told me. So...

**CO:** He should – I wish someone would encourage him to talk. Do you think it was because he was troubled by –

**MJG:** I don't know what caused the...I didn't cross it. I didn't try it.

**CO:** Sure, sure. Yeah.

**MJG:** It was important to him to just keep quiet.

**CO:** Mm. Because the, you know, historians have gone around with microphones because they've been willing the past decade or more to talk. Well, let me just...One more. Is there anything we've left out? There's a whole section we've left out, and I'll talk to you about that when we get through with this but...Is there anything we've left out that you would just like to insert? It's a rich life to try to cover in...

**MJG:** I made some notes.

**CO:** Okay.

**MJG:** Let me glance at my notes a minute and see what I...(end of tape)

**CO:** If that's legible I could actually take it and print it up for you.

**MJG:** That's fine. It doesn't-it's not gonna make sense you know?

**CO:** Ok.

**MJG:** I just got some words on it.

**CO:** I see.

**MJG:** I told her all that. Let's see it says the 76<sup>th</sup> thoroughly militant concerning unfairness to women.

(both laughing)

**MJG:** Final straw don't want no woman. Yeah I told you about when they were going to build this north bypass, and said don't want no woman on this committee. Well, I want you to know that north pipe pass would not be built to freeway standards if it had not been for me.

**CO:** Mm

**MJG:** Because I was in by that time. I was in the legislature and I had a lot of support across North Columbus, and they were gonna-because the business men in the community who owned the land, wanted five on the ground, which meant that every

place they were-they had turn lanes and red lights. Well we got that stopped and it was built to freeway standards because you just floor on

(Both laughing)

**MJG:** (mumbling 3:12) Well I've told you everything, everything I know. I never did talk about the genealogy we did but I showed you the book that we wrote on that.

**CO:** Yes. I want to talk to you about those books and about your vita and so forth. Is the genealogy published somewhere? Did you get it compiled?

**MJG:** Oh. No. It's not it's in the books, and books, and books.

**CO:** Right. They are not compiled.

**MJG:** No. No. They are on my computer. It covers about sixty two lines back to when they arrived in the United States. So, no, I don't have anything.

**CO:** Wow. Well, there's one last question everybody hates but I have an idea that you're not gonna hate it-that you're gonna like it.

**MJG:** Like I say I don't remember.

**CO:** No you can't. It's a creative thing. What would you title your life's story? Mary Jane Galer: what would the rest of it be? You just used your tomb stone. You could use that as the title.

**MJG:** Wife, mother, and advocate for women.

**CO:** I like it.

(Both laughing)

**CO:** Well-

**MJG:** Because I-you know my whole life's been devoted to being a wife, and of course if I did that properly among the women I would be a spouse. And total wife-because you know when you have these children-they grow up and go away but they're still there-you are still mothering.

**CO:** Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, really and truly the only thing that we-that I didn't cover-I got a section on loss and how you handle loss. You handled so much loss by the time you were an adolescent-

**MJG:** Yeah. Yeah.

**CO:** that you sort of mastered that.

**MJG:** But I haven't had any since.

**CO:** Yeah. Yeah.

**MJG:** Everything has just been fine. I mean, as I say those things-those pseudo-parents died off, but they wanted-you know they aunt-----Uncle Harry's wife lived into her 90's. So, you know we were visiting her all the time. And the other two-the other family-the doctor and his wife were gone sicne 1960-61-62. And they weren't as dramatic as ?????? were.

**CO:** Well-

**MJG:** As I say I don't consider any loss other than my parents.

**CO:** Yeah. Well, just losing the original family of origin at the age of five.

**MJG:** Six.

**CO:** Six. Yeah. Well-

(End of recording)