PRESERVING OUR HISTORY: ROTARY CLUB OF GREENSBORO

ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Kathelene Smith

INTERVIEWER: Larry Moore

DATE: January 22, 2010

KS: It's January 22, 2010. My name is Kathelene Smith. I'm in the office of Larry Moore for an oral history interview for the Preserving Our History: Rotary Club of Greensboro project. Good morning, Mr. Moore. Thank you for having me.

LM: How are you?

KS: Fine, thank you. Well, let's start out about when and where you were born.

LM: I was born in Wilson, North Carolina, in 1948. I grew up in Wilson, attended Wilson County Schools, and my last couple of years in high school I went to Fork Union Military Academy, graduated from Fork Union, which is in Virginia in 1966, and got an appointment to the US Naval Academy and graduated from the Naval Academy in 1970.

KS: Great. So, what did your parents do?

LM: My father was a farmer first, and probably a legislator second. And he was also a lawyer.

KS: Following in his steps.

LM: Yes, I never thought that I would. But I ended up doing that. I really broke family tradition. I was the first male in my family in over 100 years who did not go to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

KS: Oh, how did that go over?

LM: Well, actually, my dad was delighted, because I was one of five kids. My dad was forty-four when I was born, and I had an older sister who was a year and a half older. And three younger siblings, the youngest of whom was four years younger. So, my mother had five children in the house under school age.

KS: Those are hard years.

LM: Yes. So, my dad was looking at a big tab coming up for college educational expenses and provided a bit of assistance that I could go without any fee.

KS: How was growing up on the farm in Wilson?

LM: It was a different life than what we have here. I tell my kids all the time that they can't imagine how much life has been changed by air conditioning and television. When I was a young kid, we were one of the first to get a television set. Televisions at that time in Eastern North Carolina – the closest station was in Norfolk, which was up in Southeastern Virginia, and it was over 100 miles away. And you could imagine reception from 100 miles away. We'd watch *The Lone Ranger*, and it looked like it was snowing. But television became more and more a part of people's lives as I grew up. But I never slept in an air conditioned room until after I graduated from college. And we would sit out on the porch, or go outside and play, because it's cooler outside, especially in the evening. And families were much more social with their neighborhoods at that time. Now, social and sports activities seem to be more school-based, or more athletically-based. And they have much more formal rules. When I was a kid we'd go out in the summers especially, we'd go out Saturday mornings, and we'd start playing baseball in a lot, a vacant lot that we would mow to get ready. And we would play from 9 o'clock in the morning until dark. And at lunchtime people would run home for lunch, and the game would continue without that person for a while. And, then, the person would come back.

KS: That sounds fun though.

LM: It was.

KS: So, what kind of school – did you go to a county school? Were you far out on a farm?

LM: No, we were – we lived downtown for the first, I guess, until I was about six years old. And then we moved out to a place that was about a mile outside the city limits of Wilson at that time. But now it's within the city limits of Wilson. But it was a fairly rural life. But there was a housing development nearby, and there were middle income kids who lived in the housing development. And we lived in a house my – dad had two tenant houses connected together and built the family room on the back of it. And that was where we lived out in the country.

KS: Did you like school when you were young?

LM: I did like school when I was young. I was very bookwormish until I discovered sports, and baseball in particular. And I think we had very good schools. Schools were not integrated in those days. And in fact, that was one of the issues that my dad was dealing with that I really wasn't conscious of at the time. When Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, was handed down by the Supreme

Court in 1954, I was five years old, and my dad was in the state legislature. And North Carolina was grappling with how to deal with the integration issue. Because the Supreme Court had directed the states to move forward with, I think, "all due speed," or something of that nature. And in our neighboring states Virginia and South Carolina, there had been school systems that were shut down because of the integration issue. In North Carolina, our governor, William B Umstead, had appointed a committee to study the program. And at that time the legislative strength was focused in Eastern North Carolina. And most of the hardcore racial issues were in Eastern North Carolina, I'd say. Perhaps people were more – perhaps there was a greater concentration of the right-wing white view in Eastern North Carolina at that time. And the governor had appointed in Eastern North Carolina, legislator and former Speaker of the House, Tom Pearsall from Rocky Mount to head the committee. And I believe my dad was on the committee. And the committee proposed a plan which, at that time, was considered to be a moderate-to-liberal plan. As we would look at it today, it would be considered to be a conservative plan. But there was a conservative element that opposed that plan. And the conservative element was led by I. Beverly Lake, who was an educator, and who ran for governor shortly after that, and he was a lawyer also. In fact, they have a rich tradition within that family of – rich legal tradition. And I. Beverly Lake, Jr., was recently the chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court for a time.

But at that time, the right-wing element, the segregationist element, wanted to oppose the federal edict to integrate. And the moderate group, represented by the Pearsall plan, basically proposed a plan where they would not push integration, but they wouldn't oppose it either. They wouldn't oppose the federal government. And it really sounds like dragging your feet looking at it now, but at the time, even our progressive governor from 1960 to '64, Terry Sanford, favored it, because that was all that could feasibly be done at the time. And my father was Speaker of the House in the 1955 session. And they had a special session in 1956 to consider that issue. And William Friday, Bill Friday, who is the retired president of the University of North Carolina System, told me that they televised the session of the House of Representatives on a crucial vote regarding this. It was an evening event, and he said that the tensions were so high that – and this was the first time that the legislature had ever been televised by the Public Broadcasting System, UNC TV, Channel 4. And he said that he and my dad worked out a plan where if my dad dropped his handkerchief, then Friday had agreed that all the cameras would go off immediately. But they were very concerned that there might be some violence or something incendiary that would occur during the session, and that as a result, it would create – having that on television would create a public reaction that would be difficult to control. And they didn't want to set off any extremist activities as a result of anything that might happen on television.

KS: Now, once the Supreme Court had mandated the states to do it, did the states really have much of a choice?

LM: Well, the states didn't, but the Supreme Court doesn't have a police force.

KS: They weren't going to come after every state.

LM: And how do you do that? There was a difficult – it was a difficult assignment. I think in my – I don't think there were any of the classes were integrated by the time I finished my sophomore year in the Wilson School System, which was in 1964, spring of '64. Fall of '65 I went off to school at Fork Union. And I think they integrated that year. But they only had one, or two, or three blacks per class. Can you imagine the anxiety those kids must have felt going into an all-white school system under those circumstances. I mean, when I was a kid the bus stations were segregated. And they had a snack counter at the bus station, and the snack counter was segregated. They had a wall that walled – that divided the bus station waiting room in half. And the whites sat on one side, and the blacks on the other side. And they had to arrange the snack counter so that part of it extended into what was called the colored section and part into the white section of the waiting room. And they really did have white and colored drinking fountains. And they had white and colored hospitals. It was something that you look back on it, and you're embarrassed and ashamed that those conditions existed.

KS: It's almost incredible now to think of it.

LM: Yeah.

KS: Now, it's just hard to believe.

LM: But you have to remember that the people, white and black, were born into that system. So, it's easy to look back and cast blame on the whites. And it's easy for blacks today to cast blame on other blacks, who they would see today as being subservient or bowing and scraping, as the characterization that you hear often. But, you know, they were products of their times. And they were trying to get by the best they could. But it was an interesting time when there was so much change.

KS: So, after your summer year you went on?

LM: To Fork Union Military Academy.

KS: You finished there. Were you an athlete there, too?

LM: I played tennis.

KS: You changed from baseball to tennis?

LM: Yes. I thought I was going to play basketball. But you may – I don't know if you've ever heard of Fork Union. But Fork Union is the only prep school or high school in the country, I think, that's had two Heisman Trophy winners: Vinny Testaverde, and Eddie George is the second one. And so, we've had two Heisman Trophy winners from Fork Union. North Carolina–

KS: Competition a lot.

LM: The University of North Carolina has had zero. Duke has had zero. Wake Forest has had zero. State has had zero. So, you understand there is not something that you find at every institution, at every college institution, even those that play big time college sports. So, I went to Fork Union, and I thought I was going to play on the basketball team. And somebody asked me about that, "So, well, you're going to play JV right?" I said, "No, I'm going out for the varsity." And they sort of laughed. But the varsity players were really good. They were really good. So, I played varsity tennis, but not basketball.

KS: But that was good that you were such an all-around athlete that you could change sports like that.

LM: I was not that great. I was very small until I finished the tenth grade. Finished the ninth grade, I grew six inches in the tenth grade. And, so, I was a very clumsy, skinny kid. And then, I sort of grew into my body when I was in college. So, when I started school at the Naval Academy I was six feet, two inches tall, and weighed 150 pounds.

KS: Wow.

LM: And when I graduated I was just a little over six, three, and I weighed 185. So, I was fairly normal by that time.

KS: So, did you go into the Navy right after school?

LM: At the Naval Academy – if you graduate from the Naval Academy you have a five-year service obligation. And when I graduated, I went to a ship, the *USS Perry*, that was stationed in May Port, Florida, which is near Jacksonville. It's where the St. John River runs through Jacksonville, and enters the Atlantic Ocean. And we spent a total of – I was on the ship for a little less than three years. And when we got back from Vietnam in the spring of 1973, we had spent, it was either 90 days or 120 days, in our home port in that entire time. And I joined the ship when it was deployed to the Mediterranean. And it was just during the Jordanian crisis when Jordan was kicking the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] out. Many of the PLO had immigrated to Jordan from Israel, and Jordan threw out the PLO as a political force and its leaders. And that was a cause for the U.S. and for the Russians to have ships all over the area. And our ship came back from that deployment in the spring of 1971. And I was sent down to May Port – not May

Port, to Key West, Florida, and they sent me to warfare school. And that was very nice. And then, came back to the ship which was in the shipyards at Charleston, South Carolina. And we came out of the shipyards in Charleston. And the fall of 1971 we became part of the First Atlantic Fleet Surveillance Squadron and following the Russians and the Cubans around the Caribbean and escorting ships around Cuba that were subject to being attacked by the Cubans to – Castro's forces had captured a ship named the, I think the *Johnny Express*, which was owned by a Cuban exile who lived in Miami, I believe. But it was registered in Panama as a lot of ships owned by American citizens or American companies are registered in other countries so they don't have to pay U.S. taxes. But we escorted other ships in that line around Cuba, and we followed the Russians and the Cubans to San Fuego, and to Havana, and all around.

KS: Was there a sense of not knowing what was going to happen? Did y'all expect that something could happen?

LM: Yeah, we did. We had an occasion when we were off the coast of Havana. We were six and a half miles off the coast, and the Cubans claim twelve miles of territorial waters. The United States only acknowledged three miles, a three-mile limit. And to show that we weren't going to accede to their characterization of how far their territorial waters went, we generally would come in to within six and a half miles. And the Cubans came out one day with their – with a squadron of their PT boats at general quarters. And they surrounded our ship with twelve or fiften of them with their 50-caliber gun mounts manned. And we were very concerned they were going to try to board us, because this was three or four years after, I think, the *Pueblo*, *USS Pueblo*, was captured by North Koreans in the late '60s. And the *Pueblo* was an intelligence ship. And it's my – it's my inference, I guess, that after the *Pueblo* was captured, the United States decided that it would do its intelligence gathering, its shipboard intelligence gathering, on combatant ships rather than merchant ships so that they would have the means of defending themselves. And there was some irony in that, too, because by the time the Cuban PT boats came out, and they were within 100 feet of us, they were too close for us to shoot at them with our shipboard guns, which are five – you know, the barrels are five inches. The inner diameter of the barrels was a little over five inches across. The projectiles were five inches in diameter. And, so, you can imagine these big guns which were – barrels were ten-feet long, you can't train down and shoot at ships that are below you in the water within 100 feet of your ship. So, that was rather exciting. Nothing happened, but we were ready to repel boarders. But we finished that. We finished doing our – well, I guess we didn't finish. We got orders to Vietnam that summer, and we left for Vietnam. And we came back in April, I believe it was, of 1972. And at that point, that's when I had been in my homeport for either 90 or 120 days since I got the ship. I was scheduled to be transferred, and my detailer in Washington called and said, "What do you want? We can get you on another ship that's getting ready to do a round the world cruise." And I said, "Please, you know."

KS: That didn't seem appealing?

LM: No, I was ready to get some shore duty, and he asked me what I wanted to do. And I said, "Well, I'd either like to teach Naval ROTC at a college, or I would like to be in the race relations program." And he called me back a week later and said, "You're the only guy we know who's getting both of your first two choices." And I said, "Tell me about that." He said, "Well, you're going to teach Naval ROTC at Prairie View A&M," which is the first – was the first predominantly black college in the country to have a Naval ROTC unit. It's a school much like North Carolina A&T, and it's got a very strong engineering program.

KS: What town is that in?

LM: It's in Prairie View, Texas, outside of Houston. It's about forty-five miles outside of Houston. Texas had created a – this was Texas's supposed "separate but equal" answer to Texas A&M just as Texas Southern Law School, Texas Southern University. I know that the law school was a response to the *Sweatt v. Painter* lawsuit where a black man named Sweatt had filed suit to challenge his exclusion from the University of Texas Law School. The result of that, Texas Southern Law school was created. Well, Prairie View A&M had been created maybe 100 years earlier as the – it was known as a Normal School at that time which was, I think, there are schools in North Carolina, predominantly black schools, that are referred to as Normal Schools at that time. But I taught at Prairie View for three years, and had a great experience. Started out teaching freshman – had 125 freshmen. And had a good experience with those students. And I was assigned to be the sophomore instructor the next year, to stay with the same students, and tried to help develop them, their interest in continuing on in the ROTC program. And we had very good success. We had more people who continued on than they had had in the program previously. And I went to law school. Got out of the Navy in 1976, after spending six years in the Navy and finishing my – finishing three years at Prairie View. And I went on to law school at the University of Houston after that.

KS: So, you didn't want to be a teacher and continue on with that? You wanted to do something different?

LM: I loved to teach. And it's still something that I look for opportunities to teach. And I guess now that is being fulfilled by being a preceptor at Elon Law School. And we have an organization in the United States that's modeled after the British Inns of Court. It was started in the mid '80s called The American Inns of Court. And we have six of them, I think, in North Carolina. And we formed one in Greensboro in 1995. And the purpose of the Inns of Court Program is to create a sort of mini-society, if you will, of more senior lawyers, more experienced lawyers, a second group of lawyers who have just begun practice, and a third group of lawyers who are in – who perhaps have been practicing between five and fifteen years. And the purpose, again, is to promote professionalism and ethics

and teaching within, among the groups, so that the older and more experienced lawyers work with the younger lawyers and help to give them perspective on how to deal with different situations with the court, and to try to improve the caliber of legal representation.

KS: Now, is this program actually affiliated with the British Inns of Court, or is it separate?

LM: It is separate.

KS: It is modeled.

LM: Yes.

KS: So, Houston, is my stomping ground. How were your years in Houston?

LM: I liked Houston. It was kind of interesting. When I went to Houston in 1973, I was single. And – well, when I went to Prairie View I was single. Prairie View is forty-five miles from downtown Houston. And another of the assistant professors on the staff of the Naval ROTC at Prairie View and I, a single professor and I, got an apartment in Spring Branch, Texas, which is a suburb of Houston. And to give you an idea about Spring Branch, Spring Branch Ford sold more pickup trucks than any dealership in the entire world.

KS: I could believe that.

LM: And, so, Charley Black, Chuck Black and I, had an apartment in Spring Branch. And Chuck is black. And if you haven't noticed, I am somewhat of a pinkish tinge here. But we had an apartment in Spring Branch, and we didn't know any of our neighbors for six months, because Chuck's girlfriend was in the house often, and my girlfriend was in the house often. And in fact, we both ended up marrying our girlfriends within a year. But my girlfriend was attending classes at University of Texas, and his girlfriend was a college senior as well. Well, mine had graduated from college and was attending graduate classes. But it kind of blew the minds of some of the Texans to walk by – and all the apartments had these big picture windows in the living room. And I'd be sitting on the sofa next to his girlfriend. And people would take a double take at that. But, you know, I bet they wouldn't even notice today. I hope that's the case.

KS: So, you graduated from the University of Houston. And you decided to come back and practice in North Carolina, pretty much immediately? Did you consider living in Texas?

LM: I did. I did. I had a great experience at the University of Houston Law School. It is a very good law school. It's got great resources, and it has terrific opportunities for its students to assimilate into the law community in the Houston area. They

have – they have trial courts and state court in the state system, and in the federal system, there. And there are some of the biggest and best firms in the world there. Summer after my first year I worked for a firm that was then known as Vinson, Elkins, Sorrels, Connelly and Smith. And John Connelly was the Connelly in that firm. And I worked with a lawyer named John Golden. And, also, worked with two other lawyers, Tom Weatherly and Harry Reissner, and Tom Weatherly and Harry Reissner were nationally renowned lawyers of their own. Tom defended Dr. DeBakey, Dr. Michael DeBakey, did the first artificial heart. And this was – I'm going to guess in the early '70s. And Tom Weatherly defended that case.

KS: Now Dr. DeBakey operated on my grandfather.

LM: Did he? OK. And, so, you know what kind of publicity there was at that. Harry Reissner was another – I can't recall any of the cases that he did at the time. During my second year I clerked for a lawyer named [Richard] "Racehorse" Haynes. Are you familiar with him?

KS: Yes.

LM: With his name. OK. And during that time he was trying the first Cullen Davis case, the fall of '77. Cullen Davis was the – was characterized as the richest man ever tried for murder. And I doubt that's the case. Probably there's some kings who were tried and beheaded, but he was the richest American who was ever tried for murder. And that was up in Amarillo. And the trial had just started when I began work that fall. And, so, I didn't have very much to do with that case. I did prepare a petition for certiorari to the United States Supreme Court for one of the other lawyers there. At the same time they had the Cullen Davis case going on they had – as a Houstonian you may recall the story about Ash Robinson and John – what was the doctor's name? John Hill.

KS: Oh, sure.

LM: And that was the case about which the book, *Blood and Money* was written about. And there were several movies about both of these cases. But "Racehorse" Haynes had represented Dr. John Hill when he was charged with murdering his wife by injecting her with some kind of poison, and Haynes got a mistrial in the first case. And before the retrial could come about, the assumption is, the allegation was at least, that Ash Robinson had Dr. Hill killed. And in fact the person who killed Dr. Hill later confessed while he was in prison. But he died after that. So, he couldn't testify at the trial. But there was a civil trial by the estate of Dr. Hill against Ash Robinson. And that firm was trying that at the time I was clerking there. And one of the lawyers there had a case, a criminal case, for which the appeal had been lost in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. And they wanted to draw a petition for certiorari to the US Supreme Court. So, Ray Bass, the attorney who was involved in that, asked me to draft the petition for certiorari, and I did that as a second-year, third-semester, law student. But the assignment

was rather modest: To convince the Supreme Court to take this case, to overturn Oliver Wendell Holmes last opinion.

KS: What pressure!

LM: No, the Supreme Court denied certiorari.

KS: That's great. I'm surprised working on such high profile cases that you may not have decided to stay in Houston. North Carolina was calling you.

LM: I thought about it, and we had two children. My second child was born my third year in law school. And I had been told that I had a home at Vincent and Elkins if I wanted to go back there. I never applied. They never accepted me. But the lawyers I worked for said, "We'd like for you to come back here." And I really did enjoy that type of work. I also enjoyed criminal defense work. And I worked for the DA's office during my third year of law school. And actually got to try a couple of jury trials as a third-year law student, misdemeanor jury trials. One was a misdemeanor, and one was a traffic case. But in Texas you get jury trial system to misdemeanors. And I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed the legal environment there, and I liked Houston. Houston is great except for the traffic, and the smog was somewhat noticeable. But it's a city that has everything, activity or interest, that you could want. If you – you could find other people like yourself in Houston regardless of whether you were a Mongolian Hippy or a Star Trek nut. You could find a bunch of people just like yourself.

KS: That's true.

LM: And that was one of the things that was appealing to me about Houston.

KS: But you decided to move back?

LM: We came back because we decided we wanted to live within visiting distance of our relatives.

KS: Sure.

LM: We wanted our kids to grow up knowing their aunts and uncles and grandparents.

KS: So, was your wife from North Carolina, too?

LM: Yeah, she was–

KS: Oh, so, you met someone in Texas that was from North Carolina?

LM: Now we had started dating during my – right at the end of my second year at the Naval Academy.

KS: Oh, okay.

LM: And when I was on the ship, I was gone all the time. And, so, we really weren't able to advance the relationship then. And we ended up getting married after I'd been in Texas for a year. And she finished her spring semester in graduate school in Austin, and we decided to get married then.

KS: And moved back.

LM: And we moved back two years later. But our first two children were born in Houston.

KS: So, did y'all move back to Greensboro at that point?

LM: Yes, we moved back to Greensboro. Greensboro is about 125 miles from Wilson. And it's the perfect distance for visiting on weekends. But it's just a little bit too far for afternoon drop-ins.

KS: Sure. Now, that's a perfect distance.

LM: Yes.

KS: So, you moved back to Greensboro, and you started looking for a law firm, or did you go out on your own?

LM: I started working with a law firm. My dad had died in 1973, but one of his friends was on the State Supreme Court. And I wrote to his friend. His name was Joe Branch. And Joe was – Joe Branch – was an excellent lawyer. He was – he had been the campaign manager for Dan Moore, who was governor of North Carolina, elected in '64. And he was an excellent lawyer. And he was an assistant justice. They called the justices – you're an assistant justice unless you're the chief justice. And there are six assistant justices. And after I came back to North Carolina, he became the chief justice. But I had written him and asked for him to recommend firms which I could apply in the larger cities in North Carolina. And he wrote me a very nice letter and recommended two or three firms in each of the cities. And one of the firms he recommended was Adams, Kleemeier, Hagan, Hannah and Fouts in Greensboro. And that firm – I came back, clerked with that firm, and then took a position with that firm as an associate beginning in 1979 after I finished law school. And I was with that firm until the year 2000, at which time it had grown to about 50 lawyers. And I still have great friends there, but I'm just too much of an eccentric, I guess, or individual – I won't characterize it – to do well with so many rules and so many – well, you have to have – if you have 50 lawyers, you have to have some rules. And I left the firm in 2000 and came to practice with my current partner, Charlie Younce, and we had two other partners

at that time, Sam Johnson and Bill Moseley, here in downtown Greensboro. I've been here since then.

KS: Great. So, what was it like moving back to Greensboro during that time? What did you find in Greensboro?

LM: I liked Greensboro because it had a number of cultural activities. It's close to the mountains, close to the beach, relatively speaking. And it's within traveling distance of Washington, D.C. It's within an hour and a half flight of New York, or an hour and fifteen minutes from New York. And it's on the interstate network, so that it's easy to travel about. But it's also – Greensboro I found to be a good city with its own rich heritage and strong blend of resources, human resources, of all sorts of types. And I've enjoyed Greensboro.

KS: So, what kind of things have you been involved in here? And did you get involved with local politics or–

LM: I have been involved in supporting local politics. I started right off, and in 1980, I met one of my best friends while working to take people from the polls – to the polls in the poorer sections of town. And I got to know Dorothy Brown and Nettie Coe, who are both leaders in the Old Asheboro Neighborhood Association. And Dorothy is like a second mother to me now. We talk on the phone all the time. And if she needs my help, she'll call me. And if I need her help, I'll call her. And I've worked with Dorothy in different political projects as well. Other political stuff that I've done – in 1984 there was the race between – for the senate – between Jim Hunt and Jesse Helms. And there were some very disgraceful tactics used during that race. There were mailings sent to the black community, especially among black college students, warning them that if they voted in the wrong – in the precinct where they didn't really live that they could be prosecuted for federal crimes. And, of course, this was to try to discourage black students from voting. And in reality, once you go off to college, unless you have formed a specific intent to return your hometown, you have the right to register – returning to your hometown to live permanently – you have the right to register to vote in the city or town where you live. And I was involved sort of secondarily with the legal team. I guess I was in the second-tier group of the legal team that worked in 1984. And so by 1986, we've continued that every year since then. We've developed a legal team, and I've been involved in the leadership of that since 1986. And we publish a brochure having to do with voting rights. And we get volunteers to work at the polls. And we work to assure that voting rights are not going to be violated during the elections. And it has not been a problem of that nature since 1984. It's – there was a lawsuit concerning that. And I think there was a consent order entered.

But you're always suspicious about opportunities for intimidation to occur. And we've been on the lookout for things like that. And there are other voting issues that come up such as out-of-precinct votes in 2004. And the State

Supreme Court ruled in 2004 that it was the intent of the legislature to allow people who voted early – early voting, you can vote two weeks before the elections. You can vote early wherever the hell you want to vote, in whatever precinct in your county. You can vote by absentee ballot, you don't have to go your precinct to vote there. But this legislature – under the Supreme Court which just happened to be, have a six to one Republican majority, which two of the Supreme Court members recused themselves. So, there were five Republicans who addressed this issue, and they concluded that the legislature had intended that people who voted on Election Day, outside the precinct where they lived, were not casting legal ballots. So, if someone lived on the outskirts of town and worked downtown, and they voted at one of the downtown precincts that day, their votes were ruled not to be counted. And during the contest that brought that question to the Supreme Court, the Democratic Party, the Guilford County Democratic Party had asked me to represent John Parks who was the county commissioner who won over the incumbent, Trudy Wade, by virtue of provisional ballots that were cast. And the provisional ballots were given to people who voted out of precinct. And the State Board of Elections had told their workers that people could vote out of precinct, but they would vote by provisional ballots. So, everybody thought it was okay, but it was challenged. So, we had to go back and take out all of the out-of-precinct votes. And, then, we had a big dispute over–

[Recorder turned off and on again]

KS: This is the beginning of Side B. So, you were saying about the Supreme Court?

LM: After the election protest filed by Trudy Wade had gone to the North Carolina Supreme Court for the second time, it was coupled in this process with the protest filed in connection with two other races for the state Secretary of Agriculture and the Superintendent of State Board of Education. And John Parks had won on the strength of the provisional ballots that had been cast. There were about 2,000 cast. I think there was something like 1,200 of them that were counted. And in the 1,200 ballots that were counted, initially he got enough votes to win by, I forget what the margin was, but maybe a couple hundred votes. And, then, after the Supreme Court said to throw out all the out-of-precinct ballots, we had six days of hearing here in Guilford County, presided over by the Guilford County Board of Elections. And Jim Turner, who has recently passed away, excellent lawyer in Greensboro – Jim Turner was the chairman of the Board of Elections. And we had six days of hearings before the County Board of Elections, and we had two days of hearings before the State Board of Elections. And the precinct, the out-of-precinct ballots were discounted. And we had a big dispute over whether people who had moved their precincts were deemed to have moved more than 30 days before the election, and we finally resolved that. And a year and a half after the election John Parks was allowed to take his seat.

KS: Good grief, that's complicated.

LM: Yeah, it was. And it took a long time to get that done.

KS: But once that kind of thing is settled, then it's basically set – then that's what everybody goes by now?

LM: Yeah, except that the state legislature has – the state legislature tried to preempt the Supreme Court by stating that its intent was you could vote – it was not illegal to vote out of your precinct. And the – for federal races the state court, State Supreme Court, does not get to decide whose votes are counted for federal offices. So, it was an issue that was decided by our State Supreme Court that affects local races.

KS: I had no idea that went on. It's amazing.

LM: This was the longest disputed election contest in the country arising out of the 2004, the November 2004, general election.

KS: It's amazing that you were involved with that. So, besides that, since you've lived in Greensboro, other events that happened that have stood out in your mind?

LM: Well, one I get asked a lot about is the – in 1979 there was an altercation between members of the Communist Workers Party who were having a "Death to the Klan" march and people who were associated with either the Ku Klux Klan or the Nazi Party, and five people were killed. There were two criminal trials regarding that incident, and there was also a civil trial. The civil trial was filed a year after the incident occurred. And it named as defendants – the civil trial – the plaintiffs in the civil trial contended that there was a conspiracy among federal officials, state officials, city officials, and the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi Party people who attended, who were involved in the incident, to attend and attack the people associated with the Communist Workers Party. By the time the case got to trial, it was about to get to trial, it was in the fall of 1984. So, it was almost five years after the event, and almost four years after the case had been filed that it was ready to go to trial. And the judge, who was specially assigned, was Judge Robert Marriage from Richmond, Virginia. And Judge Marriage, in the fall, noticed that there were no attorneys in the civil case, and this was a civil lawsuit filed, there were no attorneys for any of the people associated with the Ku Klux Klan members or for the people associated with the Nazi Party. And Judge Marriage sent a letter to a number of law firms. I think he sent them to each law firm that had – in the Triad area – that had as many as eight lawyers. And my firm was one of those.

But he asked them if they would challenge his right to appoint their firm to represent people associated with the Ku Klux Klan or the Nazi Party, who were defendants in this case. And, of course, you may be familiar with the principle that if you are charged with an offense in criminal court for which there is a real potential that you could serve time, that you can get an attorney appointed for

you. In Guilford County we have a public defender's office, and there's a public defender's office for people who can't afford their own attorneys who are charged with federal crimes in the Middle District of North Carolina. But there is no provision for paying or retaining people, attorneys to represent people in civil cases. There's no – no state money is used to fund a group of lawyers to represent people in civil cases. We do have groups like Legal Aid of North Carolina, but that's not a state institution. That is a charitable institution. They do great work. In this case, there was no pot of money from which he could order – he could pay people, attorneys, to represent these people. But he saw the case was about four or five months from trial, and they had, I think there were twenty-two plaintiffs plus five estates – the estates of the five people who were killed, were represented by lawyers, many of whom had associated with different groups that had become involved in this issue regarding the altercation on November 3, 1979. But there were government lawyers who were appointed to represent the members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or the Federal Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau who were still defendants in the case. And there were attorneys for the city police officers, there were about thirty police officers who were still defendants in the law suit as it went to trial. And the city had an insurance police, and that paid for the Nichols, Caffrey Law Firm to represent the city officers. But there was no one to represent people associated with the Ku Klux Klan, people associated with the Nazi Party. And the judge thought that the trial could get out of hand if they had a bunch of people who he presumed might have sort of a cowboy mentality about trying the case. And five of the individuals had asked for counsel to be appointed.

And, so, the judge sent the letter out to the law firms and asked them to inform him by – there was a certain Friday in November, 1984 – inform him by that day whether they would challenge his authority to appoint them to represent people associated with the Ku Klux Klan or the people associated with the Nazi Party. And my firm waited until the last day, and at 2 o'clock on the last day, we sent a letter to the judge. And I had just become a partner in that firm. I'd been there five years. We sent a letter to the judge stating, "We do not wish to be involved in this lawsuit. We do not challenge your right to appoint us, but we respectfully ask that you do not do so." The Brooks, Pierce McLendon, Humphrey, and Leonard firm also did the same thing. And sent theirs in at about the same time. All the other law firms sent theirs in at 5 o'clock which was the close of business. And lo and behold, the judge got the first two and said, "Well, that solves that problem." So, he appointed the Brooks Pierce firm and Adams Kleemeier to represent members of the Ku Klux Klan and – I don't know the name of – the American Nazi Party. The Nazi Party. And within the Brooks Pierce firm, Jerry Chapman, who is now prominent immigration lawyer in town drew the short straw, because Jerry had Federal Court experience having served as a clerk for Judge Gordon and had been with that firm for four years after a two-year clerkship with Judge Gordon. Jerry drew the short straw in that firm, and I drew the short straw in my firm. In fact, the senior lawyers in my firm came to me first and said, "Larry, we know that you're involved with Civil Rights issues, and

we want to ask you if you have any sort of ethical issues with representing these people working on this case and defending people associated with the Nazi Part or with the Ku Klux Klan." And I was a member of the NAACP at the time. And I thought about it, and I remembered when I was in Houston there was a lawyer, a black lawyer, who had been a member of the ACLU who had represented Nazis whose rights to have parades had been challenged. And his name was Craig Washington. And I thought – that had worked with the Democratic Party in Houston while I was in law school. And I thought, "Well, if Craig Washington can do it, I can do it also." Because I feel very strongly that each person should have the right to representation. And just because you represent somebody doesn't mean you have to agree with them. It does mean that you have to present their case, any evidence, their credible evidence in a professional manner. And do it in a manner – represent them zealously to allow them to have their side of the story told.

KS: Was this all pro bono to your firm?

LM: It was.

KS: Oh.

LM: And in fact I worked on that case for seven months straight. And my firm got no revenues from that case. And one thing that did happen is that the lawyers in the firms that had been asked by Judge Marriage, the lawyers in the firms that were not selected, each donated $100 per lawyer to cover our expenses for trying the case. And it was close to covering our expenses. I think we collected, as I recall, $17,000 or $18,000. And part of our expenses were – during the trial Jerry and I lived in an apartment in Winston-Salem because it took too long to get back and forth from Winston-Salem to Greensboro. At that time I-40 bypass was not complete. And I-40 went through downtown Winston-Salem as Business I-40 does now. But it was a two-lane road from – I-40 was two lanes from Winston-Salem to Greensboro. And we were working around the clock. And Judge Marriage was trying the case. We had court on Saturdays. We started at 8:30 in the mornings. And actually, the jury came in at 8:30, and the lawyers were there before 8:30 because almost always had motions to hear before we started. So, we would start hearing motions at 8 o'clock. And, then, the jury would be let go about 5:30 in the afternoon. And we'd hear motions after that. And we'd hear motions at lunch, because as you might imagine there were a lot of disputes in that case.

KS: How long did that trial go on?

LM: Three months, thirteen weeks. So we finished that trial in June. We started March 11, 1985, and we finished – that was the end of the second week of June as I recall of 1985.

KS: What an experience for you, though.

LM: Oh, yeah.

KS: I mean challenging, certainly.

LM: It was. But, you know, through each of our experiences whether they're overall classified overall as good experiences or bad experiences, these experiences are opportunity for us to learn and grow. And I've learned a lot. And I think I grew a lot by virtue of having been involved in that case. I didn't get a lot of sleep during the case. But I did – I learned a lot of life's lessons.

KS: I bet your firm was appreciative that you took that on, because that's an amazing amount of time and effort.

LM: Well my firm – I was appreciative that my firm continued to pay me during that time. And everybody in the firm took a hit, because we had, I think, maybe eighteen lawyers at that time. And so, we didn't have – it wasn't just a marginal slice of our attorney time. And among the partners, I don't know how many partners we had at the time, but I had just made partner, and I was – it caused a dramatic drop in my revenues, of course. And also, it caused a discontinuity in my representation of a number of clients. And I had developed relationships and was representing companies on a regular basis like Carolina Steel. And as a result of my being involved in that case full-time, we had to bring others in to take over that. And, so, we lost the benefit of associations that I had developed. Although I think everybody who took over for me did an excellent job in handling the cases that I had been involved with.

KS: In any aspect, but I guess in talking about this trial, especially from the race aspect, have you seen a lot of change in Greensboro over the years since that incident – as far as race relations?

LM: That's a difficult question. When I came to Greensboro I was surprised that race relations had not developed more than they had at the time, especially among professionals. And there was an occasion when my wife and I had a party, and we invited a lot of our lawyer friends, and a number of them were black. But I heard in the aftermath of that, people commenting, "Larry had a party, and Steve Allen was there." Steve Allen is a black lawyer who came to the bar about the same time I did. And some of my, you know, I had dear friends of both races. And I had never thought of my relationship with any of my black lawyers as being any different than my relationship with white lawyers. I don't think skin color has affected it. But I think that the relationship, race relations, among lawyers has evolved quite a bit in the thirty years I've been in Greensboro. I don't think it had anything to do with the Klan-Nazi/Communist altercation. I think it was a natural process. And I think it evolved because we – and I think race relations in general have evolved because of the – in part at least, the leadership it's gotten within its

professional communities. And the Greensboro Bar Association has had several black presidents in the last ten years. I think it was three in the last ten years. Before that we never had a black president. And there were certain strings between the Greensboro Bar Association and members of the black community. But I think that through a combination of the passage of time, and through the process of having to work together, that people in Greensboro have evolved into being much more open to social relationships within the races. Jack, I'm sure, President Obama carried Guilford County in this last election. He carried North Carolina, which is quite remarkable considering that when I was in high school the Ku Klux Klan was still having rallies and burning crosses and getting TV exposure for doing that. I mean I'm sure they still have these events now, and they burn crosses, but they don't get a lot of publicity for it. I think that we have evolved quite a bit, but I think we all have things to learn. And we still have a ways to go.

KS: Do you think it might help in Greensboro, in particular, to have so many universities and colleges in the area?

LM: Yes.

KS: Do you have any direct contact with the universities? Are you involved with anybody in particular? I know you didn't graduate from any place in town.

LM: Well, I have – as a member of the Greensboro Rotary Club, the Greensboro Rotary Club is very active in civic matters. And one of the things that inspired me to join this Rotary Club was that I knew a number of its members who I admired so much, and who had been so involved in making Greensboro a better community, including black and white members of the club. And I'm – I'm one of the two directors of a summer leadership program that Greensboro Rotary Club directs, one of the two directors. And it has a partnership with Guilford College where the program is conducted. It's a week-long program, and it's operated also with the three partners with us are Guilford College, Center for Creative Leadership, and the district – our Rotary district is also a partner in this. And we have students coming from high schools all over our district, which is the Central Piedmont District. And this is the only summer program for high school students that the Center for Creative Leadership is involved in. As you know the Center for Creative Leadership is worldwide. It has – it's international I should say. It's not in every country, but it has offices in Belgium, I know. And it conducts programs in Belgium. It has offices in Colorado, I believe, and also Greensboro is the headquarters for it. And even flag rank officers in the US Military come here for training. So, the Center for Creative Leadership has great resources to provide to any kind of leadership program. Guilford College has a terrific environment for housing this program and for conducting the activities that are involved with the program. So, I've been involved with that. I have had some associations with UNCG from time to time. I helped with teaching a couple of classes, putting on a couple of programs at UNCG. I've had involvement with A&T through politics,

through helping their students to organize and get to the polls. I've had involvement through Bennett College, taking their students to the polls. So, in direct connections with the schools. Then I've taken some programs, participated in some programs at UNCG. But, you know, the colleges we have are a tremendous asset to Greensboro. And especially here in terms of Patricia Sullivan, who has recently passed away. She was a dynamic leader. And if you had been on campus before Pat came, and go on campus now, for the first time since then, you would be astonished to see how many new buildings have gone up, and how much more activity there is, and how many more students there are. UNCG has blossomed under Pat Sullivan.

KS: It was such a loss. It was such a loss – to lose Pat Sullivan. Everybody is still talking about that. So, when did you join the Rotary?

LM: I joined in – I'm not sure. I think it was 2003. And I was – my partner, Charlie Younce, invited me to join, and Bill Moseley was also a partner of mine at the time. They were both members, and they invited me to join. I had visited a time or two with my dear friend, Horace Kornegay.

KS: Sure. I interviewed him.

LM: OK. Horace Kornegay and Bill Adams, who was a partner at Adams Kleemeier, were – they're the two men who have been like second fathers to me. And Horace Kornegay was such a wonderful man, and did so many things for Greensboro, and Guilford County, and the United States, through his service in Congress. And I just enjoyed being a friend of Horace's – went sailing with him many times. And Horace actually tried a case with me. Once I defended a man in federal court who was charged with bank fraud, and I concluded that in federal court when you go at the federal court it's such a – I'll say it's a novel atmosphere. But it's an atmosphere where you are impressed by all the indicia of federal authority that, in my view, there is pretty close to a presumption of guilt rather than a presumption of innocence when you go to try a case in federal court. And I represented a man who had been charged with bank fraud under a statute that had been written to catch people who were kiting checks. And my client had kited checks, according to the government, and between two different banks, and when they caught the kite and stopped and arrested him, he was – I'm trying to remember – it was something like $155,000 in the hole. And I asked Horace to help me with that trial, because I wanted him to give the opening statement to try to help make an initial impression that would offset, by his dignity and the authority with which he spoke, that would help to even the playing field against the US – assistant US attorneys who would be presenting the case and telling the jury, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I am an assistant United States attorney. And I'm here on behalf of the people of the United States against Mr. X, against the defendant." And Horace agreed to do it. He said – he cautioned, [Saying it in a very loud stern-like voice] "Larry, I haven't tried a case since 1959." This was in 1986, '87, '88, something like that. And I said, "I know that, Horace, but you make such a

strong credible impression to everybody. I'll write the opening statement, and you can change it. I'll write the draft. You change it to suit your personality." And he said, "Well, Larry, I can't examine any witnesses. They've got the new Federal Rules of Evidence now. And I don't know anything about the Federal Rules of Evidence." I said, "Horace, I'll give you two character witnesses to examine, and I'll write a suggested series of questions for you. And I'll handle all of the – I'll cross-examine all of the government's witnesses. And I'll handle all of our witnesses on the key issues." And he agreed to do it.

And we went over there and tried the case Christmas week. And it was a case where the FBI agent, who was the lead agent on the job, had told one of the witnesses with the bank – the bank that ended up getting shorted was CCB – and told the CCB officer that I was giving my client bad advice to try this case, and that because of my bad advice he was going to end up doing active time, and more of it, than he could have expected otherwise. And so, we went in and tried the case Christmas week, and the jury came back, I think it was Wednesday or Thursday. And it was like the 22nd or 23rd of December, and the Christmas spirit got to them. And my client had paid all of the money back by the time the case went to trial, and they acquitted him. And the client started crying vocally, I mean out loud in the courtroom, put his head down, and tears were running out of his eyes and onto the desk. And Horace and I had to leave, because we were about to start crying. And he was so supportive, and it was such – it was an experience I wouldn't trade for anything to have tried that case with Horace Kornegay. And he was a member of this Rotary Club. And Horace is somebody that you could not help but like if you like decent, honest, caring, truthful people. He's just a wonderful person.

KS: I was so lucky to have interviewed him. And I went out and spent the whole day. What a charming gentlemen, you know? Just a gentleman to the toes. And interesting, and had done so much. Just lovely. I was so glad to have spent that day with him. We went to lunch – he took me to lunch.

LM: And when he talked to you, you knew that he was listening to you.

KS: Yes.

LM: He would look you right in the eye, and he would listen to what you had to say. And he was there to learn from you as much as you were there to learn from him, I'll bet.

KS: Yes, he was just wonderful. Some of his stories of the war, you could imagine, were just – they will just live with me forever. I was so sorry he passed away. Because even though I spent only a day with him, I felt – I know it sounds crazy, I felt like I knew him.

LM: Felt like he was a dear friend.

KS: Yes. It really was – it was hard for me to explain. I know everybody thought I was just crazy, because I felt like I knew him. And I was just devastated. But everybody, you know, because we knew him in the archives, because I interviewed him – and we all cut out everything from the newspaper, and we all felt like we knew him. Well, what else have you done with the – have you been involved with the Rotary Club since you've been a member?

LM: Yes, since 2003.

KS: 2003.

LM: Yes, I haven't had a leadership role really before becoming the director of the Rotary Youth Leadership Program. But I have participated in other activities, everything from helping the Salvation Army ring the bell with its Christmas kettles. And our Rotary group almost every year, if not actually every year, gets – brings in more money through its kettle than any other kettle in Greensboro. And there are lots of wonderful organizations participating in that. But we – and that's another thing – that project –the Rotary Christmas Kettle, Salvation Army Kettle project – has been led by David Grimes. David Grimes worked with me with the Greensboro Urban Ministry. And he was the – he was one of the actual chairs of the Greensboro Urban Ministry capital campaign in 1992. I was involved with – I was on the board of the Greensboro Urban Ministry for two, three-year terms, from 1989 through 1995. And I was a lawyer for the Urban Ministry during that time. And we conducted this capital campaign in 1992. And the professional fundraisers told us that our goal of $1.75 million to build the building that you see on Lee Street now, 305 East Lee Street, I think that's the address, that goal was too high. That they had done an empirical study, and that we would not be able to raise during that time half that much, more than half that much. And David was the leader. David said, "I don't care what they say. I think Greensboro's got it in us, and I think we can do that." And so we went about this campaign, and there were other people on the campaign committee who were involved. And it was a very great privilege to be involved in that. Kay Bryan Edwards was involved, and the Bryan Foundation gave the first major gift for that to get the capital campaign off and running. We ended up collecting more than $1 million over our budget. And we actually had the money from that to purchase – so from our funds we had already purchased a lot where the building is now, although we had to fight a lawsuit from the Lee Street Merchants Association to be allowed to go in there.

KS: Really!

LM: And I represented their ministry during that lawsuit. And we collected enough excess funds that we were able to buy the lot that borders on Eugene Street in the back and touches the Urban Ministry lot. And we bought that lot, and we built an indigent healthcare clinic on it. And my involvement with the Urban Ministry started when I was involved in Leadership Greensboro, and our Leadership

Greensboro study group of six or seven people had decided – we had been assigned to study indigent healthcare. And we decided, you know, they don't need another study. There have been studies everywhere about this. Everybody knows we need more indigent healthcare resources. We need to get something done. And, so, we ended up joining forces with – our group had gone around and began talking to people in other cities who had indigent healthcare clinics. And when we got to Raleigh we talked to Dr. Don Lucey who was involved in the Open Door Clinic in Raleigh. And Dr. Lucey said, "Well, have you talked to Mike Aiken and Stewart Rogers?" And we said, "No." And he said, "Well, they're interested in starting a clinic as well." And the Urban Ministry at that time was using volunteers at the Pathways Family Shelter for – they were having a lunch hour clinic at that facility one day a week, or maybe it was one day every two weeks, or periodically. And so, we began talking with Mike Aiken, who was the new director of the Urban Ministry. This was back in 1989, and Mike had just come on as a new director of the Urban Ministry. And Stewart Rogers is an internal medicine physician with Moses Cone, with the pediatric teaching – with the internal medicine teaching clinic there. And we got together with them – and Stewart's wife, Betty Rogers, was a nurse – and they had been active in working with Urban Ministry.

So, we got together and wrote some grant applications and started the first – we started a dedicated clinic here on Battleground Avenue, downtown. We leased a facility just half a block from here, and it was the Urban Ministry Medical and Dental Clinic. And in 1993, I think it was, that morphed into Health Serve Ministry Medical Clinic. Then we created a new nonprofit, Health Serve Ministry, to operate that, and that was a nonprofit with four institutional members. Actually, it started out with three but eventually Wesley Long Hospital joined. Moses Cone – Dennis Berry, who was the head of Moses Cone System at that time, who was a very strong leader who has had so much of an impact on health care in Guilford County. And Dennis was the one who suggested that we begin having meetings to see if we could create a separate nonprofit. And we did that – we started a separate nonprofit. I think it was in 1993. And David Talbot became the first medical director of the clinic. And we hired an executive director. And we had one executive director, and Fred Levitt took over for that one as we're still starting up. And Fred became the first medical executive director of the clinic as we were up and running. And we operated that for seven or eight years, kept having to change the rules, because they changed federal rules on funding. And finally, it got to the point where it couldn't be operated by anything other than – cost efficiently – by anything other than an existing hospital. And so, the Moses Cone Health System now operates the clinics. But we did it as a separate unit for about – for I guess, about eight years. Because I was the president of the board for seven years, and Gladys Robinson was the vice chair, the vice president, I forget the title. And then, by that the time the rules had changed again. And we had to convert it to a clinic operated by Moses Cone Hospital. But that was how I got involved with Urban Ministry. And the Urban Ministry had so many – it has had so many dynamics leaders. And, of course, Mike Aiken has been – is still the

director now, and he has helped the Urban Ministry to grow and to become involved in so many areas of our community that it's a very powerful organization to provide resources and help to those in need: food, shelter, training.

KS: It provides so many things. It's wonderful organization.

LM: It is. It is. And Mike is a member of the Rotary Club.

KS: Really?

LM: Yes.

KS: I'll have to track him down, too.

LM: Yeah. You need to talk to Mike, yes.

KS: So, back to Greensboro. What changes have you seen since you've lived here, and what kind of improvements do you think could be made to the city?

LM: Greensboro has grown – when I came here we had – the population was, I would guess around 150,000. I know that when we were doing our studies to start Health Serve, Guilford County was the only metropolitan county in North Carolina that had neither a county hospital, nor a university hospital. And at that time Guilford County, the studies had shown Guilford County had 350,000 people. And Greensboro had less than 200, I know. Now, I think Greensboro has around 250,000 people, and the county has grown quite a bit. Greensboro has advanced – it has advanced culturally, and it has advanced in the sense of having better leadership. But, actually, Greensboro went downhill in terms of effective leadership from the time I got here until – you can argue about when the date was it started to turn around. Some people would argue that it hasn't started to turn around. When I arrived here, Jim Melvin was still the mayor of Greensboro, and Greensboro was a much more effective – had much more effective city council that was better at planning for the future. However, from the time I got here in 1979 until, I think the school bond was passed, first school bond was passed maybe 2001.

[Recorder turned off and on again]

KS: All right. This is Tape 2, Side A. I'm sorry, continue.

LM: Where were we?

KS: I think we were talking about the fact that they had not passed any school bonds in 20 years.

LM: We were talking about – that's right. The changes in Greensboro. Greensboro went from being a city that was known for having effective government that would plan for the future to, for a while, being a city that could not pass a school bond. And there were a number of other bond referenda that were defeated during this time. And it was also a city that – and Guilford County – that had inadequate facilities for indigent health care. And the county finally became involved with Health Serve ministry. But its contribution to Health Serve ministry was, in my view, so diminished that it should have been embarrassing for the county, as far as what it was doing to help with indigent health care. For most of the time – in fact today – most of the indigent health care that's provided in Guilford County is provided – and I'm talking about primary care – people going to the doctor for aches and pains, and for the flu, and for contagious diseases, and for coughs that might turn out to be lung cancer, whatever. The doctor that they see first over there in the emergency room is going to be a doctor at Health Serve, one of the Health Serve clinics, or a doctor at the internal medicine teaching unit at Moses Cone. And that teaching unit is associated with the University of North Carolina. So we – Guilford County is supporting the Health Serve clinics now. And I don't know what the level of support is, so I can't really say that it's inadequate. But Moses Cone, through the leadership of Dennis Berry, and now Tim Rice, has been involved and is now operating the Health Serve clinics. And it's – it's shameful to me that when we started the project in – began the study in 1999, early 1989, I'm sorry, more than twenty years ago – Guilford County had 350,000. Data showed that Guilford County had 350,000 people, and about fifteen percent of them were uninsured. That means they had no Medicaid or no private insurance or Medicare. And, now, the numbers are something like eighteen percent. And, so, we've had a higher percentage now than we had twenty-one years ago, even though we've instituted a new program that is still in operation and provides, as I recall, when I was in my last year at Health Serve we were providing primary care for 7,000 people, and we were providing about 25,000 patient visits a year. And, so, even though we had the effort to address this issue, we're actually falling behind. So, it shows you that health care is, indeed, an issue. And it's not just important because we want to be good people and help everybody feel better. It's an issue because Greensboro as a community needs to have healthy employable people. And people who don't get primary health care who are the people who are most likely to have problems with high blood pressure, diabetes, all sorts of diseases, even screening for things like AIDS is a big part of what they do.

If you don't keep your workforce healthy, your workforce is not going to be as effective. And you're not going to have as many viable candidates to work in new industries. So, we've had changes in how we address indigent healthcare, and that's been positive. But we still need to do more. We've had changes that were for a long time negative changes because of the inactivity in building new schools, and that has resulted in having our existing schools not as strong as they should be as far as fiscal units, the bricks and mortar, not having to have so many classes in temporary buildings. And we have embarked on a program that has been making major strides to address that in the last eight or nine years, and that's

a really good thing. So, there's been some positive leadership. But for many years we have been gridlocked by disputes among members of our Guilford County Board of Commissioners and, in more recent years, City Council. And that's not been a good thing. There is too much factionalism in the process. And I think the process has lent itself towards a system that tends to get people – some of the people who have been elected have, in my view, been elected because they were more eccentric or outspoken against something rather than being protagonists in the role of supporting a cause. They have been antagonists against a cause, and that's resulted in their being elected. So, we've had some trials with our leadership. And we are only going – it's only going to get worse because, you know, we have a great fiscal crisis now. And as you've seen what's happened, the federal government has paid for less and less of the programs that have benefited us on a local scale, and the state government has done the same thing. So, it's been pushed back – more and more the burden has been pushed back to local governments. And it's now reaching a crisis point, because we have high unemployment. We have more support that has to be provided to people just for food, shelter, clothing, medical issues. And we don't have the growth industries here that we hope will carry us forward for the next thirty years. We don't have textiles as we did when I came to town. We don't have the furniture industry providing jobs for people to build furniture that we did when I came to town. And we don't have the manufacturing capability or resources that we did when I came to town thirty years ago. It's a much more service-oriented town. But on the other hand, we have a number of positives. But I still think it would be much better if – our biggest employer, I think, is Moses Cone Health System in the county – and it would be much nicer if we had somebody like a Burlington Industries, Cone Mills, Guilford Mills, providing the jobs that we're going to need going forward. And it's a cause for concern, but we have good people, and we have a great place to live that's going to be – that's going to attract more people to come to Greensboro and Guilford County.

KS: How do you feel about the downtown development?

LM: That's been a real positive. And it's great that it's drawn interest in downtown. And it's also provided a facility for the younger – for younger people in the twenties, professionals, and working people in their twenties and thirties to have entertainment and activities downtown. It has been the most positive aspect for the viability of Greensboro as a downtown-based city in the past – in the thirty years I've been here.

KS: Anything else in particular you think about Greensboro's future?

LM: No, we've got a great culture here in Greensboro. We've gotten along better among the different ethnic and cultural groups in Greensboro. One thing that has been very positive is that Greensboro has the largest community of Montagnards, they're ethnic Vietnamese, they're mountain people. In fact, the Montagnards is not their native name for their ethnic group. But Montagnards is the name the

French gave to the people who lived in the mountains. And these were a race of people who were supporters of the United States during the Vietnam War, and they had a thriving population at the time of the Vietnam War started. I think somewhere around – over two million people. And now I think they're down to maybe half of that in Vietnam. But North Carolina has more Montagnards than any other place other than Vietnam. And Greensboro has more Montagnards than any other place in North Carolina.

KS: Why is that?

LM: Well, it's because the – and I can't speak with authority, but it's my impression that it's because there was the Episcopal housing – I think there was a nonprofit run by the Episcopal Church that helped steer them here to start with. And all the church communities worked together to provide support for the Montagnards. So, we not only have Montagnards, but we also have ethnic Vietnamese. We have a lot of ethnic Cambodians and Thai people, and Greensboro is a much, much more polycentric community. Now, we have much more ethnic diversity than we had thirty years ago. When I came to North Carolina in 1979, I remember seeing a study, and I can't tell you whether it was in the *Wall Street Journal* or the *New York Times*, but there's a study that concluded that North Carolina had the highest percentage of natives among its population of any state in the country. That means out of the five or six million people that we had at that time, that we had a greater percentage who had been born in North Carolina than any other state. That can't be said. If you go downtown in Greensboro and stop the first ten people you see, probably four out of those ten or five out of those ten will have been born somewhere other than Guilford County, and most of those five born elsewhere were born in other states. And that has provided a great resource for Greensboro. And people who come to visit are surprised that there are probably more Asian restaurants in Greensboro, especially Southeastern Asian restaurants, than you will find in bigger cities. There are probably more than you will find in Washington, D.C., for instance, or Atlanta, just because Greensboro has served as a center for relocating many of these Asians. And it's a great benefit to us and to our children.

My son, my younger son, became friends with a Cambodian kid, and he was friends with people of other nationalities while he was in school here in Greensboro. And now he lives in New York, and he fits right in up there. He doesn't have to worry about how to relate to people of different cultures because he's had that experience in doing that here in Greensboro, and that's something you wouldn't have seen thirty years ago. Kids growing up in the Guilford County School System probably didn't know – kids who graduated from the system in 1978 or '9 probably didn't know many, if any, Asians. Probably didn't know any people who were here from Europe. And you see a lot more of that here now. You know, the Volvo Truck facility here is – that's a multinational corporation. You see multinational corporations involved in the furniture market making hardware. So, this provides an asset to our community, not only an economic asset, but it

provides a social and cultural asset to our citizens. Because it gives them skills in dealing with people of other cultures that people are going to need if you go to big cities and try to work there. You are going to have to do that. If you've had the training or that experience here, it gives you a greater opportunity to excel when you have to deal with people of different cultures and social groups elsewhere.

KS: One thing I did want – on a personal note, I know that a lot of people are involved in different hobbies, and the first several [oral histories] I did I realized I was remiss in not asking about anything outside of business. A lot of people have taken up flying, golfing – and consider that almost of equal importance to what they're doing. So, now I always want to mention that, too, and give you a chance to talk about anything else that you might be interested in outside of business.

LM: I don't play golf.

KS: One of the few and the proud North Carolinians who does not play golf.

LM: I don't fly, although I did receive training to be a pilot at the Naval Academy for a couple of weeks. I did aerobatics and things like that, but I've been involved in aviation litigation. I represented companies who make products, products liability work, and many of those cases have involved flying. And I enjoy flying with others. A lawyer who was associated with our firm for several years was a retired US Airways pilot, and he and I have been representing the only survivor of this Comair crash in Lexington, Kentucky. My other activities that I have enjoyed: I love to sail, and in 1994 I took my three kids up to Annapolis. I chartered a sailboat and hired somebody to get me certificated as a Bareboat Skipper, and since then I have chartered boats and been my own captain in boats taking my kids out, and that has been a lot of fun. I really enjoy doing that. And I enjoy walking and hiking and canoeing, things like that.

KS: Great. Well, thank you so much. Is there anything else you want to add? I think we've covered a lot of things.

LM: I don't think so.

KS: Thank you so much for talking with me today. I appreciate the interview.

LM: Thank you.

[End of interview]