THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Bonnie Angelo

INTERVIEWER: Hermann J. Trojanowski

DATE: October 13, 2009

HT: Today is Tuesday, October 13, 2009, and I'm in Jackson Library with Bonnie Angelo. We're here to do an oral history interview for the UNCG Institutional Memory Collection. Bonnie, thank you so much for driving all the way over from Washington, D.C.

BA: I'm delighted to have done it.

HT: And so glad you're here. Bonnie, let's start the interview by—I'll ask you some information about your background such as when and where you were born.

BA: I was born, when? In 1924 if anybody can remember that far back in Winston-Salem, North Carolina on the fifth floor of the Baptist Hospital.

HT: Can you tell me something about your family and home life in Winston?

BA: Well, I was the youngest—things were—at first, let me say, in those days things were more family-oriented than I believe they are now. And I was the youngest of four children. And they never let me forget that I was the youngest. So, I always had the feeling I was kind of tagging along after them, which is maybe makes you a little more combative as you grow up, that you've had to kind of fight your way to be included. So, I don't resent them much. It was a family of four kids: me, as youngest, my parents, very supportive in everything. And even in the Depression years they sent all the children to college.

HT: Now, did you have brothers or sisters?

BA: Two brothers, one—there are four of us. Two girls, two boys. Boy, girl, boy, girl. Nice arrangement.

HT: Now, what did your parents do for a living?

BA: My father was a merchant. He had many different kinds of things that you do in small towns. But the main thing that he would be known for was the E.J. Angelo Fine Groceries. It was an emporium that had a lot of interesting specialties that did not appear

on all of the shelves in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. But he also had other interests that he—as small-town people do.

HT: Does it still exist?

BA: Oh, yes, with the name—oh, yes, it's Nege Northe. It then became a center for artists. And is now still the Winston-Salem artists have studios there. And the name of it was—he had the building built. And so E. J. Angelo in the face of the building in the bricks. It's still there on Burke Street in Winston-Salem.

HT: Is that B-U-R-K-E?

BA: B-U-R-K-E. And it was quite a landmark, because I think it might even have the date on it, which I think would have been 1928.

HT: And where did you go to high school?

BA: Reynolds High School, Richard J. Reynolds High School which was the most incredible high school that your mind could imagine. We took it for granted. You know, this was the way high schools are. It was only later that we realized—this school was endowed, a public school, endowed by the R.J. Reynolds family. And we all know what they did to make their fortune. It was, and is to this day, it's now a magnet school. But it was a joy to go to school every day. I can almost not explain how much fun and enthusiasm we felt about that school. And it still is a beautiful school, and it still is flourishing.

HT: What was your favorite subject?

BA: Gosh, I liked so many things. I was a Latin major. So, I had four years of Latin. My mother had been a teacher. She thought that was a very good idea, because if you know how Latin puts together, it helps you know how English puts together and how language develops, and groups of languages which made me from the beginning given her influence love words. So, that was—her influence was very, very strong. She'd been a teacher before she was married in some small school in Western North Carolina.

HT: She didn't attend the school, did she by any chance?

BA: [no audible response]

HT: Where did she go to college?

BA: She did not go to college. In those days you could be a school teacher. She went to a school that was up in Cincinnati, [Ohio], that was operated by a wonderful order of Episcopal, Anglican nuns, and partly was the fact that her mother had died of tuberculosis as so many people, unfortunately, died young in those days. And, so, she and two of her sisters went to this school which had this very elegant roster of Anglican nuns. And it

really impacted her life. It made her very—go way beyond her natural growing up years. And they opened up many, many windows to her and her sisters who went there also.

HT: Was this Cincinnati, Ohio?

BA: Yes. After, I think, they closed and went back—they were British—went back to England during World War I, and they did not reopen. But it was—she always gave enormous credit to them for her love of education. And she taught, I guess, for two years. But it was in a little country school. So, there's not much to think about.

HT: So, how did she end up here in North Carolina?

BA: Well, she was born and bred in North Carolina.

HT: Oh, okay.

BA: Oh, yes. And would you like to know where?

HT: Yes.

BA: Metropolis in Western North Carolina, called Bat Cave. Now, if that isn't a launching pad. But the house is still there. She grew up in one of these beautiful houses, three stories with towers, and a veranda that wrapped around the whole place. And it was in a valley of the North Carolina Blue Ridge and a rushing river across the road. And as children when we would visit our grandparents in that gorgeous house, it was like magic. Because we could just go across the road and have this wonderful rocky mountain river that was just memorable. And I was able to—because the house still stands. And it's still really beautiful. It was prettier; I'm sure, than it was when they lived in it because it's been glossed up. But when my own son was a little tike, they had had one house on the property, my mother and her sisters. So, it overhung the river. And it's rushing, rocky river. And, so, it was wonderful to be able to take my son to the place that his great grandfather and his great-great grandfather's house was there also. When they built this big one, they tore the old one down. But that's a lovely kind of feeling of roots when it's the same house, the same—

HT: Piece of property.

BA: The same wonderful wrap-around veranda, and this rushing, rocky mountain stream right across the road.

HT: Now, where is Bat Cave, North Carolina?

BA: Well, you well may ask. It is—let's see if I can pin it down. It is near—it's about twenty miles from Asheville, twenty miles east of Asheville, and it's near Chimney Rock, North Carolina which is a big tourist attraction because of the mountain has this great chimney there. And Lake Lure, which is right also down the road. So, it was a very—even when

my mother was a girl it was a great tourist place when they were coming in horse and buggies then. But the house was big, because he had seven children. And it is still to this day—have kept it—whoever has bought it must have been a couple of generations of people have kept it in this wonderful shape. And you just see this house as you go up the valley. And my grandfather sent three of his daughters away to school in Cincinnati. So, it really opened her young eyes. Then she came back and taught there in this valley. She met my father in Winston-Salem and married him and spent all her married life in Winston-Salem.

HT: Let's see. Go back to high school. What were your favorite subjects, do you recall, other than Latin?

BA: English if I had a good teacher. The difference that a really good teacher made is enormous. But I must say Reynolds High School I had really good—a couple of them were okay, too soon out of college, maybe. But English literature. Loved it. Enjoyed math. Took geometry and all those things. Geometry I didn't like, but algebra I loved. Algebra I loved. And I took trigonometry because I loved it too. So, there were just a lot of kinds of things I would dabble in, because, you know, if you are interested in you want to know more about it. And I did a lot of dramatics there.

HT: Okay.

BA: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Strong, strong interest in giving plays, yes. Worked on the paper, obviously. But I was not—I was a columnist, but I was not—I was not an editor.

HT: That was later on at WC [Woman's College]?

BA: No, no. I never worked on the paper over here.

HT: Oh, this one?

BA: I did the *Pine Needles* [yearbook].

HT: *Pine Needles*.

BA: Yes, because I liked doing the *Pine Needles*, you see, by then I had really crystallized this interest in art. And, so, that gave me the sense of a publication where you are doing something that they're going to keep. They won't keep the *Pine Needles*, they would keep—what was the name of the paper here?

HT: *The Carolinian* [student newspaper].

BA: *The Carolinian*. But they would keep the *Pine Needles*. And I loved the combination of just putting it together. And, also, did mine quite differently from a lot of the others. Instead of having kind of a traditional padded leather, I had it done in a textile, rough

textile, because I felt that textiles were much more North Carolina. And I'm sure some of the other students thought, "Oh, why is she doing that for my year?"

HT: Well, I know you attended one year at Salem College?

BA: Yes, I did. I did my freshman year. All the other three of my siblings were in college away. Oh, I guess my older brother was maybe even working by then. And I just felt like I ought to keep it from being an empty nest. So, I did one year, and then I thought, "I've really got to fly a little higher than this." And that was when I happily transferred to Woman's College.

HT: Did you think about going anywhere else other than Woman's College?

BA: No. No, by then I really knew people here. I knew that they had an extremely, lively life here. And also that you had great range of subjects to choose from. So, I didn't really take—I guess I toyed with William and Mary [College] just because it was an historic and it sounded—And, then, I kind of looked at, "How do you get there from Winston-Salem?" And it's a very good thing I didn't do that, because it's got lovely history, but it has—it does not have the enthusiasm and the excitement that Woman's College [or] the university was able to generate.

HT: So, what year did you come here?

BA: I came here in, let's see, for the year '41-'42.

HT: The academic year '41-'42?

BA: Yes, because of the year before I was at Salem [College].

HT: So, Pearl Harbor was bombed December '41. So, you came here—it happened right after you got here?

BA: Absolutely, absolutely. And I was home, because living in Winston-Salem it was very easy to go home for weekends. And I had friends that would come from their college. So, we had this kind of double—as we always can, you can remember where you were standing, how you felt that moment, when you heard it on the radio. Which I heard it as it came through. And it's just as clear in my mind as if I have a picture of it even to this day. Because I knew this is going to—I knew instinctively this is going to change everything, including my own little life.

HT: So, [there] was a rumbling of war for a number of years, especially Europe was already at war at this time.

BA: Yes, yes. So, it was not an out-of-the-blue. That particular attack was. But, no, we were so used to the doing the—Lend Lease was already very active. So, we were very aware of

it. But that was the moment that is fixed as if by camera where I was standing in relation to the radio. Because, of course, it wasn't television.

HT: You were at home?

BA: I was at home, yes, that weekend. I went home a lot of weekends because the friends would come from Chapel Hill. The guys would come from Chapel Hill. And we had a very lively social world in Winston-Salem, very lively. And, so, it was kind of fun. Yes. And, then, over here was a different kind of social world, which I enjoyed very much, too. The meeting of different people when I came to this campus was significant in my life. Because I had really met—this is going to sound so parochial, and it is. I didn't know any girls who were Yankees when I was growing up in Winston-Salem. And here I came and my—in Winfield Hall which was the most beautiful dormitory that anybody had ever seen at that time. It was brand new. Maybe two years old, something like that. Gorgeous with the paneling, and the ballroom that we shared with the building, Weil, it was called then. And it was so elegant. You were so proud for anybody who was coming to be with you on campus to see that beautiful building. We had a great sense of pride in that because we knew were in something—that building was something very special. But I did go home most—well, a lot of times, lots of friends would come up from Chapel Hill. But I went home a lot. It was so easy, just—the bus went right down Spring Garden Street. No, I think the bus went down Tate Street, actually. That's the one over, isn't it?

HT: Tate, it was Tate and Spring Garden are perpendicular.

BA: Then that side. What is the next one over from Spring Garden?

HT: Walker Avenue which is closed now.

BA: Walker is the one that comes first.

HT: Yes.

BA: It was Spring Garden where I would go to catch the bus to go to Winston-Salem, yes. So, it was a—it was a good life for me because I had still all my ties going in a very lively town, which it was.

HT: What are recollections of coming here for the first time?

BA: Well, mine are not typical. Because I came as a sophomore. And I had visited two or three, no, at least three of my really close friends from Reynolds High had come here first off while I was staying that year in Salem. So, I came over several times and visited them. And realized how much bigger a scene it was for a college girl than to go to Salem [College] as a day student and go home. So, that was what drew me here was activities. And just the atmosphere was lively

HT: Do you recall what your favorite subjects were on campus?

BA: It depends on the teacher. I would have to say my favorite subject was political science. And that's because Miss Louise Alexander was one of the great teachers of all time. So, she made it come alive. And afterwards is when I would come back to campus after I was working. And I talked to Miss Alexander because she reached me, reached me. And I said, "You know, you're the one that got me interested in politics," which I just—has been the backbone of all my political—my journalistic work. And it started with Miss Louise Alexander, because she—and she could tell I was really interested. Because she would fix on me and I later realized that students show in their faces whether they are interested or not. I hadn't really – but she made it so interesting. So, I've covered politics for *Time Magazine*. In Washington I covered the White House. I covered the heart of politics in Britain with the rise of [Margaret] "Maggie" Thatcher and all of that. Then I was in New York, covered New York politics. And every step of the way I thought, "Thank you Miss Alexander."

HT: She must have been a very special person.

BA: She was. And I was—and she stayed on long enough for me to be able to say, "You started me on this." And she already could see that it was a career developing. So, I felt—if you just even get one teacher, and I had many. But she was so special, because she made it come alive. If you just get a teacher that makes you excited about the course.

HT: It makes such a difference.

BA: It does.

HT: Now, you were an art major?

BA: I was. I was. You can't—

HT: Why weren't you a political science major?

BA: I don't think they even had a major.

HT: Oh, okay.

BA: In political science. Because that was mainly [University of North] Carolina [at Chapel Hill]. We couldn't go to Carolina until we were juniors. I transferred once. Some of my friends did transfer to Carolina. And I didn't want to, because I wanted to be editor of the year book, which I then became. And I knew I would not be able to do that at Carolina, not a girl. Not in those days. But the interest that I had were art. As a kid I was interested in art. You know, tot. That was what I wanted for Christmas was colored chalk and water colors. And my mother was happy, of course, both parents were happy to indulge me in that. But my mother didn't like for me to get outside the lines. Now, that's a terrible thing to say to a child. But I didn't know it at the time. She was very supportive in everything I wanted to do, I must say. So, I majored in art, because I just loved art. And I was not in the fine arts mode. I was in applied arts, interior design, architectural design, textiles,

especially textile design. If it hadn't been war time I would have been a textile designer. So, I'm glad I didn't. But that's how close. So, mine were applied art, furniture design, those things. Loved doing it. And it made—it gave me a dimension that has lasted all my life of appreciating and loving objects.

HT: Do you recall any of your art teachers in that period of time like Gregory Ivy?

BA: Oh, Gregory Ivy, absolutely. Now, he was away in the service, I guess, the Army for part of the time. And we had Miss Mary Stewart. Mary Stewart, yes. She was very good. But a little tough. And when Dr. Ivy came back from—he was putting in his—it was just a joy for me. And I felt that he was more than just an art teacher. He was somebody who wanted to see his students reach out and develop. He was a wonderful teacher.

HT: Was Helen Thrush there at that time?

BA: Yes. She—in fact, she was—in my first year over here, she was very good. But she did not resonate with me. She was a wonderful woman, but she was very restrained. And I'm sure I was not her kind of kid.

HT: You didn't see eye-to-eye in the art field?

BA: Yes, well, that was—she was good in making me loosen up in art. I just think that maybe she—I don't know. I liked her very much, but it was not like my real friendship with Dr. Ivy or with Louise Alexander, or some of the others.

HT: Well, tell me about working on the *Pine Needles*.

BA: Well, it mostly happened in my room like after midnight. Because it had to do with organizing photographs, pictures. Deciding what kind of things you want. If you looked at those yearbooks, this one was very different from the others. In the first place, I wanted the textile cover. And with the spray of pine needles in green ink. It didn't look like any of those padded leather covers. I'm sure a lot of the students thought, "We didn't get our kind of cover." Well, I don't care. They got something that had considerably more thought put in it. I didn't want to get involved with the paper, *Coraddi, Coraddi*—was the yearbook, because a good friend of mine from Winston-Salem, we went to the same high school was already in line moving up to be editor. I just didn't feel that that's where I wanted to.

HT: Did you work on the *Pine Needles* more than one year?

BA: Yes. Oh, yes. I just kind of volunteered from the first minute I hit the ground over here. And in my second year, which would have been my junior year, I did a lot of layouts and all of that, and really worked closely with the editor. And was beginning to think of things I would like to do. And had a very free hand in doing them when I was—became editor-in-chief. And I think I've got all my time stashed in my little study at home. And I

think it still holds up. It doesn't look like the others. It's not the padded leather. It's a North Carolina textile burlap kind of.

HT: Was it difficult getting that kind of cover from the printer?

BA: However it was, we did it. And I think maybe—I can't remember any problem. Therefore, maybe he thought it was an interesting idea. The ones that would not like it would have been the ones that manufactured the leatherette ones. Because this was a textile. And in beige and with the pine needles on it were in dark green. And I just felt it looked different from any of the other yearbooks, and it does. It's because I still have my years and that one. And it does look different. And I guess that's probably one of the things that has been a little guiding spirit in my life was that I like for things to be a little different.

HT: Was there an advisor?

BA: Must have been.

HT: But you don't recall who that was?

BA: Well, whoever it was I didn't have any problems with. She or he—it might have been Gregory Ivy in which case because we were such good friends. And he would have liked the fact that I did it differently. Yes, might well have been. But I liked doing that, because I knew this is what they will keep. This is the part of Woman's College that they will maybe look at maybe ten years from now. And I knew that you don't keep the newspapers that long.

HT: I believe that we still have some of the newspapers from that period of time. Not all of them.

BA: Well, yes, that—

HT: But it's something—it's quite different.

BA: But from people you probably move them—I'm sure the editors of the newspaper would have kept samples for herself. But I just liked the kind of combination of feeling that I was able to use applied art, because—to make it look different. And it did.

HT: Well, what did you do for fun while you were on campus those three years? You went home quite often.

BA: I did. I did. It was war time. And there was a great, great mixing and mingling of the students at Woman's College and the young guys who were just coming into the Army at the—I've forgotten the name of the Army something, something center.

HT: ORD [Overseas Replacement Depot] or something like that.

BA: But these were people who were just like ready to go. Maybe ORD. Well, I can't remember what it was. But it was young guys. Because we were—see, by the time I was a senior that was in the year '43, '44. And, so, there was a huge military establishment in Greensboro. What was it called?

HT: Is that where Bessemer, east side of town?

BA: I guess. We didn't go over there. They came over here.

HT: Right. For dances and that sort of thing.

BA: Oh, yes. They loved it. They loved the fact that here these were young guys. Because this was—we're talking about '43, in the spring of '44. ORD. Overseas Replacement Depot.

HT: Something like that.

BA: That's it. That's it, Overseas Replacement Depot. They, then, would come like to this all-girl campus. Hog heaven. And there were dances here. And there was organization so that—I don't even know who organized how they selected the soldiers to come or maybe they volunteered. I'm not sure. But one of my best friends that at one point we had a very large room. So, for awhile it was a three-girl room which is not a good idea. You can't get anything done. But she married one of the guys that she met. And a marriage that lasted the whole route. So, it was—they were very glad to find this great treasure of girls. And the girls had a good time. They would come for dances. And, then, you would meet somebody. And he'd bring a friend. And you'd get him a friend. So, it was just a lot—we were not kind of sealed away in a nunnery while the war was going on.

HT: But there were restrictions on campus at that time?

BA: Oh, yes. They had—we could only—eleven o'clock. On Saturday nights it was 11:30. Eleven o'clock lights—you had to be in and sign in. And you could hear people running down the street. Because I lived in Winfield which, you know, which was at the end of the long horseshoe. They were running down the street to try to get in before the doors were shut, I guess. But what it meant was that it was a tremendous amount of social life even when it was the depths of the war, which is hard for people to realize. But it was this great intake of the younger, newer soldiers.

HT: From all over the country?

BA: From all over the country. They were not married, because they were just out—a lot just out of college or school or whatever. So, it was a different kind of—a lot of people really did meet. My friend was a typical one of many who met their future husbands there.

HT: Because the guys out there, they were going overseas probably for a certain period of training.

BA: That's right. So, they were to be turned loose on Woman's College campus on a Saturday night was really a treat for them, yes.

HT: I was going to ask you about the various residence halls where you lived. Did you live somewhere else other than—?

BA: Just Winfield.

HT: Just Winfield?

BA: Yes, because the other freshman halls I was then in Salem College. So, I didn't have any of that. My roommate, who was my best friend in Winston-Salem, Ann Queensbury, a beautiful, dark red-haired, who was in the May Court and all that. She was just a wonderful chemistry major. And became a chemist at Oak Ridge [Tennessee]. But there is a funny kind of buzz, isn't it? But, anyway, I can't remember what I was going to say about—

HT: We were talking about the various residence halls.

BA: Oh, yes. So, I only just lived in the one.

HT: All three years?

BA: Yes, yes. Well, the reason was I wasn't here my freshman year. You see, everybody was in a freshman dorm.

HT: Right.

BA: And, then, they came—once you were settled in one of the upper class dorms, I don't know that there was a lot of moving.

HT: Okay.

BA: People would move internally, but you developed your own friends there. And I had three different rooms in three years, but each one better, you know?

HT: Did you have the same roommates—

BA: Yes, yes. It was my best friend from Winston-Salem. She was a really—

HT: It was Ann Queensbury, I think it was.

BA: Queensbury, yes. We stayed friends—she lived and worked in Washington, [DC] afterwards as did her husband. So, we stayed friends, yes.

HT: What did you think of the dining hall food? Do you recall?

BA: Well, it's war time. It was not food you would really want to order, but we certainly survived. I'll tell you the thing that we all really hated—I'm sure you've heard this one—was a dish we had every Tuesday, I believe it was. It was called "Goldenrod Eggs."

HT: I don't remember that.

BA: Well, be glad you haven't. Because it was this mess of, I guess, kind of soft scrambled eggs with some kind of cream sauce in it, and as you can see I didn't think it was particularly succulent. But we only had it Tuesday lunch after we'd had—on Tuesdays we would go—we had formal chapel. We called it chapel in that sense it has a religious overtone, but which it didn't, of course. It was just the way you referred to it. But we probably had another name to it. I just don't remember at the moment. But we would go at a specific time that was set aside. And there were announcements were made then. And we would have speakers. It was a gathering for the student body which was really the only time the student body was all together.

HT: I guess it was held at Aycock Auditorium?

BA: Yes. And it was usually—it would be speakers of various kinds. And I'm sure they were all very well-qualified people. Because this was—you've got this audience of about 3,000 young women who were—and one of the things about going to Woman's College is—they were quite serious students. I don't mean like Wellesley [College] or I'm just throwing one of the ivy leagues. But they were serious. It was not like a finishing school in any way, which a lot of women's colleges, girl's colleges were at that time. They were—to get a nice gloss of education. Woman's College you could be a serious student. And go into serious professions. Never in the kind of top roles that they now have. But you were lab technician maybe rather than doctor.

HT: Because even in those days career options were very limited for women.

BA: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

HT: Much more so than today.

BA: Oh, the difference is fantastic. And it's so wonderful to see they can do anything and everything now. Even then Woman's College had a well-deserved reputation for having more depth for their students to choose from, more career opportunities than almost any other female college that you can think of. Now, I don't know enough about the—what is it, the Seven Sisters, and whether theirs—I'm sure that they had a great deal of that, too. But a lot of that was social. But this was—we had girls that were really serious students among whom I was not.

HT: It's hard to believe.

BA: I was an interested student, and a good student, but I wasn't a serious student. I had a great capacity for having a good time.

HT: Well, that's great.

BA: And you could have a good time in Woman's College. You met so many kinds of girls that I would never have met.

HT: Because they were from all over the United States.

BA: All over the United States. Loads from the New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania. Loads from there who couldn't quite afford the Seven Sisters. But they were—came to Woman's College because it was recommended as the best. And many, many told me that that's what their counselors had said. If they couldn't go to whatever was the college of the moment. Then, but, Woman's College, they would come down in the beginning of September wearing their twin sweaters and all of the rest of us was so odd, you know. So, you'd say, "Well, in another week or two they will understand that you don't wear sweaters yet."

HT: Well, the time you were here there was a lake on campus?

BA: Yes, Indeed.

HT: And the amphitheater. Can you tell me something about that?

BA: Oh, the lake from my two of my rooms at Winfield Hall we looked out toward the lake. There was a forest which you could also look a little bit so that you could see the lake. And it was a great glamorous note to have on campus. But there was one night that it's still so sharp in my mind. Some child had fallen into the lake. I'm shivering right now as I think of it. And we could hear—they would not let us go down. We could hear the rescue people down at the lake trying to find this—I can't remember if it was one child or two. Because they really would not let us go down there quite rightly. But that was the one kind of terrible dramatic moment of a drowning there.

HT: The child did drown?

BA: Yes.

HT: Oh, gosh. I'm assuming it was a child from the neighborhood that just wandered—

BA: Oh, yes. Because it was—what was he doing down there at night by himself? But that's what it would have been. But that was really sad. But we had in terms of physical education I hadn't had—at Salem College I had to do the kind of sports. I liked field hockey because you could run. I hated basketball. Hated it passionately, because here I am five feet tall on a good day. And these girls that were maybe five feet eight were wildly defending—preventing me from—I did not want these tall people getting in my way. So, I hated it. However, when I got over here to Woman's College just a whole new world opened up. I took horseback riding.

HT: Oh, my gosh.

BA: I became a really good rider. And I would go out with a couple of buddies, who also were crazy about it, on Saturdays on our own we would go out to the stables.

HT: Were the stables on the campus?

BA: No, no, we went out to the—

HT: Sedgefield Stables?

BA: Sedgefield, yes. And it was so fun going out from campus to do it. And we would—oh, it was just wonderful. We started riding in the ring. And, then, we went on the trails. I simply loved it. And, so, when I could—and there was somebody else who was game for it. We'd go out. I don't know how we got out there actually on a Saturday and would ride on our own. And I do remember one day when it was nippy, nippy January day. And they knew I was a good rider. And I really was. And you know there are some things you come natural to. And that one was. And I was on a very high-spirited horse that they put me on named "Blood." Now, when I think of Blood and my ride with him on a cold January day, he got the bit in his teeth. And do you know what that means? You got no control. You can saw on him with all your might, and it doesn't hurt them. I took a ride with that horse as long as he wished to take me for a ride which was about an hour. I remember seeing it come to a ninety-degree bend in the little unpaved roads that we used back in the woods there. And I thought, "Do I? I'm not going to make it around this bend. Do I throw myself off, or do I let him throw me off?" Well, I thought about it as we were approaching. "I don't really know how to throw myself off. I'm just going to hang on." So, I did. I hung on for dear life, seriously. And made it around the bend with Blood. And, then, he was going back to the—he, whether I went or not was going back to the stables. Because he had the bit in his teeth. And he wanted to go back and get some more hay. Scariest I think I'd ever been. But I did hang on that horse, and I'll never forget his name, Blood.

HT: Were you riding on an English saddle?

BA: Yes, yes. I preferred those even later when I used to ride a lot on my own after college I always asked for them except for when you go to a ranch in the West. It's hard to get an English saddle.

HT: Well, do you recall what social or academic events stand out in your life during your three years here at WC?

BA: Well, social or academic they're so two different. In academic, when I think of that I think of specific teachers. And there, again, I come back to Miss Louise Alexander who was gifted and who made me love political—politics. And I have covered politics through thirty years for *Time Magazine* and I always say—I was happy that I was able to tell her before she retired that she had pointed me in that direction.

HT: Did you know Harriet Elliott by any chance as well?

BA: No, I did not.

HT: She was probably away.

BA: She was away. And people who knew her were so impressed. She was getting all these fantastic national honors. But she was really seriously doing her bit with Oveta Culp Hobby in Washington. She did come back, I guess, in my senior year. But by then she was catching up on everything as I never had any real connection with her.

HT: I know that Miss Elliott and Miss Alexander were great friends, and they always listened to election returns.

BA: Oh, well. So, you could see I really adored Miss Alexander. But it was the timing for Miss Elliott. We all were very impressed that she was doing a very major job in Washington when there weren't that many women doing them.

HT: No, there weren't.

BA: So, I wish that I had. But when she would be back on campus everything was so stacked up. And I didn't have any.

HT: I think Eleanor Roosevelt came to campus—

BA: She came after my time.

HT: After your time?

BA: Yes, after my time. Yes. She might have come twice, but after my time is what I remember, because I was a cub reporter on the *Twin-City Sentinel*. And—or maybe the *Journal & Sentinel*. Anyway, in Winston-Salem. And I heard that she was coming. So, I said to the editor, "I want to go cover Eleanor Roosevelt at WCUNC. And he looked a little astonished, because didn't normally cover things in Greensboro. The *Greensboro* [*Daily*] *News* did that. He said, "Okay." So, I did, indeed come over. Did a good piece because it was—we had a chance where we sat down and talked with her. So, that was, again, one of the elements—if I can call Mrs. Roosevelt an element—that pointed me very much in the direction of covering politics.

HT: Did you get a chance to talk with her one-on-one?

BA: Um, not really. I mean I asked her a question but there were Greensboro reporters were there. So, no, not really. But it made a nice story. So, I was delighted to do it. But it certainly—I still go back to Miss Louise Alexander for having stirred my interest in politics, because not too many of the girls gave a hoot about it. Now, my father was really

interested in politics, too. My mother was not. But Daddy was. So, he liked it that I had this interest.

HT: And you could talk to him?

BA: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. He would, obviously, more conservative than I. But that's proper. You've got to be more conservative than your children.

HT: That's right.

BA: But I think he was really pleased that I was interested in it. So, that was nice, yes.

HT: We may have already covered this. What was college like during the Second World War?

BA: Well, you're going to think I'm going to say terrible things, but it wasn't. Because the campus was awash of young servicemen looking for fun with a college girl. It was hard in that you didn't—your pals from Chapel Hill who—if they could get like six people to give their coupon, ration coupon—

HT: Because travel was restricted?

BA: Yes, because you didn't have any gas.

HT: Or tires, I understand.

BA: Well, I think not. I think they were not as relevant as gas.

HT: Someone told me recently that it was—I don't remember who it was. But, anyway, this person worked for Miss Elliott, and Miss Elliott's mother was dying in Illinois. So, she had to drive back to her in Carbondale, Illinois, and they could not go any faster than thirty-five miles an hour.

BA: Ah.

HT: Because of the restrictions. And wear and tear on the tires, that sort of things, I guess.

BA: Well, I want to tell you that didn't trickle down to the crowd I wasn't going around with—no. I'm sure Miss Elliott. No, the boys would come over from [North Carolina] State [College] and Carolina.

HT: Did they come by car or by bus?

BA: Some—not so much bus. They looked down their noses about it. They would thumb. It was—you see, it was before the interstates.

HT: Yes.

BA: You can't do that now. But when it was just a plain, old road, highway. And people were used to the college boys, and they would give them rides. So, they would—how they got back, I don't know. But somehow they did. And, then, if somebody did have a car they'd pack them full of seven guys and come over. But, certainly Winfield was a very social dorm. And I'm sure that the more serious girls—I don't consider myself serious yet. I'm fascinated by serious subjects, but I don't consider myself serious. But you've got to have a little fun in life. But, anyway, there were girls that lived in Woman's Dorm were more serious. They were really serious campus politicians. The girls who lived in Winfield—because there was this beautiful ballroom there with the, oh, what are the floors that—when they're done?

HT: Parquet?

BA: Parquet floors, that's right. But now Sunday nights is when guys would come. And we wanted to listen to great mystery series on the—name of which I don't recall on the radio. It was really good. And we liked to listen with the lights off, because it was scary. Well, the house mother wasn't having any lights off. So, she'd come roaring in. And I think her imagination was just a lot more lively than the scene was. But we just, you know, we'd listen to things like that on a Sunday night, because Sunday night you couldn't dance. And that was not allowed.

HT: No dancing on Sunday?

BA: No, that was very much the mode in North Carolina.

HT: Was that "The Shadow" that you listened to?

BA: Probably. Probably.

HT: I've heard of that.

BA: But it was something. It was something that was really good, but it was more fun—I think it was "The Shadow Knows." But it was fun to listen to it with the lights out, because it was scary. Well, the house mother didn't see it that way. She was wrong. They always imagine more than what's going on.

HT: The next question is actually backtracking a little bit. The college celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary in 1941-42. Were you involved in any of that, do you recall?

BA: Let me think a minute. Gosh, that was really war time.

HT: You came in the fall of '41.

BA: '41, yes. You know something. I have absolutely no recollection.

HT: They had a special play called “The Women,” or “The Woman,” “The Women,” I think it was.

BA: Well, that was Clare Boothe Luce [who] wrote “The Women.”

HT: It was called, “We, the Women.” Sorry.

BA: That’s different. No.

HT: That somebody local wrote.

BA: Oh, okay. That I don’t remember at all. You know, I chide myself for not having—taken advantage of so many of the really good things that were on campus, way across campus somewhere. And we didn’t—I didn’t, and my pals didn’t, have the kind of motivation to do those things. Which, of course, the rest of my life has been filled with. And I’m cross at myself retrospectively for not having done that, because there was some good things I missed.

HT: There were some wonderful performances—

BA: Oh, yes.

HT: —come to the Aycock Auditorium. It was just world class.

BA: Yes, I did try to go to the Playlikers things. Oh, and I can remember being so proud in New York when one of the ones who had been a major actress when I was there, Ann—interesting name, and I can’t remember what it was. Anyway, she made—had a very good career on the stage in New York.

HT: Somebody who attended here?

BA: Oh, yes. She had done a lot of things. She was not a pretty girl. She was a character actor. And so good. And that’s what she did in New York, characters. So, I always tried to go to see anything that she was in that I could. I would do the thing of standing at the stage door after so I could say, “I just want you to know this is a Woman’s College aficionada here.” Don’t remember her last name. Ann [Pitoniak] Cevelaca, maybe. Maybe C-E-V-E-L-A-C-A but I’m not sure about that. That could be somebody else. But at any rate she went on to a distinguished career. So, there were people who were serious about their work in drama. And I—you kind of had to be in it or not. I mean. And I was surrounded by people who weren’t. And I took the cowards way out and didn’t really go and do anything. I’m now such a theater nut, that I think, “Why didn’t you do that, you idiot?” But I didn’t. I went to see other things, but I wish I’d really worked in them. Anyway.

HT: But you were involved in a lot of other things, so.

BA: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I kept occupied.

HT: You were quite busy.

BA: Yes.

HT: Well, the next few questions are really about some people on campus. We've already talked about some of them. Do you remember Laura Coit, she was the secretary on campus?

BA: I remember that name. There was a hall named for her. But it was already named for her. Would she have been still alive when they named a dormitory for her? Wouldn't seem right.

HT: In those days you had to be dead.

BA: That's right.

HT: You had to have something named after you—

BA: So, I had the feeling that it was—that she was not—or maybe she was retired.

HT: Could have been.

BA: Anyway, I know the name, but—

HT: How about Dr. Gove, Dr. Anna Gove? Did you ever meet her?

BA: At the infirmary.

HT: The campus physician, yes.

BA: I did. She was away for maybe two of the three years I was—

HT: Well, she had retired in the mid-thirties. But she came back and worked part time.

BA: That's right.

HT: And she died in the forties.

BA: Yeah, and maybe she also did some things with the military. I'm not sure about that. But I was a healthy person. Therefore, I really didn't have any first-hand—

HT: Knowledge of her.

BA: Knowledge of her.

HT: I think Dr. [Ruth] Collings was already—

BA: Yes, Dr. Collings, now, I do remember here. As I say, I was—I never had to be in the infirmary. And never wanted to be. But Dr. Collings was very, you know, we'd get shots there and stuff like that. Very well liked, yes.

HT: During that time while Dean Elliott was away, I understand Annie Beam Funderburk—

BA: Funderburk.

HT: Was acting dean. Did you have any dealings with her?

BA: I remember the name very well. And I remember what she looked like. There wasn't much reason for my path to cross the dean's path or vice versa. I just—I don't know what students did with the dean actually.

HT: I guess if you misbehaved—

BA: Well, I got away with mine.

HT: Now, Dr. McIver's wife, Lula Martin McIver, died in 1944. Did you ever meet her by any chance?

BA: No, I think she must have been ill.

HT: She probably was, because she used to live in that house on the corner.

BA: Yes, yes.

HT: It was her home.

BA: Yes, I knew it. But I never remember—I just don't remember anything about her one way or the other. So, she might have been kind of—

HT: By that time she was already confined to a wheelchair.

BA: She might well have been, yes. Because I feel like I would have remember if there was a more active role. But I don't.

HT: How about Chancellor Walter Clinton Jackson?

BA: Oh, well, yes. He was holding forth indeed. We were all very fond of him. He was—when I—in my years of having been such a good friend of Pat Sullivan who I really dearly loved and miss.

HT: Hard to believe she's gone.

BA: Yes. When I think of Pat Sullivan and vis-a-vis Walter Clinton Jackson, gosh, there's been a lot of changes. We liked him. He was formidable, but he was, uh, at the same time

he had a bon ami. He was—he exuded a kind of friendliness and a cheer, an energy. He was not a scholarly aloof man. You felt that he was interested in you or what you and your classmates were doing. He was very well-liked, yes.

HT: I've never heard a bad thing about him.

BA: Well—

HT: All the people I've talked to.

BA: And that's—

HT: That's something.

BA: And I think he led the college, this university through a very difficult time of the war.

HT: Also during—dean, chancellor 1934. So, that was the height of the [Great] Depression.

BA: Absolutely. Oh, yes. I knew—

HT: That was a tough time.

BA: So, but there was a warmth about him. He was not a—when some college presidents were cold and standoffish, he was a very hardy man.

HT: Well, do you recall anybody else in particular on campus? I know you've talked about Miss Alexander with a lot of warmth.

BA: Oh, yes.

HT: Talent.

BA: Oh, yes.

HT: Anybody else?

BA: Well, oh, Dr. Ivy. I mean I was so glad when he came back to campus. I mean it was wonderful. Oh, dog, I cannot—all of a sudden I can't remember his name. Really, really liked him. And he was funny, and he would make puns. And I maybe was one of the people who grew up in a house of kids that were funny, you know, and our mother encouraged us in our whimsies. It's a—he taught things like, uh, what is it when it's a myth. Was it just called mythology? Was the course called mythology?

HT: It might have been. Yes.

BA: But that sort of thing. And in the classics. And I'm sure that he taught more serious classes to some of the people who were majoring in different kind—I took his thing as an elective.

HT: Oh, I see.

BA: Because I just found him so lively and so fun. And I cannot remember his name. And if I—

HT: I can't think of the name either.

BA: If I had a yearbook I could get it in a minute, because they're all listed in there. Well, anyway, he was—Dr. [Charlton C.] Jernigan. Dr. Jernigan. I think he's the one I'm thinking about on that. I liked him. But as I say Gregory Ivy when he came back from serving in the Army was such a lift to the art department. You lose your, the director of the department, you lose some of the impetus of it. So, he was very much missed. Miss [May D.] Bush.

HT: What did she teach?

BA: Oh, she taught English. And she loved it. And loved it when we responded to her. Yes. English literature, not grammar or anything. Miss May Bush. I think it was May. Maybe I just think of her being a May Bush. But Miss Bush. But she was—I really loved going to her class, and she liked it when your students found parts of the literature that attracted them particularly. She recognized it when you saw something on your own, not because of the teacher. And, so, I found her a delight. Had a good psychology professor, too. I don't remember. But he was really so—such a figure on campus. And I can't remember his name. I'm sorry to say. I know exactly what he looked like. Can't remember his name. Anyway. But psychology was, of course, I was one of these people who just elected everything. Everything across the board. Mine was kind—if mine were laid out, it would be like a sampler, you know? Because so many things sounded interesting. And most of them were. Once in awhile [mumbling under breath], but. But I felt that—and my mother was very encouraging in this. She—no, my father was more encouraging. That's right. He said, "You don't have to worry about taking something, taking courses that would help you get a job." He said, "You know, you want to get your education. You want to"—I mean he really had the core of what it was all about. And, so, he encouraged me to be eclectic.

BA: Did he encourage all four of you—

HT: I have no idea. I was the youngest, and those others were out of the way, and they didn't care about me. The boys—my sister—actually, I was talking to her just recently about this. She went to Salem. And after two years there, which she had some wonderful teachers and very much enjoyed it, but she said realized that the second two years were—the last two years were kind of focused on your training of what you were going to do. And she said, "At Salem it was just really you focus on teaching." She said, "I knew I

was not going to teach." So, she said, "Why do that?" And she was right, because certainly she never stopped learning. She never stopped reading. So, nothing. But she, then, took a business school course and was—she was the first young woman in Forsyth County to join the WAC, the Women's Army Corp.

HT: She lives in Idaho now, doesn't she?

BA: Yes, yes. And I was just talking to her the other day. I hadn't talked to her in awhile. But she was—so, there was a lot of publicity about her, because it was a very kind of daring thing to do. She loved that experience. She met the kind of people you never, a cross section that you—she was an officer. And she would have liked to have served overseas, but that didn't happen—but very few.

HT: Very few.

BA: Very few of that. It was mostly nurses, yes. So, it was a wonderful life experience for her.

HT: Did you think about joining, because she had already joined?

BA: No, I did think about when she did that I thought, "Well, I should get in the war activity in some way." I'm sitting here on a wonderful college campus, and I'm not doing anything for it." So, I said to her, because she was six years older than I. And that's a whole life span when you're that age. Maybe almost seven. And I said to her, "I'm going to drop out, and I'll come back and finish, but I feel like I must be doing some things connected." She said, "No." I don't think I ever even got as far as saying it to my mother. Because she said, "No, you finish your college education." She said—and she was adamant. And she was very much enjoying her time as an officer in the WAC, but she was right. I—my life would not have been the same if I had not finished college. You don't come back.

HT: It's very difficult.

BA: It's very difficult, yes. So, she was adamant. But I always felt like I should be doing something which I wasn't. The war had minimal effect on those of us who were in college in that time.

HT: Especially for the women. More so for the guys because they could be drafted.

BA: Yes, hanging over their heads every minute. That's right. And especially since we had this constant flow of available young men stationed right here in Greensboro that kept it very lively.

HT: Well, of course, you graduated in 1944.

BA: Yes.

HT: What was that like, do you have any recollection of graduation time?

BA: Well, I—yes, I do. It was a lovely day. My parents came over. And, of course, I had the feeling, "Okay, that's that." You know, "I finished that. Now, let's see what we're going to do." And I didn't have a clue what I was going to do. I had taken all of these subjects that I thought sounded interesting, and most of them were. I had the most variegated size field of subjects anybody could have. So, then I had to do—so, I got finished. And was talking with my parents about, "What am I going to do now?" And I had three offers. And one was—there was a regional Civil Service office, headquarters, regional headquarters for Civil Service in Winston-Salem at the time. Well, I had done summer before one of those temp jobs they had to use up the money rather than turn it back in. And the woman in charge—seen, I just worked like a dog whereas the regular employees didn't. I didn't notice this myself. But I do remember the day that Mrs. Ealy, who was a lovely woman came over to stop and there at my desk and very conspicuously said, "Bonnie, I've noticed how much you've done and how, blah, blah." She just went into this spiel. And I thought, "Well, I'm just doing what you do." Well, when I realized that I—because I work fast, just my nature. And if you're there, you may as well work. And I realized that the woman who was sitting next to me—after Mrs. Ealy left with this kind of announcement almost to the room, was making a point, was that they kind of—don't want to say skidded along, but they did not work full out. She said they were having to do it for years, and I was just doing it for the summer. So, you know, well, it was just doing things with paper. I mean it wasn't like manual labor. It was just putting people in the right folders, total civil service type of work. But they were—but you had to say how many you did. So, my energy got me into trouble with the rest of them. And Mrs. Ealy wanted—

HT: They were jealous.

BA: They were mad. They were not jealous. They were annoyed. I never thought about that. But it was so funny, because I'd never been in an office you see. To see Mrs. Ealy—and they were all terrified of her—come and stand in front of my desk and say in a distinct voice that was intentional, "Bonnie, I've noticed how much you're doing, and blah, blah, blah." And I said, "Thank you, ma'am." And, then, I realized after my desk mates said, "You see, you do that, and we have to do it all the time, and you're making us look bad." So, I learned a little bit about civil service.

HT: So, you worked at that one summer?

BA: Yes. They had money that had been appropriated and had not been spent. So, you never turn money back in.

HT: Sure.

BA: So, I did that. But it was a good experience for me.

HT: Now, what did you do the other summers?

BA: Played.

HT: Do you recall?

BA: Well, see before they were drafted there still were—the guys were still around, and we just had—Winston-Salem was a wonderful city in which to grow up, wonderful. And full of fun. And, so, no, I didn't do anything with the others. No, I did some volunteer work, yes, for the war. We did some things—perhaps it was copying files on to something else. Something that had to be done. So, I did it for the summer, and that was—I was glad to do that. Another summer I got a job as a volunteer for people, maybe people coming for war ration stamps, things like that, just as a volunteer. Because I liked to do something. And it was, just good, a good bit of background for me to know what people have to do in jobs that aren't very interesting. I've had a different feeling about that.

HT: After you graduated, what kind of work did you want to get into?

BA: Oh. All right one week after I graduated I was trying to think what to do. That's when I was sitting down talking to my mother and father. And I said, "I've got these three offers, and I don't know what to do." And one of them was the civil service. Mrs. Ealy had made it very clear that she would like for me to take the test, the civil service test. She said, "I know you will do well on it." So, she was—that was at one aspect. I had a friend from State College who was—he had his own advertising agency where there was a lot of art work done for newspaper ads. He was offering me a job where you illustrate ads for newspapers, which they did a lot more often then. And, then, the third one was a job assistant novice at the Winston-Salem papers. And so, I was trying to figure what to do, because the civil service job paid twice as much as the others. So, I was talking to my parents. I didn't know what to do. And my mother wanted me to take the civil service job. She's a very practical woman. And she saw this quite—from Winston-Salem, this kid right out of college—quite remarkable civil service kind of salary. My father said, "Take the job"—he was not keen on that. He said, "Take the job that's the most interesting." And I said, "Well, that would be to work on the newspaper." I said, "It doesn't pay as much." He said, "That's all right." And that is what I did. And there went my life. From that one sentence he could have said, "Oh, that civil service job is really paying good," because that's what my mother felt. He said, "Take the job that's interesting." And thereby hangs my entire life. Because I would have done what he said.

HT: That is truly amazing.

BA: It is. To know that some one tiny moment in your life—

HT: You take one path or another path.

BA: And it wasn't that the other two weren't good paths. But they wouldn't have brought me the life I had.

HT: That is amazing. That was with the *Winston-Salem Journal*?

BA: Yes. *Journal & Sentinel*. That was the two papers. They had an afternoon paper, too. I really worked on the afternoon paper most of the time. And, then, I did for the first time they broke out. They got a new executive editor, and they broke out the women's section from being just the brides and things like that to be a women's section for Sundays. I mean it was a separate section with a big Sunday front, feature story and all that. And, so, I did that. And it was—I stretched the term women's section pretty far. I remember one story which I got, was surprised in retrospect they let me do it, there is a place up near Asheville where only women can fish in the river because the women wanted to fish and the men didn't want them there. And, so, I thought that was pretty fascinating. Now Asheville is not in our circulation. But the city editor just said, "Okay." Or the Sunday editor. I took a photographer. We went up and did it. And I thought after that, "You know, maybe sometimes it's a good thing to just go for something beyond what the limits." In this little tiny way it made me think. So, I did things—back then we had a big contention of North Carolinians in leading positions during the [Dwight D.] Eisenhower years. Well, the end of the [Harry S.] Truman years. So, anyway, I went to Washington and did all these North Carolina figures who were doing—Gordon Gray, who happened to be publisher of the paper which didn't hurt for getting my idea accepted, was secretary of the Army. So, you just learn to spread your ideas to the outer edges, which has made for very interesting things.

HT: How long did you stay [with] the *Winston-Salem Journal*?

BA: Well, about, I guess it was five years. Because then I married Hal, who was my husband, Hal Levy who was a rising star at the *Winston-Salem Journal* where—when I was on the—doing the Sunday stuff. And, so, one thing led to another. And we got married. And, then, we—then he got the offer of a job at *Newsday*, which was really quite a new and exciting paper at that time with Long Island [New York], very new and very bold. And, so, I said, "Sure." I said, "I can find something in New York." The offer was his, not mine. So, we went to *Newsday*. We went to Garden City, Long Island. I'd never been on Long Island ever in my life. And the publishers were a couple. And the female of the couple was Alicia Patterson. And the name Patterson resonates in the press world, because her father had been the owner of the *New York News*. Her uncle was [Robert R.] McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*. And they wouldn't hire Alicia in anything, in anything of substance. And, so, she started with her husband. Now, here's a helpful husband, Harry Guggenheim. So, you can just see the moneybags hanging from them—from every syllable there. He thought it was a great idea. They started *Newsday* from scratch. It became one of the biggest papers in the country. So, anyway, my husband went up to work there. And I said, "I'll get a job somewhere. Don't worry about me." And we went to lunch the first weekend we were there. To their—Miss Patterson and Harry Guggenheim's castle brought from France—on the cliffs above the Long Island Sound. Now, I want to tell you this little girl from Winston-Salem was—It was tall cotton. And, of course, we drove in. We did have a good car. I will say that. We drove in and realized we'd come in the servant's entrance. And, so, we quietly backed out, went around to the front. And it was a Saturday's lunch overlooking the sound and all that. And the other two couples, the other two guests were Marquis Childs, who was one of the most famous columnists in America at that time, perhaps the most famous syndicated

columnist. And the man who's name just that minute went out of my head, which does sometime. Anyway, it won't come to me. But the man who was the powerful editor of the *New York Times* Sunday section, which in those days set the tone and set debate in this country, their Sunday section now. I don't think anybody could do it now, because it was really a think section. So, that was the other guests. And I'd never been out of North Carolina. And I had this accent. It was a lot stronger then. And there we were. And my husband is very quiet person. So, I just realized that somehow I seemed to be making more noise, more statements than I should have. And I think they've never seen a creature out of the South before.

HT: Southern belle.

BA: That's right. They just didn't know. And I used a few just normal Southern expressions. I can't even remember them now. But you know kind of expressions women use. And they just roared. Because they'd never heard them before. There you go. So, anyway, the next morning the phone rang at our house. And Miss Patterson called. I said, "Hal is right here. I'll get him." She said, "I don't want to speak to him. I want to speak to you." And she said, "I want you to work for me." Like that. I was just astonished. And I said, "To do what?" And she said, "Well, what would you like to do?" Now, I tell you, this is some way to make your first weekend of a new part of the world and all of that. So, I said, "Well, I didn't know." She said, "Well, we'll talk about it. We'll talk about it at the office. Come in the office tomorrow with Hal." She said, "We'll talk about it." So, I said, "I just really—" Now, I didn't have a child yet. But my husband worked. He did the Sunday—they didn't have a Sunday paper. He did the Saturday equivalent of a Sunday paper. So, it meant he worked all night Fridays. So, if he didn't have to work Monday so he could have two days off. So, I said, "I just can't work on Mondays, because then Hal has Mondays off, and it's the only day we can do anything." She said, "That's all right. Four days is fine." So, I said, "What do you want me to do?" She said, "Well, you figure it out." So, she said "I want not doing regular coverage, I want page layouts of—." It was tabloid size newspaper so, that made it a little easy. So, we worked it out. I did a fashion page with the artists, and we broke all the kind of rules for how you did it. And I did a home furnishing page which was more classic, except nobody much did them as a news story before. So, that was fun, because I liked—I really liked that kind of thing more than I do now. But I didn't want to do food. So, I got a really good person that had worked for the Winston-Salem papers to do one a week for us with really good. Because I just couldn't do food. That was not my thing. So, that was how I got into *Newsday*—was that. Then she decided to open a Washington bureau. And, so, she wanted my husband to go down as bureau chief. And I said, "Don't worry about me. I'll find something. Don't worry." And she said, "No, no. I want you to be in the bureau." So, that was how I got to Washington and covering all kinds of things. We had another person that covered local stuff. I didn't do any of that. But I did feature stories. And that kind of one thing led to another. And *Time Magazine* came after me. I did not apply to *Time Magazine.*

HT: So, how long did you stay with *Newsday*?

BA: I was there, I believe, seven years or eight. And, then, yes, I believe eight. And I just loved Alicia Patterson. But she died. She died and all of a sudden I had two offers in my hands, whom I was going to turn down. Because I couldn't possibly have left the woman who had given me all this chance. I couldn't possibly. But the guy I was going to turn down was out of town. And, so, she had a sudden one of these terrible fevers and died. She hadn't even been ill but about three days.

HT: Was this is the mid-fifties?

BA: Yeah, she was fifty-nine, something like that.

HT: And—

BA: Yes, it would have been sixty-one. No, Kennedy was in. So, it would have been—

HT: Sixty-one.

BA: Sixty-two, something like that, yeah. It wasn't when Kennedy was killed. It was before. And, then, I went—then the Newhouse newspapers had offered me something. And all of a sudden I thought, "Why am I staying in *Newsday* when Alicia Patterson is not here?" All of a sudden the fun goes out. So, I just quickly went to Newhouse newspapers for two years. Then *Time* came to me there. So. It's nice when people would come to you.

HT: So, you must have had a great reputation?

BA: Who knows? Or for what? I think it's this in retrospect. I think that I always saw stories, and I was not a woman's writer. I could see maybe a woman's angle for some. But I saw feature angles, news features. And if it was a woman, fine. I gave more attention to that, because nobody else was doing it. But I think what it was that I showed – they gave me the chance, of course. They gave me the chance. I showed that I could do politics. And with kind of a personality kind of—it wasn't just straight, "So and so said today," kind of things. But political news features. And personalities. And I was interested in all kinds of things. All kinds of things.

HT: There were not very many women journalists in that period of time.

BA: Not many, no. There were a fair number in Washington.

HT: Helen Thomas of course.

BA: Helen, whom I had dinner with just the other night. Yes. She's a great friend, a great friend. Yes, Helen. But Helen was just really barely getting a purchase through UPI [United Press International]. I mean she had to come up the hard way. Thanks to Alicia Patterson, I got to come up from the top. Because I didn't have to work my way up. And that was just simply Alicia, I think identified me as some—as a young woman, because I was at that time—who didn't fit in—didn't fit the mold. And, so, I think she liked it that I

didn't fit the mold. But she gave me the chance, and they would do big double trucks, smart looking and all of that. Really gave me the chance to shine. If somebody doesn't give you the chance—

HT: You can't shine.

BA: You can't. So, I was fortunate that they gave me the chance all along the way. And when I worked for Newhouse I didn't work for any specific paper. I went on their national wire of any kind of stories that I wanted to do. Nobody had to assign them. Well, sometimes the editor in charge of all the papers would say, "Have you thought about doing this?" And I was happy to get that. But I mean it was not—I was not on a paper. I was on the Newhouse—I guess they had thirty papers at that time. The papers didn't have to use my stuff, and some of them didn't. Just didn't like the idea, but some of them did.

HT: Was it almost like a syndicated—

BA: Yes.

HT: —type situation?

BA: Yes, it was. All of them owned by Si Newhouse who was quite a strange figure, because he was very reluctant to be a dominant figure, where most newspaper editors of lots of papers are very flamboyant people, but he was not. But any rate, they were terrific. They had mostly guys who had big offices. He had about twenty-five papers there. And they were right in their area. Their papers which was fine. And I was doing things that any of the papers could use. So, it gave me just a total field to run in.

HT: And you say *Time* came after you?

BA: Yes.

HT: What was that like?

BA: I was kind of surprised, and I took one month making up my mind. When I think how absolutely incredible. What could I be? But, anyway, I didn't know whether I could stand working for two things. Not having any byline, not having—at *Time* your story did not necessarily go in as your story. It would go through a writer first. Didn't know whether I could stand that. Because I had all this freedom. And then I wasn't sure whether I could deal with their political point of view. Right at that time they were changing. Harry Luce had resigned or retired. Not resigned. He retired, and he was mostly in Arizona. There was, well, that whole thing of *Time* being—the writers having to kind of fit the editor's—That got completely rethought at that time. And it was that that made me think, "Okay, I can do it." I couldn't have done it the other way.

HT: That was the early sixties, I guess?

BA: Well, that was sixty—I can't remember. Well, I was there when Kennedy was killed. I was at Newhouse. So, it would have been early sixties. That's right. yeah. I would say, I think. I went to *Time* in sixty-six. So, I think I was there two and a half years. And they were terrific to me. I did all kinds of things. And but I just couldn't—I had a hard time making up my mind about *Time*. Because I just didn't know whether this absence of a byline, this absence of your thing. And my husband didn't want to tell me what I should do. He was very careful about that.

HT: And where was he working at this time?

BA: He was—ah, by that time he was working as a special assistant to John Gardner at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. So, he had been to New York—*Newsday's* bureau chief in Washington, and, then, when the Kennedy administration came in—Hal was one of the people they reached out to. And that's what he did. And, then, he went with John Gardner to start Common Cause and to do all kinds of things. And they were just total friends in all of the things that John Gardner's wonderfully imaginative mind conceived. But he didn't—he wouldn't ever tell me what he thought I should do. Which was the right attitude. But he did mention, he said, "You know, you do have—*Time* does have a tremendous amount of clout. And what are they going to ask you to do? And, so, I talked to them, "What are you going to ask me to do?" And they said, "Whatever you want to do." Now, that was—so, they said, "We don't necessarily want you on a beat." But, anyway, the said, "We do want you to cover the White House." Be the second person, not the top person.

HT: Who was the top at the time?

BA: I don't remember. They always had a guy. And later, not long later, next go round I became an equal person. It was never really equal, but that's what it was supposed to be. But with *Time* they were just little stories that fell between the cracks that didn't quite go into somebody's beat, or didn't quite go—plus, the Kennedy years were—this incredible family and social. And if you think the Obama years is something, you should have been here for the Kennedy years. So, that was my just my ball of wax. And it didn't really take away from somebody else. It was adding something. So, that took my whole time with *Time*. And, then, they just kept getting—they realized I could do anything, because these were the things I'd done that had no gender.

HT: What was it like covering the White House during those years, the Kennedy years?

BA: Oh, the Kennedy years, because that's when I started. There was a sense of excitement that you almost can't imagine now. Because we're all jaded. And we're all so suffused in news from morning till night. It was not that way. And news came on at 7:15 at night or something like that. And that was—and people were still reading magazines. So, you really had this purchase from which to cover the White House. And with *Time* they wanted occasional—I did personalities a lot. And they had a plethora of those. And the whole social scene was so yeasty. It changed Washington. And people could not get enough of it, of reading about the Kennedys. So, that was—

HT: Such an attractive couple, small children—

BA: Oh, exactly.

HT: Everything.

BA: And doing exciting things. And, so, then, of course, I was there for the assassination. I mean I was not in Dallas. I was at the—I was at Andrews Air Force Base when the plane came back with the coffin. I tell you, that was a date I'll remember. So, from that time on I stayed with *Time*. And, then, they asked me if I would like to be London Bureau chief, which is just one of the most magical jobs in the whole system. And I thought about it. And said, "Yes, indeed."

HT: Did you know Bill Mader?

BA: Yes, I did, indeed. How did you know Bill?

HT: Well, I took art lessons from his mother.

BA: Oh, I knew—

HT: Martha Mader in Greensboro.

BA: Oh, golly. His wife, yes.

HT: She's one of the Jester girls.

BA: Yes. Oh, Betty.

HT: Betty Brown Jester. The daughter, Martha Jester.

BA: Yes, yes, indeed. And I don't know whether Bill is still alive or not.

HT: I don't either. I haven't heard anything since the early nineties when Mrs. Mader died. They were here. And they lived—

BA: In London.

HT: London for a long time.

BA: Oh, London. They stayed, you see. That's where they stayed after—he was London Bureau chief for a time.

HT: That was after you, I guess?

BA: No, before me.

HT: Oh, before you?

BA: Yes. Because he did more foreign.

HT: Yes, he was in Vienna for a little while, and then Canada.

BA: Yes, he had a lot of things like that. And, then, when he—Did I say before me? That's not right. It was after me. Did I say he was before?

HT: Before.

BA: No, he was after me. I just plain forgot. Because Herman Nickel was before me. I knew it was somebody kind of foreign. Herman was German. And, so, Bill came after me. And, then, he and Martha stayed in London. And I don't know whether he's still alive or not.

HT: I don't either.

BA: I just—normally it's the sort of thing that would be in *Time*—not the magazine but in their house organ which is a very lively one. And I could have easily have missed it at some point. I must find out about that. Then I did hear that—come to think about it, not too long ago hear that they were coming back to this country. So, obviously, they did. But, you know, you lose track of people when your cities aren't the same.

HT: So, when were you in London? Do you recall what period of time that was?

BA: Oh, do I? Oh, yes. January 2, 1978 to August 1986. It was the most exciting time anybody could be in London. My first story over there, after I got my feet under my desk was watch this woman that nobody had ever heard of: Margaret Thatcher. She was the—she suddenly was important because the guy who was leader of the party, whose name I don't remember. It doesn't matter. Decided he was not going to stand again, i.e., was not going to try to be prime minister. She was all [unclear]. Because she was some minor, minor shadow cabinet person, minor. And, so, I—my first story after getting my feet under my desk was this person who has thrown her cap in the ring before any other Tory. And I had the best run of stories that anybody had had in the London Bureau. I mean—well, I guess you could say Edward R. Morrow in the war time. But I mean in terms of variety of stories. In terms of magazine stories, not a broadcaster. She just turned the world upside down over there.

HT: Because it was so unusual.

BA: Ah.

HT: A female prime minister.

BA: Oh, never before. Never before. There was some in other countries, but not there. And such a strong person. Let me just give you my first introduction to Margaret Thatcher.

Okay, we're coming down—the second year I was there, and I just—it was time for an election. They call them. They don't have. They call them. And I thought, "Labour [Party] is going to call that election I figured for mid May. I just—so, I asked her in April to give me some serious time for an interview. Because I said, "Mrs. Thatcher, I think you're going to be our next prime minister. And I want to get everything right." And I did actually have the guts to say to her, and it was true but barely. I'll tell you. I said, "You know, this is true, I'm having your portrait painted—back in New York, I'm having your portrait painted for the cover right now." Now that kind of made her think. And it was true. And it was a really good one when it came out. But she was—she didn't like my first two questions. They were quite tough defense questions. Because I wanted to show I was not going to talk about recipes or anything. And she said, "Well, we'll talk about—oh, you should ask that defense question to, you know, the shadow." And I said, "But Mrs. Thatcher, the rest of the world does not know you. They do in Britain. But the rest of the world does not know you. *Time Magazine* is the only magazine, the only journalism that goes around the world." Nobody else would have tried it. And, so, she began to be a little more rational. Because she just wanted—she didn't want to answer any serious questions. She wanted me to leave. And she said, "We'll talk about this some other time." Oh, I groveled. I had to get that interview so it could be on the stands the week she was elected. I was sure she was going to be elected. I really just—I was just sure. And, so, she grabbed my notes off my lap. I was like this. She grabbed them off my lap. Never had anybody do that before or since. And she began looking, "Not ready to answer this kind of question yet. I'm not ready. We'll talk after—we'll talk later." That's when I really began to grovel. And I said, "But, the artist is at work on your cover portrait," which he was right now. "We feel so sure you're going to win it." Well, look." And she said, "All right. We'll try a few." Well, I said, we'll skip the first one. It was a defense question, you know, serious defense question. Because I wanted her to know I wasn't going to ask about recipes. So, I got to the next one. After she, "Eek," made me suffer she answered every single question. I was booked for half an hour. She kept me an hour. I couldn't believe it. We had the portrait already. I told her, I said, "I've already been to"—Oh, I forgot what her hometown was, blank. Up in Lancastershire. Forgotten it. I said, "I've already been up there, and I've talked to all your friends or many of your friends when you were growing up." And I actually did throw out a name of a chap that she was courted by. I said, "Including," whatever his name was. And I said, "So, I've got all the background." But I said, "I now have to have the interview." Gradually she thawed.

HT: She was called the "Iron Lady," wasn't she?

BA: Oh, yes. And you can hear it, can't you? Yes. So, I got the interview. And I had everything all done beforehand, before all the British guys got around, scurrying around for stuff. They could have done it. They just weren't thinking. And, so, we were out on the stands with this full issue and the cover portrait was really good. And I'll tell you, from that day forward any time I needed her for an interview or even for just a question or two, she readily agreed. So, she saw that I was fair and that I was a serious journalist. And gave me credit for it. And on the last trip that I made—I was only at right the week before I was leaving to come back to America I did a last trip up around places with her

that were very good. I was in China with her on that one and some others. So, as we were coming on the last—oh, the Middle East. And we were coming—last leg back into London. And, so, she had everybody come up to her cabin for champaign, which was nice. It had been a very, very major trip. So, she said, "Bonnie's leaving us," and she raised her glass of champaign to me on her equivalent of Air Force One, which was really nice. I vastly appreciated that. But that one had a rocky beginning. But she did—she understood that you can trust people, and that I was not—she thought you had to be for or against. I'm a reporter. I'm a journalist so, that was a new concept for her.

HT: I understand that you also had a chance to interview Prince Charles?

BA: Oh, yes.

HT: How was that?

BA: Oh, that was, oh, Prince Charles. That was great. That was great. I was doing one when he turned thirty, and he wasn't—Diana wasn't even a glimmer in his eye yet. And it was the "Prince Charming Turns Thirty." Because there he was, the bachelor. So, yes, he gave me an interview. And he'd never given any non-British person an interview.

HT: That was a first.

BA: Ever. Yes. And it was nice. It was harmless but a nice little interview. You could say the prince, blah, blah, blah. So, that was nice. So, I was sitting next to him, oh, a few weeks later at an American Correspondents abroad, American Correspondents in Britain dinner that we had once a year. And the prince was our honored guest. When he accepted the whole Diana thing had never come up. That was before. Because they work out their schedule six months ahead or even more. So, anyway, I was the incoming president. So, I was seated next to him. And he said—well, there are two things that he said that were funny. He said, "Was my interview all right? Was I all right?" So, "Was I all right?" But, then, the other thing he remembered having been over here on a visit with his sister, [Princess] Anne when he was still totally an unattached prince, and he was visiting Washington. And there were four of us, Helen Thomas, Frances Lowin, who is Helen's counterpart at the AP [Associated Press] then, and some other person from another part of the country. I can't remember who. And me. Well, the *New York News* put us like witches on a thing because we trapped him so closely and not let him out of our sight. And, so, he said when he sat down to dinner, he said, "Were you one of the witches?" I said, "Yes, I was one of the witches." So, he—I realized this man kind of keeps up with what was going on. But he was, oh, he said a lot of things that day that was—he was off the record. So, I really did not use them, because if something is off the record, I—many years later I used part of it when the whole thing with Diana had long blown up and he had married Lady Camilla [Parker-Bowles]. He doesn't care what I write about now. However, at that time he was kind of evaluating the American press. And he said—oh, this would have been such a good story at the time—he said, "The only thing that was hard that I didn't like"—and this was when he was a guest of the—he and Princess Anne, his sister who was a pain in the neck, were guests of honor of the Nixon girls. He said,

"The only thing I didn't like was how they threw Tricia Nixon at my head." I mean he said that to a *Time* reporter. But I didn't write it, because it was off-the-record. Years later when he'd already broken up with Diane I did put in a story, because by then it didn't matter and nobody would even care. But that was interesting that he would say that.

HT: I'd never heard that before.

BA: Well, you wouldn't of. Because I said I wouldn't use it. But I just find it charming that he had me over to the palace one day for a little gathering of people that were getting this or that. And it was just simply so I could sort of see. I wasn't getting anything. I was just invited as a guest. I was the only journalist there. Absolutely, the only journalist. And, so, we had more than just a one-time crossing of the interests.

HT: Did you ever have a chance to interview the queen or?

BA: No, I covered her a lot, but she does not really—

HT: She does not give interviews?

BA: She does not give interviews. And I never even put in a request because that was understood. Now, she has done some television things since. But that was many years later.

HT: She's softened a little over the years?

BA: Well, I think that they thought television would be useful, which is a little different. But I also was invited to a couple of things at the palace, which was nice. And it just—she knew who I was, but that doesn't mean that she paid me any mind. But we met enough times that. So, I first met her in Canada when she was still the princess. So, I didn't make a big deal of that. But I did want to say that I had had the pleasure, and it had been a very nice trip up to Canada. She had been very successful on it. But I think highly of the queen. I think she has been a stabilizing influence. I think she's been extremely fair to whichever party is in. She has been wonderful with the Commonwealth—well, she is colorblind in terms of dealing with the subjects who are from the heart of Africa. So, I have a lot of admiration for her.

HT: Very interesting. Now, while you were stationed in London or—

BA: Well, that's fair to say.

HT: Did you get a chance to go the continent or do a lot of traveling, that sort of thing?

BA: Oh, yeah, I did. I went over when there would be meetings with the various heads of government where Thatcher would be going. And the Common Market which was just really being tightened up then. And, yes, I did a lot over there. And one of fun kind of

sidelines. The USIA, United States Information Agency, actually overseas is USIS, United States Information Services, but it's the same. Anyway, they would ask me to go make speeches. So, they sent me to all kinds of—and if it was a place that I wouldn't want to spend my own money, I'd go make a speech. And, so, they sent me to Iceland, to Turkey, to just all over the place just to make speeches about the American issues. And I loved doing [it]. My only thing was I said, "Well, I'll have to do a Monday or Tuesday so I can get back in time to put in a full week for *Time*." I knew I could just make it up, lost time, by then. So, I just—and, of course, in doing that I met a lot of the kind of interesting people in very major jobs. So, I was just all over Europe.

HT: Who was your favorite interviewee during that time?

BA: Oh.

HT: Well, maybe ever?

BA: Ever, ever. Oh, boy, that's a hard one when you've had as many interesting interviewees as I've been happy to have. I don't think I can—I don't think I can pull one out.

HT: Does one story stand out above the others?

BA: Of course Peter Ustinov was a great interview. Because, that's because he's a wonderful actor and funny and everything. But my mind was going politically at first. And I did other—just celebrities when they were really in the news. Not a lot of it, but I did some. I—I don't believe I can—I don't believe I can boil it down like that. Because the things that maybe like the queen was not that interesting, but to do a story on the queen where I was getting her cooperation, Prince Charles. I mean that has got to be—Prince Charles had never given an interview outside of something or other dutiful thing in Britain. But he had never given—so, that sort of thing has to take precedence. But there were some other royals along the way. One of the interviews I remember most was when I was working on the *Twin-City Sentinel* in Winston-Salem. And they sent me out to interview a young woman who had just been convicted of first-degree murder of her husband or her lover. And there was me in my little white gloves. I go out in the county to meet this woman who had just killed her lover. And she was just kind of young, twenty-one year old, just so stricken because she said, "He was the onliest man I ever loved. He was the onliest man I ever loved." I've never forgotten that construction. And she had not known what she was—a bit of anger. And I don't know whether she's still in jail or not. She may well be. She probably got out after twenty years or something like that. But I wondered a lot of times—

HT: Was there someone with you when you interviewed her?

BA: I had a photographer.

HT: But there were no police?

BA: We were at her—that was a funny thing. We were at her home.

HT: My gosh.

BA: Yes, and she had already—yes, we were at her home at near Walnut Cove.

HT: My gosh.

BA: Maybe she hadn't been sentenced yet. Maybe it was right before the sentence came down. Because they would have taken her straight away after that kind of sentence.

HT: The trial had already occurred?

BA: Pardon?

HT: The trial, had occurred?

BA: Yes, but there's a point in which—I don't know. She had been—that detail is too fuzzy. I can't remember except that she was going to go. Maybe the sentence hadn't passed, but it was going to be—sent to prison for life or nearly life. But that was so touching. And, there I was—it was an era where you wore kind of bouffant skirts and wore little white gloves. Here I am interviewing this murderess with my little white gloves.

HT: So, did she bring the ax out.

BA: That's right. And she was so touching. And I just felt terrible about her plight, which is terrible because I felt this was a crime of passion, and I can't even remember how she did it. Must have shot him. Like she couldn't have possibly done it manually. I don't think she was powerful enough. But, I remember that one went really well. So, Nadie Case decided there was another woman, young woman, who was in jail who was for murdering her lover. So, he decided, "Hey, send Bonnie." Like I'm the murderess interviewer. And the difference was the one had been so touching, and I'd felt so bad about her. This one was tough as a nail. And she would say nothing nor would she even—she looked through the sort of slit eyes, and she was tough. And, then, I realized I had two really, a murderess is not necessarily the same person. That I had had this one that in a crime of passion had done this thing. She rued the day she did it. And, then, there's this tough one in jail. Not all murderers are alike.

HT: Both were in Forsyth County?

BA: Yes, yes.

HT: Well, let me see.

BA: You've got nothing else left. There's nothing else.

HT: Just a few more questions. I know you've worked for a Washington TV program called *Panorama*?

BA: Yes, yes, did it for ten years, right till—

HT: Tell me a little bit about that.

BA: Oh, that was fun. I did it once a week, sometimes twice, depending.

HT: That was after you left *Time*, I guess?

BA: No, no, no. I'd race back—it was lunchtime live show, live, my dear. I'd race out there, pray there were no cops on the way, in my car because the taxi drivers wouldn't take the chances that I did. And get on the set like that. And sometimes I actually wasn't in that hurry. But I'll tell you one in a minute where I was. But it was live. Maury Povich who then went on, yes, yes, he was really good back in those days. And there is Barbara Hower [who] was one of the hostess, one of the women. They didn't call them hostesses. This was a tough show. But series of several women, including Barbara Hower, who was very good. And Maury Povich who was there the whole time. And myself. I would do it once a week, sometimes twice. Sometimes I would fill in for a whole week. And I would usually bring on a guest of my choosing. And it would generally be a political figure. Because this was live, and it was during the Watergate trials. And Sam Dash, the Watergate prosecutor, would come out to the studio, which is in one of the high parts of Washington, as they all are, to be on the show live. I mean it was really a show of instant appeal. So, I did that until I went to London. I did it for ten years. And because I did it as a *Time* correspondent.

HT: There was a big connection there.

BA: Oh, yes, I don't think they would have had me if I didn't have *Time*. Yes. But—and I brought good people. Didn't always bring somebody. But that was fun.

HT: So, there was no rehearsal. Everything was live?

BA: Live.

HT: Right off the cuff?

BA: Oh, and one time when—normally, I tried not to get involved. My day to come on was Tuesday, because for *Time* that was a very low-key day. And, so, I said—well, that was my day. And it was 12:30, at lunchtime. And housewives were ironing and watching all of us and doing it live. So, anyway, I had to go to the White House that day just to catch the morning briefing which on a Tuesday wasn't any reason to be anything. All of a sudden Ron Ziegler said, "The president will see you now, the press." I was horrified. This is a live show I'm talking about. So, I wrote a little note, "Call my office, no, call this number and tell them what's happening," and I threw it on a desk on an assistant to

Ron Ziegler press assistant whose name was Diane Sawyer. So, Diane and I have been friends ever since. But she was just one cut above a gopher. And Nixon was announcing a new chief justice. So, it was a darn good story. But I was just watching my watch. What am I going to do? I couldn't get out to tell the office or tell *Panorama* what was happening. And though I said to Diane, "Call *Panorama*. Tell them what's happening." And, but I got out. It wouldn't take a lot of time, and it was Justice [Warren E.] Berger, and he didn't want to take any questions, and that was all right. And, so, I raced down, got a passing taxi who, bless his heart, recognized me because of *Panorama*. And I said, "I'm desperate." He said, "I'll get you there." Well, we drove like the wind, and he knew all of the shortcuts, because the studio was way out from the White House. And it was right on the edge of Chevy Chase. Because it was high out there. So, I came running, running, running into the—down the long corridors and into the studio. And they had some really—a really good person whom I had obtained, gotten. I think his name was Phil Fulbright, because it was in a big issue. Anyway, I slid into my chair like this. And the question he came to me to introduce him, and I was so out of breath I couldn't do it. So. But that's live television.

HT: Oh, gosh. It must have been nerve-racking.

BA: Nerve-racking, nerve-racking, yes. Normally, I had my life a little better organized. But that was—yes, that put me to the test. Now, listen. I'm driving you crazy by now.

HT: I think three more questions.

BA: Okay.

HT: How did you come up with the idea to write your books, *First Mothers* and the other books that you've written?

BA: Oh, I just wrote two.

HT: You've written two?

BA: Yes. How did I get that idea. I, sitting in my office at *Time*, who even was the mother then? Clinton's mother, I believe. Yes. Virginia Clinton Kelley, who was not like the rest of your presidential mothers. And I was kind of—I was a correspondent at large at that time which was a nice title they invented for me. But it meant I could not be under deadline pressure, or not be thrown something at me. It was mine to originate. And I just kind of got thinking about how different she was from say Lyndon Johnson's mother. And, then, I began just kind of, that's kind of a good subject. And the more I thought, and the more I kind of dipped into the guys whose lives I didn't know that much about, and, so—oh, I had an agent who, a friend, who had become an agent, who had taken me to breakfast not long before that. Said, "Bonnie, I want you to write a book." I said, "Well, what?" "You'll think of something." That's the way it started. So, I really did began churning ideas, and this came along. So, I called her up, and I said, "What do you think about it?" "Do it." "Do it." So, I did it. And didn't have any trouble getting HarperCollins

to publish it. No trouble at all. They gave me an outrageously good advance. And it did very well. It made—it was a best seller, maybe not on the top ten, but on that second ten, and that's not the kind of book you necessarily would think—but, anyway, it did well. And I loved doing the research.

HT: I bet so. It was fascinating.

BA: Oh, just—finding old things. And I had—with a *Time* researcher who is based in Washington. She was fascinated by what I was doing. She had the credentials—*Time* credentials to go use the Library of Congress and to check things out for *Time*. So, she got all kinds of stuff for me.

HT: Did you go to the National Archives as well?

BA: Probably did. And I can't—It must have been maybe that she was getting with the—yes. Because it must have been the archives. Yes, but at any rate I got stuff that hadn't really been published anywhere in a book. And I loved—it was fun. And I liked the fact that I could get—could do a different story about each one of them. So, then, my publisher wanted another one. And, so, that was when I said, "Look, how about White House families?" And that one I did differently. I interwove them. I did the children, and I did the different first ladies, furnished it. I interwove them. And I enjoyed doing that one, too. Very, very much. That one got me into a lot of interesting stuff about the White House that I hadn't known, hadn't read anywhere. So, I felt like I really did a book that had new stuff.

HT: Well, [Professor] Jody Natalle wanted me to ask you a question concerning when you were president of the Women's [National] Press Club.

BA: Yes.

HT: In the early sixties.

BA: Women's National Press Club.

HT: Right. And I see something about you. You helped host people like Indira Gandhi.

BA: Oh, as I was passing they would speak. I don't think—that does not – that she speaks. We would try to get really good people. And it was a very lively club. And, of course, it's long since folded been into the National Press Club which couldn't be—we were sealed out of the National Press Club. And that's why we had—

HT: The National Press Club, it was not integrated with men and women?

BA: Oh, absolutely not.

HT: Oh.

BA: No, the National Press Club wouldn't let no women [in].

HT: When did that change?

BA: I think while I was in London. It was the last of the things to change.

HT: Wow.

BA: I mean it was outrageous, outrageous. And they needed our money, so. But, no, we, as the Women's National Press Club were very lively. Because when you're having to play catch up all the time you are thinking ahead maybe and sending letters. What we really did, though, it was Kennedy administration. We—we could go and stand in the balcony of the National Press Club. On the floor of the [National] Press Club, at the tables for luncheon, any guy—it was full of PR [public relations] people. Any guy who wanted to bring his neighborhood rubbish man, could bring him. And we—I remember one day standing in the balcony, *The Girls in the Balcony*, was this great book that Nan Robertson wrote. And there were two Pulitzer Prize winners there, having to stand. One was Maggie Higgins, and one was Muriel—Miriam Ottenberg standing—having to stand in this protrude of the National—of the balcony of the National Press Club where down on the floor you could have your friendly neighborhood garbage man.

HT: So, you had to stand, you could not sit at the tables?

BA: Oh, no, no, no. You were just jammed in a balcony about as big as that table. That is what we had to go through, looking down on the floor at those people who had no connection with the press at all except the Press Club needed their money as associates or something like that. And in this balcony were Pulitzer Prize winners, people who were covering the politics in the White House—Helen Thomas—everyday. And that was the reality.

HT: So, when did you see that change?

BA: It changed when Kennedy came in. And we decided we really got to move. Because we'd done a lot of things to draw attention to it. We should make the problem known. The Press Club didn't move, didn't move. So, when Kennedy came in we talked to Pierre Salinger who felt very strongly—his mother was a strong figure in his life. And his father, I don't even know where—what happened to his father. Anyway, so, Pierre looked with kindness, with interest on this problem of ours. He said, "We can fix that." And the way they would fix it, they fixed it was simple. The White House correspondents have one great—we were not—we could be members of the White House Correspondents Association. We could be members, pay our dues, couldn't go to the dinner, the one thing they had all year. Now, can you believe that? Couldn't go. But as the president was—so, Pierre—so, he, then, told the White House Correspondents [Association] officers the president's not coming unless the women correspondents are allowed to come. Simple as that. So, I wound up at the head table of that dinner. Yes, but now that's what we—had to go through. Just everywhere you turned there was somebody just pushing. People that were not distinguished, shall I say kindly in anyway. I mean

just hangers on were allowed to do all these things. And Maggie Higgins, or any number of—Doris Fleeson, the numbers of names could not set foot on the hallowed ground. Now, we broke it. We broke that. They had to do it. What Kennedy did, he couldn't tell the Press Club they couldn't do it. That's their prerogative. So, what he did was to have the visiting heads of state, because this is what would turned it on. Heads of state, because you had one opportunity to have intercourse with world figures, whoever they were. And, so, what Kennedy did was to talk to their representative, their press secretaries, and their people who were coming over to organize and say—didn't say you can't, but made it clear that they did not favor their using the National Press Club because of this, and that they would face picketing. We would picket, and all that, if they persisted on doing it. So, they mostly didn't do it. And they would, indeed, Kennedy fixed it so the visiting head of state would have an open press conference at an auditorium in the State Department. So, he fixed it within the context of what was allowable. He just changed the system a bit.

HT: Was there much grumbling from the men?

BA: Oh, oh. I tell you I was president when it reached its absolute worst. I remember one party we went to—columnists. Well, no—national columnist in those days was George Dixon. He was funny. They lived in Georgetown. So, went to a cocktail party. John Charles Daly, who was a big television figure in those days, and he was married to the daughter of the Chief Justice [Earl] Warren and things like that. And was a big name of the cocktail party. And John Daly advanced on me in such a menacing way that two male friends that I knew came in because they said, "We thought he was going to lay hands on you." Yes, it was that bad. And I remember—I can remember it very well feeling like I must shrink from this man because he is going to hit me. Now, that is—it's John Charles Daly, you know, from ABC, the most snobbish guy in Washington, married to the chief justice's daughter. And he was treating me in that way because I was president of the Women's Press Club. So, that's my years in Washington are peppered with interesting memories.

HT: Well, are you going to write a book about that?

BA: That was—now, I'll tell you, that whole thing the girls in the balcony, Nan Robertson of the *New York Times* wrote a very good book about it. And specifically that. I just don't have—I'd rather write about other people. That's just what it comes down to. And, also, it's off the boil now. If I was going to do it, I should have done it fifteen years ago. Because it seems so incredible now that you can't believe—

HT: It is incredible.

BA: That you've got Pulitzer Prize winners sealed out, and trash—they can bring—as we always said they could bring their local garbage man.

HT: Well, Bonnie, the last question I had for you, have you been involved with UNCG since you've graduated?

BA: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I've been involved from the time I graduated with alumni events. And, of course, it was still WCUNC [Woman's College of the University of North Carolina] then. And did it in Winston-Salem and alumni club meetings and that sort of thing. I've spoken here to anybody who wanted to hear me speak. I think both my books, I believe both my books were given a nice reception by [Chancellor] Pat Sullivan in the Alumni House. I've spoken to journalism classes, although journalism isn't really much of a course here, as you know. And that's all right. Carolina has one of the two best journalism departments in the country. So, you don't try to duplicate when they've got a franchise. You do have the best art department, because they do. I don't think there's any branch of the university that can match the art department that's here. So, do what—play to your strengths. But I just done a lot of things. Because I really felt that this college, as it was WCUNC, we all know it's still Woman's College—was a college when I was here. I just felt like it gave me the launch pad. It triggered interests in my mind that I might never have really thought about until something over here made me get interested, professors, other students, situations. So, I just feel that this university gave me—let me spread my wings. And for better or for worse.

HT: You've had a fantastic career.

BA: It has been fun. You know, it really has been fun. Sometimes if somebody had said, "Aren't you having fun?" I would have said, "Yes." But I know just things have broken right for me. I've had people give me chances, but I made—I pulled my weight on them. So, I don't feel anybody cosseted me. But they gave me chances. And I just—my husband was very, very supportive. And it just—maybe I was just enough of a forerunner of the whole women's movement to be kind of—make it kind of interesting. It wasn't—there was some famous, much more famous women than I who were before—a generation before my generation. But they were very special. They usually were maybe a *New York Times* person that did a foreign policy column using—the one that I'm thinking about used her initials only so they didn't know it was a man writing. But for somebody who, I felt that I was on that first wave of when it really opened up for women.

HT: Did you consider yourself a pioneer in that respect?

BA: I—pioneer almost sounds too early. It almost sounds like those that were out there very singularly. I had the feeling that I was in the vanguard of a movement. And other people were doing it together, and the together was what made it really matter. And we were strategizing. Nobody else had done that. Like when we took the Kennedy White House, and he agreed to not to go to the National Press Club. That was an enormous change. You just almost can't believe how big the change was. National Press Club, that was its own raison d'êtr. And, so, he was not the one you would think would do it. But Pierre Salinger, who had a fantastic strong mother. But given Kennedy with women, with—his mother was strong, but very conventional. He did not have—heaven knows Jackie [Kennedy] wouldn't have done anything to advance women.

HT: We haven't talked about her at all?

BA: No, we haven't talked about Jackie. She was a great story. Great story. Did wonderful things for the White House. But as a person she's not somebody that I had much admiration for as a person. A snob, serious snob. Capitalist snob. And wanted to be. But because the White House fitted right into her elegant and snobbish interests, she really did great things for the White House that we all benefitted by that. So, I give her credit, but at the same time I felt that she was something less than a—she did not advance women at all. She advanced the White House wonderfully. But she just didn't like women. She had no interest. She was a courtesan.

HT: Interesting.

BA: And successful one. I sometimes think had Dallas not happened, had he had a second term, would we ever even seen Jackie Kennedy? I don't know what she would have done. I felt like she had kind of done what she intended to, which was really leave her mark wonderfully on the White House, leave her mark on our history as this most glamorous woman since Dolley Madison, as the phrase always went. But Dolley had maybe more serious interests. She really was concerned about her husband's programs.

HT: Of all the first ladies you've known, who, in your opinion has been the most interesting?

BA: Oh, I can't get past Lady Bird [Johnson] on that—wives. Wonderful person. She was—how can I find adjectives to say that Lady Bird was a person of depth. And—depth and understanding. She understood that husband of hers, and she tried to kind of quietly, quietly bridle him. He was this great horse, and she quietly bridled him but never let anybody kind of know she was bridling him. She—look at the wild flowers at the entrance to—and all kinds of outdoor developments.

HT: Ecology and that sort of thing?

BA: Exact, traces right back to Lady Bird. And she did it gently so she didn't step on anybody's toes. I just give her and everybody that I know who covered first ladies feel this same way. Now, there were, obviously, I was in London most of time. No, I was in New York when [Bill] Clinton was in the White House. So, I didn't cover him at all, his White House. Because I was up there. But I was, obviously, watching it closely. And I think Hillary [Clinton] has used the White House to gain a foothold in history that's different from any first lady, to come from being first lady to a very, very influential senator, to being secretary of state. She has carved a path that nobody else has touched. So, I have great admiration for her on that. And each one of them kind of have different demands. I don't think anything special happen with—. I liked Barbara Bush and Laura Bush fine, but I don't think they did—they didn't break any new ground. And, that's okay. A first lady doesn't have to do anything she doesn't have her heart in. Now, they did a lot of literacy. But—which is good. I was really glad that they did. And, so, how deep it went I had no way of knowing. And what kind of after effects I have no way of knowing. But they certainly put their hearts into it.

HT: How about Pat Nixon?

BA: Pat I liked very much. I feel just—to say you feel sorry for somebody is so shallow. Compassion for her. Because Nixon and his two alter Nixons, [H.R.] Halderman and [John] Ehrlichman kept Pat Nixon under wraps, wouldn't let her do anything but what they wanted her to do. They completely—they just kind of stamped her out. When you got Pat Nixon away from the White House she just blossomed. It was marvelous to see. Pat Ryan, she was, she was everybody's favorite when she was a school teacher back there at the—can't remember the town, Whittier, California. And I can say that because one of my great press pals, Bob Pierpoint, went to school there. And he said, "Everybody loved Miss Ryan." But she was snuffed out in particular Halderman and Ehrlichman who used her only as a prop on occasion. She had so much more that she could have done, and I think wanted to do. But you got to have the backing of your husband in the White House. And, so, I feel—all the press that I know that really knew her liked her. Because we felt she was very loose, very easy. But the minute she was—

HT: Sort of stifled?

BA: Oh, yes, absolutely. So, I felt bad about her, because I thought she was stifled, yes.

HT: How about Nancy Reagan?

BA: Nancy, I didn't cover because I was living in London then. But somehow I knew her. And actually when she was in London on a solo trip one time I was with her just with another couple of other people for dinner. So, they reached out to this—to me, because I was the woman bureau chief in London. And I'm going to tell you talk about being the two-headed chicken. Being the woman bureau chief in London of the biggest magazine was, yes, it was an unusual place to be. But people talk about the British being cold. I never felt a greater warmth, reaching out. You'd meet somebody one night, and they'd have you to dinner. And I'm talking about people with great titles. They'd have you to dinner the next week. I mean I know it was the job. I'm not that does not. But the fact is they did it. And I just felt that, that women had not had a chance to shine over there. Nobody had sent a woman. It was a very brave for *Time* to do it, you know? Very brave. Like, you know, visits with Margaret Thatcher. And we just wound up as being—I was a journalist that she liked and trusted. But as the two-headed chicken, as I always called myself over there, they were wonderful to me, the whole Brits, oh, yes. And I had a fantastically good time over there. And got—I mean the whole country was erupting with stories, stories, stories, the Falklands War, spies. There was just no end of stories. And I remember some British friend of mine said, "You know Bonnie this was a quiet place before you came here." So, I'm glad to take credit for it, but I think the things were just happening. But *Time* I pushed *Time* on it. And they were very responsive. And some of my colleagues in other foreign bureaus, i.e., Paris, were not a bit happy about this. Americans don't feel the same way about the French that they do about the British. They just – they do not have that sense of identification. And so many Americans by the time I'd gone there, so many Americans had been to England, and traveled all the time. And

where France is a foreign country. And if you don't speak French, and none of us do worth a darn.

HT: Unless you are French.

BA: Unless you are French.

HT: Well, Bonnie I don't have any more questions.

BA: Oh, well.

HT: And it's almost time for you to be back to your place.

BA: Well, I better check into my place.

[End of Interview]