

Recording begins after BOB COVEY's opening remarks have begun.

BOB COVEY: We're going to have a tree-lighting party [inaudible] on December 2nd. Fidelity National Bank is going to light up a sixty-five-foot Christmas tree on top of the bank. For those of you who aren't too familiar with Decatur, Fidelity National is right down on Clairemont, so we're the best view in town. The following Sunday, we're going to have our annual open house at the Swanton House in the afternoon. We look forward to everyone coming to that. And then December 19th will be our last general meeting. It will be a dinner meeting at the Sky Room in Decatur Federal. Mr. Bridges, our normal host, is off busy being a lawyer today, so I'm Bob Covey, the Director of the Society, and I'm going to stand in for him.

Our speaker today is Mrs. J. Don Aderhold [mispronounces it "Alderholt"], the former Gerry Turner. And her family has lived in DeKalb County for five generations.

GERALDINE ADERHOLD: Six

BC: Six generations. She has brought along a marvelous collection of photographs that we have displayed at the tables on the other side of the room. Before we go in for refreshments, which we'll have at the end of our presentation, you might like to take a few minutes and look at the photographs. So, without any further ceremony, our speaker.

GA: Thank you. [*Stands*] I think I'll continue to stand. And then if I get tired, I'll sit down [inaudible] standing up. I apologize for having to bring something to aid me in my walking today, but a little over a week ago, I woke up one morning with a pain in the area of my hip. And I thought I'd better [inaudible] it for a couple of days until I did stand there for a couple of days that [rest inaudible]. And it didn't get any better. And I got a little worried, because I've had rheumatoid arthritis for a number of years and had total replacements in both knees and both hips and had reconstructive surgery on my feet and on my neck. And so, when anything hurts me and my prostheses, you know I want to find out if anything's wrong there. So, I decided I'd go to my orthopedic surgeon. And after he took X-rays—it was time for me to have my checkup anyway—he came back, and he said, "I've got good news and bad news for you."

And I said, "Well, give me the good news first" [*audience laughter*].

And he said, "The good news is the prostheses are all just fine. They're where they should be, and everything's fine. The bad news is that you have a fractured pelvic bone."

And I don't know how I did it, but he showed it to me in the X-ray. So, he told me to use the walker for about four weeks anyway. So, I have it with me today in case I need it. But I thought, you know, I had this meeting scheduled, and I just didn't feel that I could bow out at the last moment, because I promised to get here. And so, I managed to get here with the help of my son, who's taken his day off to bring me. He's with the Sheriff's Department, an investigator in

the Fugitive Squad, as they call it. And if you were watching television on [Channel] 2 the other night, you saw him and his car featured on Channel 2's *Fugitive Squad*. His name is David; and David I especially want to thank for all of his help. He's a very good son. I couldn't recommend him any higher than that [*audience laughter*].

And I have some other relatives who are here today, too: my mother, Dorothy Turner, and my Aunt Lillian Epps, and Mary Nell Bonds [spelling?], who is a cousin, and if I've overlooked any more relatives, I hope you'll give me some grace [*laughter*]. Oh, there's Ed! I didn't see you back there. How you doing? Mary Nell told me you might not be able to get here. I appreciate your being here. Good to see them. Clayton, or Claytie, as we call him in the family—he probably hates that name—but we always call him Claytie--Uncle Claytie's my favorite uncle. I guess I shouldn't tell you I don't have any more uncles [*laughter*]. He would be my favorite even if I had other uncles. And Virginia, who's a dear, sweet person, has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, too. We appreciate you coming today. I also have some friends who've come from the church and some friends of my aunt who are here, and I don't think I'd better take time to introduce all of them over again, but I'd like for them to stand, if you would, if you are a friend and not a foe [*audience laughter*]. [*Several people stand; audience members applaud.*] Thank you.

And as I thought about being here today under these circumstances, I thought well, this is good news, and it's bad news for me, too. I'm so honored to be asked to speak to the Historical Society. And you know, if anybody asks you to talk thirty minutes about yourself, what could be a bigger honor than that? And then I thought that was the good news. And the bad news is that I'm old enough that I'm asked to speak to the Historical Society [*audience laughter*]. So, I hope I won't disappoint you. I'm going to try very hard to stay within the limits of the time we have, and I don't know how it's going to work out exactly; but we might [inaudible phrase] somewhere if I get too long-winded.

I do want to thank you for your gracious invitation to come today. You don't know how good it makes me feel that you want me to come and speak to you about these things I remember, having been a sixth-generation family in DeKalb County. The first generation were my great-grandparents, who moved from Rockdale County to DeKalb, and the last generation are my grandchildren. I have a grandson, Mark, eight, and a granddaughter, Michelle, who's two. And exactly a year ago they moved to Birmingham. Laura, their mother, taught at Lithonia High for thirteen years in the English Department; and Mark had started his school year at Avondale Elementary. And they had to move a year ago, because Laura's husband, Jim, is an architect; and he got an offer from a firm in Birmingham that he simply could not turn down, and

I couldn't blame him. So, they moved to Birmingham. And David and his wife, Rita, bought a house just over the line in Gwinnett County. So, unless some of these grandkids decide to move back, you know, this may end our six-generation dynasty [*audience laughter*]. We'll just have to wait and see. You never know what will happen.

My husband and I are both native Atlantans. Don grew up in East Point, and I grew up in the northeast part of Atlanta, the part that's DeKalb County in Atlanta. And somehow we got together and met when I was eleven and he was about fourteen. He came to our church, teaching my mother and daddy's Sunday school class when he was fifteen. He was a born preacher. You know, back then, that was not so terribly unusual. But I really didn't like him then [*audience laughter*]. It took a few years. He went into service and became a Naval officer, and I was back home here growing up and writing letters to the servicemen. Because I know all of you remember—most of you remember, some of you don't—that you could send the letters free back then if you were writing to a serviceman. And if you didn't send them free, it cost three whole cents to send them! So, I wrote the servicemen, trying to do my patriotic duty, among the ones that I knew in church, etc. And I wrote him during the war years; and then, when he went back to New York to decommission his ship, he was [*inaudible*] Lieutenant JG, was his final rank, and he was only twenty-one years old then, I believe. And he loves to tell people that he graduated from high school, spent two and a half years in the Navy, and finished college before I graduated from high school [*audience laughter*]. And that makes me sound awfully slow [*audience laughter*]. Then I had to jump in and tell, "You know, I went to kindergarten, and he didn't. And I had twelve grades, because I went to Mary Lin School through sixth grade—today that's junior high school—and then Girls' High School, and we had one more grade than he did in Fulton County. So, it's really, when you consider the fact that he was one of the 'ninety-day wonders'—in the Navy, you know, you [*inaudible phrase*]—it's understandable that he could do all of that in that short a period of time. And I'm really not quite that slow."

I was able to recognize, when he came back, I liked him a lot. I was working that summer in the display department at Davison's downtown. And my grandmother worked in the same department, and my grandfather was an electrician there. And my aunt—I can't remember if she was still at Davison's or she was at Rich's. She's been at Rich's or Davison's one for a hundred years [*audience laughter*]. She's been retired now for seven years. But we'd all take the streetcar downtown in the morning, and I worked in the [*inaudible*] department. Well, one day, right before lunchtime, here he walks in. You know, I hadn't seen him in about three years. And he walks in in his beautiful, white Naval officer's uniform to see me, sixteen years old, just as nervous as I could be when I realized that he'd come to ask me out to lunch. And we went to

Herren's. Any of you old people in Atlanta, you know, remember Herren's? Well, that's where we went to lunch; and I don't think I had much of an appetite, because I was too nervous to be hungry. And so, we began dating then, and he got out of service, and I'll tell you more about our marriage and such a little bit later on.

But when I thought about what I would say today, I thought, how are you going to compress fifty-eight years into thirty minutes? How am I to do that? But I decided I was just going to pluck my old brain and let the things that came to my mind first be the things that I would talk about. And in my growing-up years, the first thing I thought about, I guess, was the fact that I was born. You know, you don't have any control over that at all, do you? Where you're born, who your parents are, what your family is—that's just [inaudible phrase]. You don't have any control over that any more than I did. Well, I was born in 1930, a Depression baby. My mother and daddy were living in Chattanooga at the time, because Daddy was working as a dining car steward for one of the railroads which went in and out of Chattanooga. And you can go there now, you know, they've got the Chattanooga Choo-Choo. It brings back all these memories, but not to me, because I didn't live there but three months. And since Daddy was one of the last to be hired from the railroad, he was one of the first ones they had to let go during the Depression. And so, my mother and father had to move back; when I was three months old, they moved back to Atlanta and moved in with my grandparents, my maternal grandparents. And we lived there for a while, and that's why I feel that the house there we always called the "old homeplace," because it had been built by my great-grandparents, who had come from Rockdale County. And I spent so much time there growing up that I came to feel that it was sort of home, too, because we lived in several houses before I married. And the longest we lived in one was the one on McLendon Avenue that my parents built. And I lived there from about 1940 until I married in 1948, and it was just barely 1948 [rest inaudible]. So that was the longest I'd ever lived in any one house. I've been in one house now, where I live now, for twenty-seven years. Before that I lived eight years in a house in the Belvedere area that the first house that we bought. So, you see, I've lived longer in other places after I married than [rest inaudible].

So, the place on Mayson Avenue, which is now Candler Park Drive, I still think of as the old homeplace. And my mother and my aunt owned it after the death of my grandparents until about five years ago, and it was rented. It was such a responsibility for them to try to take care of a hundred-year-old house and do upkeep and repairs and such that they did decide to sell it when they had an offer made. Before that time, MARTA had bought all the property for the Edgewood-Candler Park station; and they were the third house down from the MARTA property.

And so, the house is still there, and there are pictures of it over there if you want to look at the pictures when we dismiss and are able to get up and move around. And it doesn't look quite as well-kept now as it did when the pictures were made. But it's still there, and I expect if we live long enough, someday we're going to see a high-rise building there with condominiums or apartments or some sort of businesses located within [inaudible]. It is one of the major stations now, there at Edgewood, Georgia, which it used to be, and now the Candler Park MARTA station.

I brought some things with me that I'm not going to take the time to read to you, but I did leave a copy with Mr. Covey. There's a document there that I think you really will find valuable. It was written in 1966, I believe, by Mr. Tom Slappey, who was a well-known lawyer in DeKalb County. And it was his recollections of DeKalb County in the year 1901, and it is the most amusing thing to read. And he tells about the houses and who lived in them and some of the businesses and how life was conducted day-to-day in the year 1901. He also tells about some things that were invented or that were done that might be first for DeKalb County and might not be what other places claim to be the first for, and I'll leave that to your imagination; I won't go into that. But it's a very interesting paper to read. And I'm sure he wrote it himself, because it's on legal-size paper, and it was typed. And there are too many errors in the typing for a secretary to have done it [audience laughter], so I'm sure he must've typed it himself. And you'll enjoy reading that paper, I'm sure. So, you can look forward to that. I won't take time to quote any of it today.

In thinking about where I'm living and growing up, perhaps some of you don't know that the area of DeKalb County that is in Atlanta city limits was at one time Edgewood, Georgia. The line going into Fulton County is Moreland Avenue at Little Five Points. When you cross Moreland, you go through DeKalb into Fulton. How many of you know where Little Five Points is? Then I know you've been around for a while [audience laughter]. Anybody who's lived in Atlanta any length of time knows where Little Five Points is. And that was my old stomping grounds, because I grew up next to Candler Park in Atlanta and later lived there right next to Candler Park for the seven years before I married. So, it was my old stomping grounds, and I walked back and forth to Bass High School, junior high school, and walked to Little Five Points several times a week. Yeah, we did a lot of walking back then. We had sidewalks that made it easier. And I had a good time growing up. I don't have any complaints. The only thing that really messed this up, as far as my growing up years, was World War II. We couldn't do much about that, but the only person in our family who is a close relative that would go into service was Claytie. And he spent several years in the Army and was missing for a period of time, which

was a very dreadful period to us. And finally, we heard from him, and he was in a hospital. He'd been wounded during, I believe, the Battle of the Bulge [rest inaudible]. And he said that the German doctors and nurses were very kind to him. He didn't have to spend his time in a concentration camp like some of the men did. I know one who, even to this day, refuses to talk about it, because it was such a bad experience for him.

So, I picked up a diary that I had written when I was—oh, I kept it about three years when I was thirteen or fourteen, during that period of time. And I was eleven when the war started, and I was fifteen when it ended. And the place I opened to in the diary happened to be Christmas Day. And I had written that we had dinner with Mawmaw and Pawpaw down in Tampa, Florida, because they had moved down there during the war for my grandfather to work at MacDill Field. And Clayton was away at service; and Virginia, I believe was there with Ginger, their oldest child. And I said we had Christmas dinner with Mawmaw and Pawpaw, as I called them then. And Christmas was not Christmas unless my grandmother baked five or six great, big [inaudible] cakes. She was a real cook. And you couldn't decide which one was the best, so you had to have a piece of each one, you know, sample each one. And that was what she really liked to do; she loved to cook. I wondered sometimes if I was kin to her, because I didn't like to cook [laughter]. I did because I had to, but I never enjoyed it the way she did. And writing about that day, I said, "We had one vacant space at the table, and that was our Uncle Claytie." He was our favorite space, because he was away in service. And that brought back a lot of memories, it really did.

So, I had wonderful grandparents on both sides of the family. The one that I think gave me a sense of history was my mother's mother, my aunt's mother, Grace Hull. She lived across the street from the church, and I spent so much time there—I grew up in Edgewood Baptist Church, as it was known. Been married there, my husband was ordained there, so many meaningful things happened there. My great-grandparents and my grandfather and his brother were charter members. My grandmother was the first person who was baptized in the church there, and so we were very close to the church. And I just lived there, you know, with my grandmother across the street, and the church on the northern corner of Mayson and Iverson, I spent so much time there, well, I don't think I could've gotten into any trouble, because I didn't have time to! So [inaudible] at church or grandmother's house. But we had a good time. And back then the church was large. You know, all the churches that are in the city that haven't closed are usually small congregations now. But then they were very large during World War II. There was a class of young people—a class of sixty young people, men and women, who were meeting together and at that period of time decided to name themselves Grace Hull Class,

because my grandmother was so active, and she loved children and young people. And she always welcomed any of the church groups into her house and her yard—big yard, right across the street, was the scene of many picnics, especially during World War II, when we invited servicemen out. And we'd have a picnic at the church on Sunday, many times it was all the servicemen invited who wanted to come. And we had a good time.

She was just like a young person herself. When she was with the children, she was like a child. She spent a lot of time with me when I was a child. And we went for walks in Candler Park, and in the fall we'd pick up acorns, which I did with my grandson a couple of years ago when I was picking him up after school. And in the spring we'd go for a walk in Candler Park and pick purple violets, because they were there just by the load. You could pick all day and not begin to even show where you'd picked your purple violets.

And at that time, when I was very young, you could still see the trenches that had been dug on the hill in Candler Park when the Confederacy tried to protect Atlanta during the final battle, and, of course, Atlanta was burned. They were still visible. And it was not uncommon for people to find artifacts from this battle of Atlanta there in Candler Park. So, it was a very interesting place to go. And at that time, now, remember—of course, it's a long time ago, when I was about five years old—I'm fifty-eight now—but I can remember the hillside in the park was covered with wild azaleas, of varieties that you don't see now. They were not just the pink and the red varieties, there were yellow and orange wild azaleas there. And a few years later they were gone. I suppose people would sneak in there at night and dig them up and try to replant them, you know, which just doesn't work usually with wild shrubs. They probably all died, and they haven't been there for many, many years. But I do remember them being there then.

One of the things that came to mind when I was thinking about what happened in particular during my growing-up years that affected me and influenced my wife was the streetcar. What would I have ever done without the streetcars? We had streetcars in Atlanta. The line that came up McLendon Avenue ended right there at Clifton Road, just a couple of blocks from where my home was. And the first ride I took into Atlanta, my solo flight, was when I was nine years old and in the fourth grade. And my teacher was Ms. Covey in the fourth grade, and I called Mr. Covey to ask him if he were kin to Ms. Covey, and he said as far as he knew, he didn't think so. He [did? didn't?] recall that name. And I said, "It's a name like Aderhold. You know, when people meet me, they say, 'Well, do you know so-and-so Aderhold?'" And I have to say, most of the time, "I'm sorry. I know that they all came from three brothers who came over in the eighteenth century from Germany, but we are scattered, and not a very close family, as far as I've been able to determine." So, most Aderholds you read about, I don't know. The one

prominent one we do always like to mention—that's Dr. O. C. Aderhold, who was president of the University of Georgia until his retirement and the present president took over from him. So, he had a very good reputation, we always try to assert that my husband is a cousin of Dr. O. C. Aderhold [*laughter*]. I don't know about the others; we don't ask too many questions [*laughter*], because it seems to you sometimes you find out about horse thieves and such.

But the streetcar was a big influence on my life. Can you imagine putting a nine-year-old child on a MARTA bus or train today and letting her ride to the center of Atlanta, where it stops one block before you get to big Five Points, and walk up two or three blocks to the Carnegie Library where I met my teacher? And we went into the library and worked on whatever the project was—I have no idea now what it was. And then I got on the streetcar and rode home. And nobody worried about me. And I was nine years old, by myself. Can you imagine doing that today? It made me feel a little bit strange when I thought about my own children and my grandchildren, because I feel, as I grew up, I had a real special kind of freedom that I don't think they'll ever know anything about. Because I could go anywhere I wanted to, any time of the day and night, on the streetcar—I don't recall now if it was a nickel or a dime; it was never over a dime. And when I got on, if I wanted to go someplace that streetcar didn't go, I could ask for a transfer slip, go downtown to a place where I could catch the other streetcar, give him the transfer slip, and go anywhere streetcars went. And they went all over Atlanta. And I felt that growing up during that period of time that I had absolutely no fear of being alone at night walking down up the streets. You know, I could do my homework at my house when I was at Girls' High, and I was in the choir, and back to church. And maybe I had too much homework, I could go to prayer meeting, so I would leave at nine o'clock and walk back up McLendon Avenue and down Mayson to the church by myself and never thought anything in the world about it. And we can't do that sort of thing today, can we? Not young or old or middle-aged or what have you, because we just don't have the climate in our society that we can feel safe like we did then.

And nowadays, you know, young people think, "Well, if I didn't have a car, what would I possibly do?" I didn't have a car and didn't get my driver's license till I was thirty, so you see how important a car was to me [*laughter*]. But I could get around other ways. And it was not until I was thirty years old, we were going to drive to California; I put my foot down with my husband. He didn't want to teach me, because he was afraid to ride with me [*laughter*], and he still is, all these years. I said, "If we're going to California, I'm not going unless I have a driver's license, because we aren't going to have just one person in that car with a driver's license." So, he got down to business and taught me how to drive, and I got my license when I was thirty.

I spent plenty of time on streetcars during my teenage years. And with that special freedom, I still have difficulty in feeling afraid, I really do. I keep my doors locked—my son's very insistent on that. And I had just come in from teaching a Bible study group a few weeks ago and my little dog run out to the outside, and I left the door unlocked while the little dog was out, and I went in to put my pocketbook down. And I'd no sooner got in the house than David came in behind me. And he said, "Mama, I have told you over and over again to keep your doors locked!"

And I said, "David, I do. I just got into the house and let [dog's name inaudible] run out. I was just going back to the door to let him in. You can't be concerned about that."

He said, "I am here because we're looking for a fugitive in this neighborhood. The [inaudible phrase] car right now right down the street, and we're going house to house looking for a fugitive who's somewhere right around here."

We have woods behind our house, between our house and Clarkston High School, and once they get into the woods, it's almost a hopeless case trying to catch them, because the woods are dense to see into, you know, especially with nighttime. We're used to having police helicopters fly over the house, and you can see beams shining down looking for somebody in the woods. But I am careful to keep my doors locked. But it's hard for me to feel afraid, because I never grew up with that feeling. But let me remind all of you to keep your doors locked [inaudible]. And if you don't have deadbolt locks, get them. And if you don't have some sort of protection on your windows, you know, where they're not where you can get into, have that done, too. We had nails, big nails, put in ours, so they can't be just lifted, you know. They have to make some noise, break the glass, and knock the window [rest inaudible].

So, things are not quite what they were, and I don't think they'll ever be again, with as many people as we have in our society today. You know, there's as many people living on the face of the earth today, right now, as we're sitting here, as were ever born in any previous generation put together. People are alive on our globe today in numbers that would equal the total of all generations that have been on earth before. When you have that many people, you're going to have a good number, a good percentage, who are not very nice people. And so, we have to protect ourselves today more than we have in other generations.

When I married, I was just seventeen—I mentioned that to you—it was February of 1948. And I graduated from high school just about two and a half weeks before then. My husband had come back from the service and gone back to Mercer University in Macon and finished his senior year, so he graduated from college and intended to pastor a church in Dalton, Georgia, East Side Baptist Church. And they had a nice, cute little new pastorium there,

and he was getting mighty impatient to bring a bride to put in that house, you know. And I thought, well, if I don't marry him, he's not going to wait on me, and find somebody else to move into that house with him. So, I agreed to marry him [*laughs*]. Otherwise I would have accepted a four-year scholarship to the University of Georgia but turned that down, because I didn't know how in the world I'd ever use that. If I'd only been able to see into the future, I could have seen that when we went back to Atlanta within a couple of years, that I could have used it here, at what was Georgia Junior College at that time; later it was Georgia State downtown. But you can't see into the future, and I had no idea how to use that. So, I took a small cash scholarship that was given to me when I graduated.

And as time went on after we married, we lucked out. We would have been happy to spend the rest of our lives in Dalton. And those people took me as a seventeen-year-old pastor's wife—can you even think about that? You think about it now, and think, how in the world could they stand a seventeen-year-old pastor's wife? But they did. And when I came to Columbia Drive, I was just nineteen, here in Decatur, you know. And when I think about being nineteen and a pastor's wife, it's bad enough. But seventeen, I just—I avoid the subject with young people, you know, unless they just directly ask me, "How old were you when you got married?" I just don't say anything; they just, you know, imagine that I was at least twenty-one, maybe I'd gotten through college, you know, was twenty-two or twenty-three. I don't tell them on purpose that I was just seventeen, because frankly I don't think they're as mature as I was at seventeen [*laughter*]. I really felt I was mature. And when I think about it now, I still feel I was mature compared to seventeen-year-olds now.

Maybe it was the war that did it to us, but I think we were forced into maturity a little bit quicker than young people are now, and responsibility was thrust upon us more than it is on young people now. And they really can't get around these days without a car, you know? My kids couldn't have, because we don't have bus lines. Well, we didn't then, but we have them now, within about a block of where we live; but when they were in their teens, we didn't have buses that they could easily get on and go anyplace. So, if they went anyplace, they had to learn to drive and use the car. So, it really is true; they did need a car to get around. But even though they feel the freedom of transportation, they don't feel the freedom within the [*Inaudible; audience member coughs.*] I'm sure that I feel, and [*rest inaudible*].

Well, when we were in Dalton, Don decided—education was always very important to him—he decided he needed to go to seminary and get his master's degree. And yet we couldn't afford to give up a means of livelihood and just go to seminary. He had the G.I. Bill, of course, he could use back then; but that was very limited as far as resources to buy groceries and

things like that were concerned and pay rent or whatever. But he did get the permission of East Side Church to enter Columbia Theological Seminary, which is Presbyterian, in Decatur. And we spent weekdays boarding at my parents' house, which was just a couple of blocks from the seminary by that time—they had moved to Decatur, and did become charter members, along with my brother, when Columbia Drive Baptist Church was organized in a tent. And we couldn't see into the future, of course, when I married my husband. He said, "Honey, you know, we're both native Atlantans, but don't ever expect to move back to Atlanta, because we won't."

And I said, "Why?"

And he said, "Both of us grew up there, we have too much family, too many friends. It would not be good to move back when we have that many people we're so closely associated with."

And I could see the reasoning behind that, and I married him anyway, thinking I never would come back to Atlanta [*laughter*], though I would love to. But we loved Dalton, and they were all so sweet to me. One woman had five daughters and was very active in the church and everything, just took me under her wing like I was the sixth daughter. And they all seemed to love me, and I loved them, and we would have been happy to stay there. But Don felt this need within him to grow in his intellectual process, so he went back to seminary; and I decided I would use the scholarship that I'd been given when I graduated from high school, Atlanta Girls' High. I do want to say one thing, though. I must have given the impression that I was the first girl to enroll at Columbia Seminary. I might have been; I really don't know about being the first one to enroll. But I do know I was the only one who was attending the seminary at the time I was there. And, you know, I didn't think it was a bit unusual. It never occurred to me when I went to enroll that they might turn me down because I was a girl. You know, I wasn't liberated [*laughter*]. In the past few years I found out, well, goodness, I must not have been a liberated female back then, but I didn't know it. I had all the rights I wanted.

And when I went to seminary there, they treated me like I was special, really, you know. They were so nice to me. The professors were so genuinely Christian gentlemen. And the boys who were students there were just so polite and nice. I don't have any complaints to make about the Presbyterians at all. I wouldn't dare say anything about them. One of the professors that I learned the most from there told me about Bible [*inaudible phrase*] George [*inaudible last name*]—sounds like "Goolsby"?]. And I didn't know it then, but twenty years later, I would go to work for him after he retired from the seminary in radio ministry—strictly Bible teaching, no soliciting funds or anything like that. It was just a fifteen-minute broadcast on the radio of Bible teaching. No music, except for introductory song. And he had a staff of people who worked for

him there in the office, and twenty years later, I got a job working for Dr. [name inaudible], which I was bookkeeper and edited many of his manuscripts, and, you know, just did general flunky work around the office, maybe whatever we were called on to do. Everybody sort of did a little bit of everything. And I thoroughly enjoyed working with the other women who were Presbyterian.

I was used to Presbyterians by then, you see. And the Presbyterians were having trouble in their church like the Baptists are having trouble in their church now with the convention, so there we'd come to work fussing about what the Presbyterians were doing [laughs] in their big opposition over the USA or whatever it was back then. And I said, "What do you? How do you get rid of stuff [inaudible phrase]?"

And they said, "I don't know."

And I said, "Well, in the Baptist church, you know, all we had to do was vote at the convention and fire them, and they're fired" [audience laughter]. And I didn't know I was going to be in the minority a few years later [audience laughter], when all our troubles came up at the convention.

But it was a very genuine, warm relationship that we've always had with the Presbyterians. They are closest to Baptists, you know, in theology. The only things that we disagree about at all are the means of baptism, and Baptists, of course, [inaudible] immersion-- Presbyterians say that's fine, we don't object to it. We just think baptism is sprinkling, too—and the form of church government. We have a purer democracy in the Baptist church, where each church is autonomous within itself and can vote to do anything the church wants to do; we're not bound by what happens at our conventions. That's just an expression of sentiment of the messengers who are there at the time. It does filter down, however, to the persons who've been elected as the meetings are formed, because the majority of the committees right now are funded by—the majority of them are Fundamentalists on our committees right now. And that's what's causing the problem with many of the Moderates, because we don't agree in essence about many things. And so, we'll work out of it. I think the pendulum's swung as far to the right as it's going to swing, and it's going to come back toward the middle now; I think you'll see that happening.

Meantime, my husband has been trying to work as a peacemaker, which is his natural being. He is not a confronter by nature; he's a peacemaker, and I [rest inaudible]. And he's on the Home Mission Board and was reelected at this past convention, so I suppose they didn't find him too ornery, because they reelected him. Back in the '60s he was president of the Home Mission Board for two terms, and we had a marvelous time visiting there up in New York and

the northeastern part of our country, and I've been all over the United States and Canada. And when we were younger and the children were younger, we camped, because we couldn't afford motels and restaurants with two kids, and we traveled across Canada during that. Since then, six years ago, I had the privilege of going to Europe with my husband; and last January we were privileged to go to Hawaii and celebrate our fortieth wedding anniversary. So, I have been around; I've seen other places. But I still think DeKalb County is the place you want to come back to. You know, I loved seeing all those places; they were beautiful. And I looked at them and admired them, and I think, "Oh, this is just wonderful that I've been here to see this. It's a lovely place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live here" [*audience laughter*]. And I'll go back to DeKalb County, where I live. Home always seems so good to come back to after you've been away for a while.

So, we did come to Decatur, and my husband in his senior year graduated, you know, president of the senior class. Now, I'm not going to try to tell you a lot of the changes that have taken place in the church; because, when my husband goes to meeting, like he is today—this one he flew to Texas to preside at a meeting of ministers there, and they had eighty-four enrolled at the time he talked to the man last night [*inaudible*]. He tells them about the struggles of Columbia Drive Baptist Church and the changes that took place during the '60s after we'd gone into our permanent church building. You'll see pictures of that on here, if you care to look at them. We started off with eighty members in the tent. The tent grew to a little, small, one-story building that Mr. Guy Rutland, Jr., erected from scraps from some other building, just to give us a roof over our heads, really. And the church began to grow so fast that all we did was build, build, build, from 1950 until 1965, when we went into the permanent building—permanent auditorium. And on the inside, I really tell you quite honestly, I've been in a number of other churches, but I have never seen one any prettier on the inside than Columbia Drive Baptist Church, and I love it dearly.

When we came to the church, it was kind of unexpected to us. During my husband's middle year in seminary he got sick, and we were commuting back and forth to Dalton all the time, you remember. And we would stay here during the week, and then on Saturday—they didn't have Saturday classes; they had Monday classes, and so we would have time to go up on Saturday to Dalton. They were building a new two-lane highway, which is now, you know, is Stewart [*Avenue*]. And it had thirteen detours in it, and I'm certain it was thirteen, because I counted them every weekend. But we would leave the pavement, you know, and go onto a dirt road. That was the detour; there were thirteen of them. And it was especially hard coming back Sunday night. After I decided [*inaudible*] I [*inaudible*] get a job and go to work, because we

needed to eat. And Don was making thirty-five dollars on the GI Bill and going to school with tuition paid for by the GI Bill. And we thought it was interesting that the day he graduated from seminary was the day the GI Bill was [inaudible—could be “signed”?] We couldn't help but think that was more than coincidence, do you? And so, I quit work when he was in his [inaudible] year—I quit going to seminary with work because he was still in the seminary, and I got a job as district secretary for the district office of Lane-Rexall drugstore. And how I got that job, I'll never know, because I'd only taken typing in junior high school. That was the only business course I'd ever had [inaudible phrase], because I didn't know a lot [*laughs*], so I think that was why I got the job. But I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had a very nice boss and enjoyed the two and a half years I worked there. Then I quit when Don finished seminary, so we could have a family. And I had a little girl in 1952, and David came along in 1957.

So, when Don left the church in Dalton, it was because of health reasons. During his middle year in seminary he passed out one day at school and would have fallen down the marble staircase if one of the students hadn't caught him in time. So, when the doctor checked him, he said, “You're doing too much. You've got to give up either your school or the church.” What a decision to have to make! Well, he didn't [inaudible] education [inaudible], and he still had a year and a half to go. So, we didn't know what we were going to do. He'd been asked a couple of Wednesday nights to fill in at this little church that was [inaudible phrase] in a tent across the street from the seminary, next door to the Methodist Children's Home. And it was country past there, you know. My mother and father moved into a new subdivision, which was one of the first ones built right after the war, and all the people who moved in besides these old folks were servicemen who were coming back and all these young families and buying up these houses that were five or six rooms with one bath. And the subdivisions were beginning to grow; and at that time there was nothing past that subdivision except apartments on the hill, where we later moved. And when you got to Memorial and Columbia Drive, Memorial was just a country road going out to more country, and it was surrounded by dairy farms. DeKalb, you know, was a big dairy farm place; and there were three of them right there within a half-mile of the church.

So, it was all country then. And he thought, well, I could take this small church if they asked me, and I could handle eighty members. The one in Dalton was growing so fast, it had added three hundred members during his pastorate there. And really he'd begun to feel it was too much for him to handle just on the weekends; it was not fair to the church. So, when this new church with eighty members called him as pastor, you know, that was just like God writing in the sky. You know, we were supposed to do that; it was so plain to us. And so, he did, of course, accept the call. And we had never left there until now, because he said, “It was so plain

to me what the Lord's will was when I came here that I'm not going to leave until it's that plain for me to leave." And so many committees have been to him through the years, inviting him to go to other churches—many of them around Atlanta that you would recognize immediately. But somehow something always held us back, because it wasn't as plain as it was when he went there, what the Lord's will for us was. And we've come to feel, over the last couple of years, that what the Lord's will is now for us to leave.

And so, he has resigned as of January 15, because he has become full-time director of the New Orleans Seminary School here, which is an off-campus center of the Baptist Seminary in New Orleans. A person can go here and get exactly the courses and get the credit they would get on campus in New Orleans. And I took courses there myself for a period of time, and I came to understand the students and to understand their needs. You see, most of them are men who are already married and have families or women who are married and have families. And they just can't take a—you know, pick up and go off to New Orleans with no means of support and a family to take care of. But they can come there Mondays and Tuesday nights and go to class four hours—which, as I tell you, a long time to sit in a lesson or class, you know. But they care about getting an education, because this is what they want to do. And we were so pleased last June to go down to New Orleans Seminary and see a group of our students graduate. It's the first time that we've had really a group of students graduate at one time. And they were so happy, because, you see, it took them something—one of them, eight years to get through seminary, where normally it takes two or three years to get through seminary, because they could only take so much at night, you know, part-time, to get their degree. But they'd gotten their master's degree and were so proud.

There was a man there that took us out to eat afterward. He's in his late forties, and his wife—they had no children. He had told me in confidence while was taking classes, one of which I was in, he told me in confidence that he and his wife had sold their home and were using the equity from their house to pay the tuition for him to get through school. Now, it means that much to these students to get an education. And Don was very interested in the students that had come from north Georgia, because that was one thing that we saw in north Georgia that was so lacking. There were so many preachers, particularly Baptist preachers, who were saved, and the church ordained them, and they went out to preach; but they didn't know very much. And Don said, "If I could just get them together, as little as I know, with a college education, if I could just get them together in a garage or warehouse or whatever, and just teach them what I know, that would be something." But, of course, that was not in the foreseeable future to be able to do that.

So now you see, you check the rolls one day last year, and you found that there were sixty-nine ministers enrolled in a New Orleans off-campus center that were from the area of Dalton where we had lived and where we wished that he could do this. They come from six neighboring states. They come to classes at the school, and it has been his growing conviction that this was what the Lord wanted him to do, was to teach and be director of this school. They director that they did have, the part-time director, died suddenly; and he was asked to take over that job. And then it has grown so, they have right now about two hundred students who are going to class. There are about four hundred who are enrolled [inaudible] at sometime during the year. But he's teaching a class right now that has over a hundred students in it. He had one last year that was over a hundred students. These are required courses, you see, and they have to have them when they're offered, and the students there feel they have to take it. And Roswell Street Church in Marietta has been very gracious about allowing the seminary to meet in their facilities, and they have just filled up our new educational plant last year with the second floor used by the seminary students, so they had movable walls and seats that had writing things attached to them, you know, for the seminary students to use; and they've been very gracious about that.

And I know that my time is up, and I did want to tell you that since I have not had time, I couldn't begin to tell you about the years of change in our church. When my husband looked over my notes, he said, "You know you're not going to begin to get into that."

And I said, "I realize it, but what am I going to do?"

He said, "I've got these papers," and I've brought them for you today. There are fifty copies that you might be interested in taking them with you and reading.

When the great change came in our community, and all of you who have lived in Decatur any length of time know about that, the Blacks kept moving toward our church from Kirkwood and down Boulevard until finally they were within the area of our church right across the street from our church. And several things happened that I won't go into, but I think [inaudible phrase] spirits for us. For instance, we had to vacate the church building one Easter Sunday morning, because we had a bomb threat. I had ten Black women in my Sunday school class. And we had a packed house, you know. We were having two services for a long time to accommodate people. The Black people who were living there then were coming to the church, and some white man didn't like it and threatened that there was a bomb planted in the church. So, we had to go out on the parking lot on this hot day. We were standing there for a couple of hours while the building was searched. Of course, if anybody wanted to put one in there, they [could? couldn't?] have found it. But it gave us a little bit of reassurance to know they hadn't found one.

We went back in, I think, more determined than ever that we were going to be the church that wouldn't [inaudible] wanted us to be in those circumstances.

We lost one thousand people from our membership in a three-and-a-half-year period from natural attrition, moving into larger houses and some because they had a convenient time to move. And that's not easy to absorb, you know, as far as leadership and money are concerned. It's hard to absorb the loss of a thousand members [inaudible]. But we had been able to sell [inaudible phrase] and had a good number of people who were as much committed to the church as we had been. Some of those most committed are here today. You'll find them very active in everything in the church that they could possibly do, and they're very good neighbors, even outside the church, and [inaudible phrase] friends and neighbors. And we love them very much.

We don't feel that we're leaving them by any means. We'll still be living where we're living, which is four and a half miles from the church, just outside 285. When we moved there twenty-seven years ago, the church was aghast. They said, "Why are you moving to the country?" And now, you know what it's like driving past 285—hardly country. In fact, we have a megalopolis now, don't we? You just enter one town after another as you go through Memorial Drive out to Atlanta. So, it's all changed quite a bit. But there's still a lot of people who need to be reached, people who need to be going to church and who need to know about the Lord in a way that we know about Him. So, we're trying to do what we feel is the will of the Lord. And these people in our church are entering into the same feeling that we have, I think, about the seminary, as an extension of their mission program. And we very much appreciate it.

In closing I'd like to read you a poem I wrote last year. I told you I had the opportunity of going to many other different places, but I have a special feeling about the red clay hills of DeKalb County. So, I'm going to close by reading this poem to you. If you have questions after this, I'll be glad to answer them if I can. And if I can't, I'll tell you so. We may not have time for questions; I'll just leave that with Mr. Covey.

I have wandered in the desert and [inaudible] solitude,
Where the trees have vanished long ago, lest one lonely sentinel,
Its gnarled fingers grasping for something forever gone,
Its roots buried tenuously in barren soil.
But there was beauty in cerulean sky, the ochre Earth, and tumbleweeds that pled,
"Come follow me."

I could have gazed forever [unclear—could be "at the light"] of God's Creation,
But this was not home.
I've stood on mighty mountaintops and felt the world was mine
As the chilling winds and cool sunglow caressed my cheeks
And bade me stay to live again that grand display when first they thrust
their jagged peaks up from the depths of Earth,

Powered with the hand of God, who planned the destiny
Of snow-crowned heads and cloaked, quivering aspen trees.
But this was not home.
I've walked along the seashore and heard the crashing surf,
Lured by its song that told me it was here from the Beginning.
Perhaps we long for the freedom of the tides,
Restrained only by the moon, as its mystery ebbs and flows.
But this was not home.
I love to be the wanderer and see all of Creation,
The beauty of God's hand conceived in all the things He makes.
But when I go home, I go to the hills of red clay and forested trees,
Where God empties his paint-pots in autumn
And in spring tenderly dresses them in pastels [inaudible phrase],
Making homes in their arms for winged creatures of beauty,
Who sing of joy in living.
Then I am home.

Thank you for your kind attention. [Audience applause]

BA: Thank you very much. That was fascinating. I think we have some time for a few questions if you have any.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [First part inaudible] You forgot to mention our Laotian—

GA: I didn't forget. My time just ran out [audience laughter].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: One thing I want [inaudible] to hear was the meeting of the academy and Schley Howard [inaudible—"caused" or "called" or "taught"?] so many of the—

GA: That's the paper that I've left with Mr. Covey, yes. And maybe he can have some copies made if they're interested in reading that. I think that that--it was a very good paper, and there's many things I could have quoted from that; but my time was limited, and I felt I could leave that with you to read later.

I will mention that—

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Come back. Please come back and talk to us—

GA: Thank you. I will mention the Laotian ministry, which was really a shot in the arm for us as a church, because we had lost so much, you know, and so many members, that in 1976, quite accidentally, our first Laotian family came to us at Columbia Drive needing help. Someone in the church had told us this family needed help, and we had a committee to investigate. And they did need a lot of help. Their sponsor had forsaken them after they got here, and they didn't have anything. And only one young woman spoke English and had a job. The whole family—the mother and father and sister and a couple of nieces—the whole family there was in need, and one woman working couldn't quite do it. So that began a ministry to the Laotians; and since then

we've had Cambodians and other people from Thailand and southeast Asia to come to our church. And we have--the church, I'm very proud to say, has sponsored over one thousand Asian refugees from the year 1976 until now. And we have a constant congregation of Asians of about three hundred. They come and go, you see. Sometimes they come and move here, and maybe later they will move to some other place, and in the meantime somebody else comes in new. So, we have a turnover to speak of, but we have a constant congregation of about three hundred. And these people are absolutely incredible. When they come here, they literally come with nothing. They've flown straight to the United States from the Philippines in some holding camp, you know. And they come here with nothing but what they can carry in their hands. And you would be amazed at their industry and their strength and their willingness to work. I think it's because they had it so hard naturally that they don't think it's not natural to work hard. And if they can get two jobs instead of one, they will. And it is no time until they have bought their house, and they have a car, and they have good jobs, and they're smart. And the young people very easily learn English. For the old people it's difficult, especially the women, because they don't get outside the home very much.

But it has really been a pleasure for the vast majority of us to work with these Asian people. They've become very good friends now, and we appreciate them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: We've all enjoyed the presentation very much. I understand that you said you had copies of [inaudible] papers—

GA: I have only one copy. I'm sorry, I had a copy myself, and had wanted to run off [inaudible] Mr. Covey. He has that copy and the pages that I have left with him. So [inaudible phrase] like, [inaudible] make some more copies [rest inaudible].

BA: [Inaudible] make available to anybody who wants to read it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Is the Edgewood Baptist Church still standing?

GA: Yes, it is. They have a smaller congregation, of course, and it's been renamed Candler Park Baptist Church. When the community changed the name of the street from Mayson Avenue to Candler Park Drive, the church was renamed Candler Park Baptist Church. But it is the original Edgewood Baptist Church, and the original building burned years ago, and it was rebuilt in a different style. But it's still very pretty, and they really did a better job on the inside than it used to be. My aunt, who is here, is a member of the church and goes every Sunday.

BA: There is this wonderful collection of photographs [inaudible]. If you'll follow our guest to the Superior Courtroom, we have some refreshments, and you'll have some more chance for conversation.

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by Claudia Stucke