

Recording begins while the moderator's introduction is in progress.

MODERATOR: . . . when Dunwoody was really country. I can attest [rest of sentence inaudible].

For the first minute, background noise (air-conditioning?) interferes with audibility.

Afterward, the sound quality improves when the source of the noise is turned off.

MARGARET BRIDGES: Actually, now, I'm afraid I'm not going to [inaudible] anything really interesting. I'll just have to tell you what I can remember. I've had a hard time dragging up the memories. But my husband [inaudible—could be “Bob”?] practiced in East Atlanta. We married [inaudible phrase] four years [inaudible phrase] and came here in '39. We had five hundred dollars, two children, a colored [inaudible—could be “girl”?] my mother had lent me for two weeks, and we came in a little coupé [rest inaudible]. So that's how we arrived. [Inaudible] five hundred dollars, we rented a house on Second Avenue and Cottage Road. [Inaudible sentence or sentences] *Audience member turns off source of background noise.* And then we went [inaudible], and we managed to, you know, keep going till now.

But when I first saw East Atlanta, I couldn't believe it. [Inaudible phrase] that way, but my husband's family--[*To Moderator*] stop me when I go too long on this, because I want to cover other things. My husband's family, I thought I'd dropped into the [inaudible] somewhere in 1840. They had a cow, they had two [inaudible; recording skips]—nine in each city. My mother-in-law got up at daybreak, never stopped till, you know, the middle of the night. She boiled the needles, sterilized the equipment. The patients came in the house—all over the house. They were in the living room, the dining room. My father-in-law [inaudible] sitting on the porch, but when the patients were there, of course, he was working. Then he delivered babies all over [inaudible]. And she helped him. I went with them once at night, snow on the ground, to a poor shack in down in Panthersville--I think that's near Southwest DeKalb. And she sat there and worked with the woman, worked with the woman. Old Dr. [name inaudible] sat around until the last minute, and then he got up and went to work [*audience laughter*]. So, I always thought she delivered the babies and he assisted, but that's just the way it was.

So, my husband did not particularly—I [inaudible] was pregnant—and he didn't relish living there and having the patients and doing general practice and delivering babies. He was trained as a neurologist, and he didn't want to practice that way. But the only step we could take was to get down to the East Atlanta Bank, rent two rooms above it. I don't know anything about medicine—never did try, never learned anything, but I had to stick fingers, and I would do this [*gestures*], and he would grab it out of my hand [*audience laughter*]. And he was so glad to get rid of me.

Some lady came in one day, and she said, "I've always wanted to work for a doctor."

I said, "Honey, if you'll work for what I get, you can have this job."

She says, "How much?"

I said, "Three dollars."

She said, "I'll take it."

That was Ms. Johnson. She was the most wonderful woman [inaudible phrase]. She wasn't a trained nurse, but just excellent [rest inaudible].

Well, we did that. The end of the first year of renting that house where we [inaudible phrase] on Cottage Road, we bought a house of our own where the children could play and run and I didn't have to worry about it belonging to somebody else [inaudible]. Really, it was a wooden tent on--facing the East Lake Golf Course. It was on Second Avenue, right at—I mean, Glenwood, right at Second Avenue. We had blankets under the doors—of course, the wind came through. We had two heaters, three rooms, and a [inaudible] closet. A chicken came and lived with us, you know, moved in. A dog came and had puppies, and we had a few snakes, we had turtles—it was really living outdoors, is what it amounted to.

The following year we got a real house and moved to—and I want—the prices, I think, are so important compared to now. Three thousand dollars for that house, three hundred dollars down. Then the next year we moved to East Lake Road and Ridgecrest, to my mind still the prettiest little house in the world. It was \$4,750, five hundred dollars down, which we were able to get up. And then we had heat—honey, first time we'd ever had heat. It was just magnificent. Druid Hills—I lived—that was my idea of where we lived from then on, was Druid Hills. You had trees—it was like living in a garden. The children had a big yard to play in. Across the street, where Parkwood and Artwood and all are now, were nothing but trees. Scott Boulevard was just mud, red mud, all the way. We got dogs, we got my daughter a horse—we'd ride the horse all over Druid Hills, up and down Ponce de Leon, then up and down Scott Boulevard. We bought the house on East Lake, and she was eight years old. Put her on and let her ride the pony about five miles on Ponce de Leon, thinking nothing of it [inaudible]. Every time I pass that house now, I almost feel as if I could see my children again if I'd open the door, flying the down stairs, my horse in the backyard, dogs all over, children running. There was [Inaudible; tape skips] the way was Deepdene Park, which is still there, where they could go and play there. The dogs were free; nobody complained about dogs, nobody was fussing because the grass didn't look just right. I mean, there was so much easier living. This one back here would walk around the block and take all day till they walked back [rest inaudible]. Then the next day he went to their houses, and they all fed him, you know [rest inaudible]. And there was a

happiness there [inaudible phrase] when the children were young. But I still look at that house and think it's just beautiful, the big sweetgum tree in the yard with children hanging from the limbs.

Then about that time I thought I could stop and look at the world [inaudible phrase], you know, to even think of anything. But suddenly I had [inaudible]. I was what I call the "leisure class." I had a maid. Anybody that had a maid should be doing something worthwhile in the world, because she was leisure class. And I was. So, I went to Emory—they had the evening law school then, the [inaudible—sounds like "complex"?]. That wasn't quite enough. Then I went to—I thought I wanted to meet some women who were interested in new things; so, I went to the League of Women Voters. That was—I didn't know one thing about politics, couldn't care much about it. But it was the kind of women that I knew I would enjoy, so I went to that. I found Emory, and I'm still so grateful for Emory. That track—that old track they had at Emory—everybody in Druid Hills has always used it, gone over there. Of course, now, they've got it so beautiful and you can't get in without a pass. But then everybody went over there—the children, the tricycles, the dogs. Then there was a man named Ed Shea, who was the swimming coach. That pool at Emory was in a hollow down in a hole by the railroad track. There was no driers, no heat, no anything. The children went over there to Ed Shea. Jonathan—I mean, he'd started keeping them. He formed the Atlanta Swimming Association [sic]. That was the first competitive swimming group in Atlanta. Then in time, of course, that became sort of the seedpod, I guess, for a great many swimmers. They were developed in Atlanta—[*To audience member, off-camera*] Havalanta [sic]? [*Audience member makes brief inaudible response.*] I never knew which was DeKalb and which was Atlanta. You know, we used things in both places. Havalanta was marvelous at competitive swimming all over town. Those who won against local people, those who won went to Havana and swam down there against the Cubans. The following year Cuba had that, and their competitors came up here and were entertained. Can you imagine us all of us going down to Cuba? And it was pleasant. And let me see, the ASA was one of the great things. I'm trying to think what else. Emory furnished us so much. Well, let me look at my notes and see what comes next.

[*Consults notes, calling out key words as she goes over them.*] It should be here. Oh, when I think about that time, I think of how much [inaudible; siren in background]. The next thing is the streetcar. Behind our house was the streetcar, which went to Decatur. A block from us [rest inaudible due to siren noise], which went downtown and I guess to Westview Cemetery. So, we rode streetcars constantly. The first summer I was here—I had read before I came to Atlanta about the demonstration school that Emory put on. I was so thrilled I couldn't wait to get

my child in. They were really little. I guess you remember [rest inaudible]. We'd catch the streetcar on Cottage Road, ride to Decatur, take a bus, ride to Druid Hills School, and sit there from 9:00 to 12:00 while these marvelous teachers from all over the country came and put on demonstration classes for the local teachers. That was my great ambition, when I got to Atlanta, to have my child there. Then the streetcar: the children, seven and four, could get on a streetcar and go to Decatur for the picture show. You didn't worry about them, it was all right. They could get the streetcar, then they started taking clarinet and violin and all these things. Well, all of those teachers were located down on Peachtree near Whitehall. The children could ride a streetcar down there, go to their lessons, get on a streetcar, and come home. There was no fear or danger, you know, that something could have happened. You wouldn't think of anything happening to them.

But the streetcar then, you could get a streetcar—Mrs. [inaudible—recording skips; could be "Douglas"?], my best and good friend, she lived across the street my first winter here. I adored her. And both of us were so busy all day long that we didn't have time, but both of us read like crazy. So once a week we took the streetcar. How we got away from the children, I don't know. But we took the streetcar, went down to the downtown library, got about twelve books apiece, you know, laden, and came back. We read every night. We hardly ever had any sleep. That was our reading time. And she said, "Let's go to Stone Mountain one day." That just came. "Let's go have a [inaudible] ourselves." So, we go down to the streetcar on Alabama Street, and we catch the Stone Mountain streetcar—great big, upholstered seats. And you go out to Stone Mountain on the streetcar.

Then, of course, I remember Ponce de Leon, you couldn't go, because the streetcar stopped, you had to stop. Edgewood, streetcar stopped, the car had to stop. Streetcars were just a big thing in your life. I [inaudible] a lot of people don't know anything about it, and I still would sort of like to be able to get on one. And then on East Lake Road the [inaudible] railroad [inaudible—sounds like "siding"?] that came across East Lake Road, [rest inaudible]. Well, then the [inaudible], "Boom! Boom!" all day long they were coming by there. And then [inaudible] conductor kept chewing gum. And every child, when he'd blow that whistle, and every child in the neighborhood would [rest inaudible]. He kept them supplied with chewing gum. Then around Christmas they'd get together and give him a present. That was just a lovely thing, really, just delightful.

I want to tell you about Fernbank. And I want to speak about Eleanor [Elinor?] [middle name inaudible—sounds like "Brell"?] Boone [spelling?]. My early friends were all "Mrs." We didn't use first names. Later, people called you by your first name. The first time I was shocked.

After I got married, I was “Mrs.” to most people. But Mrs. Green, Mrs. Dennison—all my old friends I still call “Mrs.” But Mrs. Green was instrumental in forming Fernbank. But originally Mrs. Emily Harrison lived in that stone house over there on [inaudible]. And I remember going over there—it must have been Mrs. Green was sitting on her porch and talking to us. And the next thing a group of people in the community formed an organization to do something with Fernbank. That first summer I can’t believe there was anything so paradisiacal as that was. Every child—it seemed to me there were hundreds of children up there—they had a little bond. There was—they put on plays, minstrel shows, and lots of teachers were there, I think they were extraordinary teachers, teachers who took real joy in children. We gave them a pony. They had a goat, you know [inaudible]. They had a roomful of snakes. The children were making leaf prints and studying nature and jumping off the porch. There was something about it that was just like—it wasn’t in this world, it was so gorgeous, and so many happy people. Well, then, they brought in a man from New York’s Museum of Natural History, and he was a good man. He came there to build it up, and he taught—he had all sorts of animals in that old building, that old house that had been this man’s. I don’t think I can tell that story [*audience laughter; pleading for the story*]. I think I’ll leave that one. But anyway, he did a great job of building it up until we have what we have now. You know, kept building until it was a real nature museum. But nothing had ever been like that. That first year everybody was all excited over it, and the freedom and the beauty.

Well, back down on Peachtree at Whitehall where we sent the children on the streetcar, there was Jack [last name inaudible--could be “Ethridge”?], who taught tap-dancing, where everybody learned to tap dance. There was Ruth Dabney Smith, who taught violin, and there was another man who taught clarinet, [name obscured by audience noise]. So, these teachers of exceptional things were also our center, down there, right in the middle of downtown. Now, on East Lake Road there was—oh, back to the grocery stores. The first year it was, when I think of it--Charlie Everett in East Atlanta [inaudible] would call up every morning and tell you what he had. He had nice okra today, good butterbeans. The roast looked really good. And he didn’t want you to get a pork roast today; he thought the beef roast looked better today, and just tell you everything he had every day, and you were delighted, and you told him what you wanted. And, of course, he sent it. And that was something I miss to this day. We had delivery right on up for twenty years, I think; but we didn’t have them calling us up and telling us what they had and suggesting what we should get.

So, on East Lake Road finally the little Mr. Chase came out and opened a tiny little store, very little stock, but [name inaudible] started running over there, I don’t know for what. And so, I

got acquainted with him, and I was so crazy about him, stocked his own fish [rest inaudible]. So, we started trading with him. And there was a hardware store on DeKalb Avenue, Bailey's I think was the name of it. I think it's still there. Any of y'all know if it's still there, Bailey's Hardware Store? There was Redding's Drugstore, there was an open-air market of some kind down there, and I can't remember what all. And then [inaudible name] Feed Store on the corner of Clifton and DeKalb? [Inaudible name] Feed Store? That's where we bought the feed for the horse and all. You know, it seemed all that was just part of your life, were these little stores.

Then we joined with—my husband loved golf. He'd been [inaudible] for years, so he finally could play golf, and he couldn't decide whether to go to Druid Hills or East Lake. Well, we chose Druid Hills because the children could walk there. When I think of how these children walked for miles on Glenwood, when we lived there. He had to go to East Lake School. It must've been three miles he walked, and we thought nothing of it. Thought nothing of them walking from East Lake Road to Druid Hills or even to Decatur. And then I wanted help. I had three young [inaudible; recording skips], and I wanted to do all these things in the world. And I got in the car, and I rode up and down Atlanta Avenue, and this is the way you got your maid; I got mine. And every time I saw some colored women, I said, "Do y'all know anybody wants to work?" And then I'd pass by some of them going [inaudible], and I'd say, "Do y'all know anybody wants to work?" I got the grandest maid; she was with me twenty years. She was walking down the street carrying groceries, and she said she wanted to work. But she would walk from back to Decatur to East Lake Road to come to work. And when you think of [inaudible phrase], it was Water Street; there was a cabin there. There was a toilet on the porch; that's all the plumbing they had. [Inaudible sentence] But it was a little safe alley, and those children were safe, because Susie kept all the other people's children. They all were in that alley. And I would drive her home some days [tape skips] [inaudible phrase], "Don't you like where she lives?" [laughter]. "Don't you wish we had a house like that?" He loved her so much. Her house looked beautiful to him.

And Druid Hills is still very pretty, but it was more outstanding then than it is even now, because there was so much of Atlanta that wasn't here. And the cars, bumper-to-bumper this time of year, and the dogwoods, driving up and down the streets, looking at it, looking at all the flowers. Atlanta's beautiful all over, but this was really the spot of beauty in the city. I told you I'd just scatter [inaudible]. Ms. Dennison called me one day. She was teaching down—I love this part of town that's [inaudible phrase] Southwest DeKalb. Panthersville was such a lovely name. She was teaching down there, and she called me, and she said she was desperate. They were out a teacher, and they had to have somebody. Well, I'd trained to teach, but I wasn't teaching.

And I said, "Well, honey, I can't do it, because those children, you know, would [inaudible] me out on the ceiling and walk out [inaudible]." And she said, "I'll [inaudible]. I'll [inaudible]. You just come on. Anything to get somebody in there." So, I went down there. I never fell in love with anybody the way I did those children in Panthersville. There was a Ms. Grant from down there, who was Home Ec. She taught those children, honey, how to do their hair. Their skin was beautiful. They didn't have expensive clothes, but they had nice—you know, they were dressed in perfect taste. They were all country children. It was a great deal of dairy business down there, lots of dairies. And these people [inaudible], most of them, were dairy farmers. But children were—I've just never been so impressed with anybody as I was with those children; and I lay a lot of it to Ms. Grant. Of course, their families did a lot for them, but Ms. Grant was the one that taught them how to look and dress and fix themselves. And they weren't over-made-up, you know, just [inaudible].

And then Ms. Dennison wanted me to come up to [rest inaudible]. And I go over there, and I had heard that it was for the rich and the dumb [*laughter*]. And I thought, "Well, I'll last about a week in there." And I went there, and it was so funny. These were the children from the wealthy families, the majority of them [inaudible]. And after Panthersville, they looked like nothing. Their blouses were loose, and their hair wasn't fixed, and they just didn't have the—they just didn't look as pretty as those children in Panthersville. I thought that was so interesting that these children from so much money and so much care—of course, what it was, they didn't care for school; there were no boys there, and at Panthersville there were boys [*laughter*].

Now, I'll tell you about my downward [inaudible]. Ms. Dennison—[inaudible phrase]—a remnant, really, of my life. Ms. Dennison started me off. Glen [spelling?] was in first grade, and I, you know, I was sure there'd never been another child in the world, so I go to the school to look at it. I'd tell the teacher I wanted to see the pots they cook in, I wanted to see the pans [*laughter*]. I want to see the kitchen. I'd like to know what education that teacher has—I mean, no way in the world. I came home, Ms. Dennison said—I kept him out of school for about a week after that. I really didn't value any of the schools very much. I always thought my children were happier not in school, and I could teach them as much as they could. So, she came down there, though, and something bothered me. She says, "Go down there! Go down there!" [Inaudible sentence; recording skips] And so I—that's what started me of. I go down there, and I walk in, and I say, "I'm coming to spend the day." And I sit down in the classroom and spend the day, watching every detail. This was really important. And I didn't send him back to school for about a month, I think. I wasn't too pleased with any of it.

And then the thing I want [inaudible]--put me as an observer at the Board of Education. Well, they met in a little teeny room [inaudible]. The one I remember as having—thinking the most of was Dr. Guy. Mr. Rainey had been the superintendent, and then Mr. Rainey and one of the ladies up in here both stayed at the same hotel with one another in Florida, and that ruined Mr. Rainey. Then they had an election or something, and they got rid of Mr. Rainey [inaudible]. And he was a nice man. I don't know who came in next. I would go to the Board of Education, and I said--seems to me it was in the courthouse—tiny little room, five or six people in there. I just despised [inaudible]. Some woman would come in with a real complaint, and they would treat her courteously; but when she left, it was like, "What of it?" You know, no real solid caring about it. Then, I was interested in what children were learning. Nobody ever mentioned that. There was never a word about curriculum. There was never a word about the things I thought were important. I really didn't like it. Well, I was sitting there one day, and in came—I think it was Mr. Norman Ellis [spelling?], I believe. I know he was [inaudible]. And he had this young man with him, and he introduced him to the board. And I looked at that man. Oh, dear Lord, we got us a man finally! Jim Cherry. I was the happiest thing when I saw that man. I mean, just looking at him, I knew we had something [inaudible]. We were going to have something done. And I want you to know, to this day, when I walk across Decatur, I'm always wishing, hoping I run across him, you know, he'll be up there. Because he came in here—our schools were pitiful, just pitiful. And Druid Hills sent out a [inaudible]—Let me ask my children. [*To her children, off-camera, in the audience*] Y'all think I ought to stop on schools? Oh, go on. [Inaudible comments] Well, stop me when I [inaudible], because that's all I ever did for the rest of my life, so [inaudible]. [Inaudible comment from audience]

But he came in, and well, I could [inaudible] immediately the teachers had to stay until four o'clock. You know, they'd been used to having their pocketbook in their hand and running out of the room when the bell rang. And then he instituted a lot of sort of structural things, which would have been a little bit burdensome on a teacher, but he was after a first-class education. And he built schools. Somehow or other he [inaudible] the money, built schools all over. When Atlanta was in double-sessions all over town, honey, we weren't in double-sessions. Our children, I don't think were ever in double-sessions. He worked out a curriculum that you could find in a book that made sense. And I watched him through those years, and I just never admired anybody so much. And because that's my particular interest, I appreciated it just enormously. And to me he was one of the most important people in my life. I mean, we weren't personal friends, you know. But then, another reason I loved him so was you could tell him what you thought. And I could say—I would write him nasty letters, and he would write me back a

nice, calm, polite letter; and then I'd write him. He let somebody railroad him on [*Recording skips*] was another great teacher, and I thought I'd die when he did that. I want to tell you one story, though, he really let them railroad him on that, see. And I don't know how he got into it. It was not typical of Mr. Cherry to be so stupid. And so anyway, he railroaded him [*inaudible*]. [*Inaudible phrase*] and I invited Mr. Cherry and [*inaudible name*]. And they were there, and Cherry told me, "You know, I've always felt bad about that." You know, this was years later. He said, "I've always felt sort of bad about that. I didn't think it was right the way they did it." And [*inaudible name*] put his arm around Cherry and said, "That's all right, Cherry. I knew God would take care of you." He'd just had his heart attack [*laughter*]. He did. Well, let me see. I could go on about him forever, because I thought he was so wonderful.

All right, we stayed there. Now, my husband had kept me awake hours, night after night, all [*inaudible*]. Chattanooga [*rest inaudible*]. I thought he knew about the country. I think he'd lived in the country for two years when he was a boy and had this vision of the country. He had a daydream about the country. I didn't know it; I thought it was a reality. And he said, "Oh, in the country you did this, and you raised this, and you had [*inaudible*] fish, animals, and you did all this." I thought poor thing, I don't want him to live and die and never get what he wants; and he wants the country. I'm going to get him to the country. So, I started looking. I found a little rural country house out on a dirt road. I didn't even see what he was doing. We just followed the dirt road. He said, "No, no, no." He didn't want a dirt road, you know. He wanted the country—he wanted that dream, is what he wanted. It was all a fantasy. So, we finally found a place in Dunwoody with an old—horrible old house. And boy, it was—under the house--twenty acres across the road. I thought, "Now we've got the country. It's wonderful." And I'd never been [*inaudible—"off a city lot"?*], so I was excited until we got a cow. We already had a horse, we had four Dobermans, we had forty hens, twenty-five quail, two hogs—[*To audience member, likely her husband, off-camera*] Can you think of anything else? [*Audience member makes inaudible response.*] Oh, five thousand [*inaudible*]. Yeah! Thank you. We built the house; he helped build it. Forty by a hundred feet for the [*rest inaudible*]. They came in, looked at it, you know [*rest inaudible*].

And so, I was so happy about being in the country, give the children a day where we could go out and [*inaudible*] the morning glories that seemed to be all over everything. And then I went to a home demonstration meeting, because I wanted to learn how to make things out of feed sacks and make cottage cheese, you know, how to kill chickens and all that. And I'd go to the home demonstration meeting, thrilled to death, and I dressed down, you know, I put on a little shabby dress, little sandals, because I didn't want to be dressed up around the country

people. You know, I wanted them to—not have them not like me because I was overdressed, beyond their level. So, I get there, honey—they all had on dresses from Frohsin's, fifty-dollar pocketbooks [*laughter*]. They weren't country people. They were people—rich people who had estates out there. I never did learn from them, anything. I didn't go. They were painting figurines [*laughter*]. Can you imagine? I thought I was in the real country. It looked like it. But I did learn. I got where I could go to that chicken house, and I could spot a sick chicken [*rest inaudible*]. And the eggs were marvelous eggs. The milk—oh, I had never had milk straight from the cow. It was out of this world. The cottage cheese I made was delicious.

It was wonderful living, but the bus came by for the children to go to school. Let's see, Morgan Falls, North Fulton, something else. Well, we lasted three days at North Fulton, and then I, you know, practically went into seizures and left. And then Morgan Falls, the principal was also teaching two grades. So that one ended that. I could have collapsed—which I did, about three years after [*rest inaudible*]. If I could have put the children on the school bus every day [*Gap between recordings #1 and #2*] my work, which I loved everything connected with the [*inaudible*]. I loved it, but I couldn't do it. I had to send one into Spring Street to pay tuition, of course, another one in the seminary, paid tuition for this one in [*inaudible*]. So, every day at one o'clock I was on the phone. This one wasn't going to stay for basketball practice, this one was going to be a little late—rearranging everybody's schedule from 1:00 to 2:00 and then to get them back and forth, it was just [*inaudible*]. And then I did work. When we moved away from there, I had five hundred jars of jelly, honey, so [*laughter*], you know, plums and all that. I made my jelly, made the bread—I wanted to do the whole thing. It just about killed me. But I really cannot remember until I got where I couldn't get out of bed. I cannot remember a day that wasn't a delight, you know, just the purest pleasure.

All right, so then we had our [*inaudible*] day in Atlanta. We moved into Atlanta at our usual—been looking for a house, you know, I wanted to get where I could get a maid. But the children could get to school on their own. Moved into Ansley Park, and as usual, walked through the house, looked at it, and said, "I'll take it," mainly for the bus stop in front. Ansley Park was like being smothered [*inaudible*] with people all around, telephone poles, other people's garages, and you just felt smothered in Ansley Park. So, we stayed there a while, and then—I wanted to tell you, but that doesn't matter; that's just me. I want to tell you about Active Voters. Mrs. Green, who ran the suffrage campaign—her mother built one of the first houses on Lullwater—I've forgotten the name—[*spelling? sounds like Rau or Ralph?*]—he was president of a railroad or something. But I met her I the League of Women Voters. I met Liza [*inaudible*—Patrick?] in the League of Women Voters. And they had tremendous effect on my life.

Everything Mrs. Green—I told her I mentioned she suggested [inaudible] volunteering. And it didn't matter what she said, I was willing to do or something. And Liza [inaudible] was the same way. But Mrs. Green was president of the League of Women Voters. She was going all over the state of Georgia, setting up the league, you know, getting them started.

And I was over there one day, and she said, "I want to set up an organization where these politicians will not be dependent on this person or that person but where the whole state's supporting them."

I said, "That's a wonderful idea."

And she said, "We'll call it Active Voters."

I said, "Here's five dollars. I'll be your first member. You'll get five again sometime."

So, we started that. Well, I want you to know that thing—that's what got rid of the County Unit System. That organization formed, and more and more people got in it. James Mackay, I remember, was part of it. Jimmy Sanders and Morris Abrams—Jimmy Sanders was the plaintiff in the court; Morris Abrams was the lawyer. And they sued and got rid of the County Unit System, because—does everybody in here remember what the County Unit System was? Well, I'm going to tell you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [Inaudible comment]

MB: But it just meant that people in the little places—your vote counted a lot more in a little county than it did here in Atlanta. The people in Atlanta were disenfranchised, and people in Richmond County were disenfranchised, because there were 159 counties. And it was like the Electoral College. Those counties could run anything in Georgia. Well, that was one of the things we thought was so wonderful, more democratic—one man, one vote. I'm not sure of that; I just [inaudible] that way. But it was [inaudible]—we thought this was better for the world, better for democracy, better for everybody.

That was—Mrs. Green was also very instrumental in getting Fernbank going. She was Active Voters—let's see, I can't remember what all else. Let's see [*Consults notes.*]—oh! Then in Ansley Park along came the segregation issue. Well, of course, here again, you know, I thought, well, [inaudible phrase] [neighbors? Negroes?]. Loved every one of them, thought they just hadn't had a chance. We accepted them and get rid of the segregation laws, and ran into the usual amount of flak. Governor Vandiver lived around the corner. I still love the way we used to be. My little boy—he's not here, the youngest one—would go up there. He took a cousin from Savannah to see the governor's mansion. He came home and told me—the cousin did, who was about twelve or fourteen—Andrew took him up to the governor's mansion, opened the door, walked in, and said, "Now, I want to show you the governor's mansion." He took him all around,

showed him all the rooms [*laughter*]. And there was Governor Vandiver sitting in a chair. He says, "And that's the governor" [*laughter*]. I mean, the ease of life was so much more. And this child, his cousin, didn't know what to think about that.

[*Consulting notes*] Now, Dunwoody, Ansley Park, segregation—now Lullwater. We bought into—I really didn't like Ansley Park. I felt smothered all the time in Ansley Park, and I like good [inaudible]. But here's another thing: some [inaudible phrase] asked me, "What subdivision do you live in?" I said, "I don't live in a subdivision." I mean, to me, that's [inaudible]. I live in Druid Hills. Of course, Druid Hills is a subdivision, too; but I never knew it [*laughter*]. You know, I just thought it was a way to live. [*Consulting notes*] Let's see—oh, when we walked into Lullwater, same way. We looked out this window and saw nothing but trees. We went to the back window, and you saw nothing but trees. I said, "Let's take it." My husband [inaudible]. We didn't look at the furnace. We didn't look at the roof. We never looked at a furnace or a roof in our lives, and we must have lived in six different houses. We just always walked in and said we'll take them and then found out that we [inaudible] [*laughter*]. And so—but I remember that little one waking up here—he'd lived in Ansley Park practically all his life [inaudible]—waking up down on Lullwater and looking out the window and saying, "Ah! How glorious!" just wowed over seeing trees and sky. And you know one reason Lullwater is such a beautiful street—Springdale and Oakdale are pretty, but Lullwater has an especial beauty. It took me a long time to figure out why. We don't have any telephone poles. It's all in the back. And we no more got there than Mr. [inaudible—Coke? Koch?] comes by and wants us to agree to put up street lights. Well, what I wanted was to be out in the dark [inaudible—see them?]. That was another thing we had done when we lived on a [inaudible]. You couldn't tell it, but it was very high. And you sat there one night, and the whole sky just rained stars. You could see them, you know, one of those special meteorite things. But I don't think it could have been any prettier anywhere than it was there, when you had the whole sky to look at. We could see it on Lullwater.

My husband—I don't want to miss any good stories. [*Consulting notes*] Someone back here--I'm almost through.

MODERATOR: You got about five more minutes.

MB: Five more minutes? Well, I'm going to name these people that meant so much to me: Mrs. Murray, the first neighbor—not my first friend, but first neighbor—lived in East Lake. East Lake had just a few rich people. Old Scott Hudgins had six servants; I figure he was rich. We had a few real poor people. Lot of medium people and good people. You know, there was no trash in East Lake; there were just good people. Mrs. Murray lived in a tin shack. Her husband [inaudible]. She worked in the linen room at the Atlanta Hotel. She raised these

beautiful children—beautiful manners, smart, educated. How she did it I'll never know. And when the Atlanta Symphony started, you know, her child's school would let them use their instruments, and it started off with just young people. And then—I can't remember the man's name who finally came here, but that's how it started, just on a very local level. You had the schoolchildren, lending them the instruments and teaching them. So that's a little thing you might forget. So that was Mrs. Murray. I never knew a finer woman in my life, and it was just something remarkable for me to see how she lived and what she did with her children and the [inaudible]. And then, of course, Mrs. Dennison; he [sic] was head Economics or something at Tech. She had four children in college at one time. She's one we really kept up with. And Ed Shea [spelling?], who formed the Atlanta Swimming Association. [Inaudible] who invented the drown-proofing that's used all over the world now, and he was at Tech. And Mrs. Green, Liza Paschal, and then Celestine Sibley and Maggie Vaughn; they helped me a lot. Everything I tried to do they would give me a call; you know, that helped. And Jim Cherry, God bless him, and Colonel Maxey [spelling?]. [First name inaudible—Connie?] Allen—whenever things got bad, [inaudible] trying to form an organization and get something done, I'd be about to give up, and she'd call up with this little chippy voice and said, "What's going on?" and just stirred me on a little more. And then Fletcher Wolfe of the Atlanta Boy Choir, you realize we didn't have anything like that. And he came in here and took those children from seven to eight years old and made them a most magnificent choir. I don't believe there could be a better boy choir anywhere. That Vienna Boy Choir I don't believe could be any better. And, of course, they [inaudible] then on Fletcher. Just [inaudible] job with the Boy Choir. Then Walter Roberts—his son is Eric Roberts, who now is on TV occasionally. Walter had formed the Actors' and Writers' Workshop, and he didn't care about anything in this world except putting on plays. And they weren't the greatest plays, but all the children--then he had a little TV show, all his children took part in that. And then my last and greatest friend, Dr. William [middle name inaudible—sounds like "Venn"?] White, the pediatrician who took care of the last baby and then allowed me to bring him to him when he was twenty, which is the kind of pediatrician I [*inaudible due to audience laughter*].

Then I thought y'all might be interested to know that I just listed schools, Jack and Jill—that was—Schley Howard's daughter had a—Mary Lin, Bass, Grady, Spring Street, North Fulton, Morgan Falls, Rogers [?] Seminary, Westminster, Trinity Place, Mary Lin, Fernbank, Druid Hills—those are the schools my children went to, so you know I had a hard time of it [*laughter*].

I think that's really about it. And I'm sorry I couldn't, you know—couldn't get [inaudible]. I just couldn't do it. I remember the roller-skating rink—we had birthday parties over there. [Inaudible]. [Audience applause]

We got a [inaudible—sounds like “real suite” or “sweet”?], and I don't feel bad at all. I was afraid I was going to go home and die [laughter].

MODERATOR: Thank you. That was just delightful. A couple of minutes to take your questions, and then we'll have some refreshments [rest inaudible].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: What was the population when you were in East Lake?

MB: Of Atlanta?

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: East Lake

MB: Oh, East Lake. I don't know. It was probably [inaudible]. It was in DeKalb County. But before we lived there, before it became settled as it was when I moved there, it had been mainly summer cabins. A lot of those houses were just built up from little summer—

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I was thinking about the grocer calling you up and so forth. I wondered how many people were living in that area to do something like that.

MB: I think he called everybody. And then later we had [sounds like “bars”?—could be “cars”?]. And the thing about the grocery stores was so wonderful, they'd bring your groceries, and you didn't have your keys, you didn't lock your doors. They'd put the cold stuff in the refrigerator, other stuff on the floor [laughter].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Oh, my gosh

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Was Morgan Falls [inaudible] built in your time?

MB: I think it was. The only thing I know about it was the school.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: This is the '50s we're talking about, Morgan Falls.

MB: Well, they called it Morgan Falls School is all I know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: No, I meant the dam.

MB: I really didn't—I didn't get to go fishing.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I [inaudible] when it was built.

MB: I didn't know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: What part of Dunwoody?

MB: Mount Vernon Road—it's still there. The house is still there, the little broken-down barn is still there, chicken house is still there. And [inaudible phrase] homes, but honey, it's still there, just as it was.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: It's real near Brooke Farm subdivision. Do you know where that is?

MB: Oh, yeah, Brooke Farm subdivision. Oh, and you could get up in the morning and look out, and there was a lake that I guess the [inaudible phrase] had that lake. Get up early in the morning, and the mist would be rising up. It was so pretty. We went out recently just to look at it [inaudible phrase] and couldn't find it. But the house is—Mount Vernon, before you get to Spalding.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Mount Vernon Highway

MB: It is. Oh, I'm sorry. And then you walked down the road at night, just maybe a mile down the road, [inaudible phrase]. Other nights there'd be the moon there—it was so beautiful. But I couldn't [rest inaudible]. I just [inaudible] [*laughter*]. I'd go to bed every day at five o'clock, and then it got to where I had to go to bed at noon, and then it got where I couldn't get out [*laughter*].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Who was Colonel Maxey I heard you mention--?

MB: Colonel Maxey was a teacher at—what's it, Four Square Corners or something out there. What was the name of that?

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Peachtree Corners?

MB: No, it's Cross Keys. He was a teacher, I believe he taught math. He was such a—he told me once that he wasn't a mathematician. He said, "I have learned"—he said, "I studied a new way to teach [inaudible]." He says, "If I hear of a good teacher, I go talk to them. I observe them if I can." So, he had those children so excited over math. They would come to school at eight in the morning for extra work just because they wanted to. They had that song "[Inaudible] Against the Wall" or something—I can't remember it, but they brought that up when they were having this hearing as though it was seen as something obscene, you know. It used the word ["but" or "butt"—repeated three times] [*audience laughter*]. Then you get through it. But some woman in the system, I don't know what—oh, and then the principal didn't like it either, because, said that if he's going to be there at eight in the morning, instead of the teacher teaching the children math, he should be putting up posters and things. You know, he just wasn't doing what he could have been doing in the school. He shouldn't be—he did not want those children coming there early in the morning purely for algebra, what it was. He was—so this woman was out somewhere or other, and they were trying to get rid of her. You've never seen anything like this board of education. There would be fifty students there, half a dozen parents there, I was always there. And they were—those people were wild. Oh, he was a first-class, marvelous teacher, not doing anything wrong except taking time to teach and keep the children that excited

over math. It was—I think—I don't think—I think Cherry got [inaudible] before he realized what was going on, you know, to support somebody. I saw him about a week ago. He still looks great. He must be—

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Maxey?

MB: --Maxey. He must be ten years older than I am, still got his chest [inaudible—hair?] [laughter].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I want to tell you that I'm real happy to meet you, because your father-in-law was our family doctor when I was seven in East Atlanta.

MB: Imagine that! He was a wonderful doctor.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [Inaudible] Dr. Bridges, well, you know, everybody knew him and loved him.

MB: Yeah! He was a marvelous doctor. They said that he could do what old doctors used to do, that he could walk in, and certain diseases—I don't know what they were--and could smell them. He didn't have to examine them; he knew from their breath or something exactly what it was. And then he never sent a bill.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: No

MB: My granddaddy never sent a bill. My husband sent them, but he didn't do it—they didn't take it too seriously [audience laughter]. Then he'd call me and say, "[inaudible phrase] and get me some money please?" I would get on the phone and say, "Now, look, you haven't paid this bill in six months. Can't you come up with a little money?" Well, now, the doctors never bothered me. I said, so, when Glen started practicing, I said, "Glen, fourth generation? Let's get paid for what you do." I don't know whether he does or not, but I sure hope you do. But that just—

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Those were really the good old days [audience laughter].

MB: Well, the thing is, those old men died and left nothing but a house, you know no provisions [rest inaudible].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: A friend of mine who [inaudible phrase], a couple of months ago, she showed me his old home.

MB: Yeah, he really was a tremendous doctor. But the work—they worked day and night. They never stopped. And then the one I felt for was Mrs. Bridges. I've never seen anything like the way she worked. And then I'd just never seen that, and I had never seen the way they lived. And I know that I've been taught to have decent manners. The first time I was up there, here are all these people—nine people sitting at the table, here's Mrs. Bridges and her

daughter walking around and serving them. I mean, like something out of an old movie or something, and then the second table came in, and everybody walked around and served them. And then when that was over, they started washing the dishes. And Mildred said to me—I knew I was supposed to offer to help, and I said, [inaudible phrase] “Honey, I got a bad headache. I’ve got to go lie down” [*audience laughter*]. I don’t know what they must have thought of me. They must have thought, “That boy sure made a bad mistake marrying that [inaudible].” I was so shocked that she’d take me up on it.

Audio continues as video stops; black screen.

MODERATOR addresses audience, apparently to end the presentation and adjourn for refreshments, just as audio also stops.

Transcribed by Claudia Stucke