

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JUNE R. KRISE

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

EDITED AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

for the

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Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
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Edited by Laurence Stacey and Thomas A. Scott; indexed by Thomas A. Scott

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Location: Board Room, Alumni House, Kennesaw State University

TS: June, I guess we've known each other close to forty years now, it seems like. Why don't we just start with you talking about where you grew up and went to school and some things like that?

JK: Well, I was born in Alabama and left Gadsden, Alabama when I was in the eighth grade. I was actually born in Athens, Alabama, and did elementary school and junior high school in Gadsden, Alabama, came to Atlanta and went to Gordon High School [in Decatur, DeKalb County] actually. It's not there now. The Gordon Generals.

TS: John B. Gordon, yes.

JK: You know what I remember about that and this is strange, I graduated in '65 and DeKalb County integrated schools in '66. I'm telling history here.

TS: So you went all the way through in segregated schools then.

JK: I did. And then I married when I was nineteen. I went to Marsh Draughon Business College, if you can believe that. It's not there now either. It was right downtown Atlanta. It was a business school or might have been a college but Marsh Draughon. Yes, and my mother insisted that I learn to type like a whiz because that served her well in Washington, D.C. during the War before she met my dad. You know what? It served me well when I was working for the State of Georgia and they said, "We're all going to go on these computers. Everybody is going to have these computers." Some of the people could not—it wasn't because they weren't smart—they couldn't type! So my mother was right; the typing served me well, and I was a computer whiz because I could type. Then I came to Kennesaw; you want to know about that, I guess.

TS: What year did you come to Kennesaw?

JK: In '73. Is this a personal story?

TS: Well, yes, it's your story, that's exactly right.

JK: Not the school's story, but I guess it will be the school's story in a way.

TS: It's your part of the school story.

JK: I see.

TS: So you came in '73.

JK: I did. I was living in Woodstock, Georgia, married and living in Woodstock, and my husband said, “You know, you need to really get you something to do. I think he thought his mother should have had something too. She died young. I didn’t know either one of his parents. They both died before we were married—and he said, “I just think you’d be a good nurse.”

TS: You had a son by this time too.

JK: I had two children. And the college was right here near us, a community college that was a new concept in those days, I think, right, a community college? The junior colleges had just . . .

TS: Well, there was a great expansion of them, you’re exactly right, in that period in the 1960s.

JK: I said, “Well, okay.” So I looked into the nursing school; and, of course, I had such average and below average grades in high school. I was a basketball player mainly in high school, that’s what I did! [laughter] I was a basketball player.

TS: Were you a good player?

JK: I was pretty good.

TS: What did you play?

JK: My mom played when women could only dribble twice, and you had to throw it off. My sister and I played when there were three on each end of the court, and you could just go halfway, and you had to throw it across to the forwards, the guards did.

TS: One group played totally defense and the other offense.

JK: Absolutely. And now of course, that’s all different.

TS: What did you do?

JK: I was a forward, and my sister was a guard. I was a little old, skinny, scrawny thing, but I did okay. I would have never gotten a college basketball scholarship if they were offering them to women back then. But anyway, now get me back on track.

TS: Well, your husband at the time told you you needed to get something to do.

JK: Oh yes, he said, “You need to get something to do.” So I said, “Okay.”

TS: How old were the children by ’73?

JK: John's forty now, he'll be forty in May.

TS: So that would be '69, he had to be born in '69.

JK: Yes, he was.

TS: So that would make him four, and is he the older one?

JK: He's the older.

TS: John Rowland.

JK: Yes, and Amy. They actually have their pictures in the annual here. I brought them to campus a lot of times when I didn't have a babysitter. It was so small then, and they'd be in the Student Center, and I'd ask a friend to sit there while I went to class. [Nursing] was a two year program, but I had to do three because I almost didn't get in.

TS: Developmental Studies courses?

JK: I did, I almost did not get in. I said, "Look, I'm older now, I didn't apply myself, I can do this." So they said, "Okay, well, you can start taking some of these courses, and we'll see, and then we'll accept you the next year." Which they did, but it was so funny because I actually made better grades in Political Science and some of the other course than I did in my Nursing courses. Dr. [George H.] Beggs and Dr. Virginia [C.] Hinton opened up a whole new world for me. I was never the same person after getting some formal education, so to speak. High school is not really that much education for most, is it?

TS: Especially since you didn't apply yourself. [laughter]

JK: I mean, I'm just looking back now. Even if you don't view yourself [as] college material you might be. But it's a life-changing experience, and everybody needs to come to a college campus and get at least one year. If they flunk out, they need to, in my opinion. I tell people that all the time.

TS: Okay. So you liked your Political Science, you liked your English classes . . .

JK: I learned to write a 500-word theme extraordinaire. I was given a good lesson in feminism.

TS: From Virginia Hinton?

JK: I sure was.

TS: My goodness, what did she say?

JK: She impressed me. She wore a cross every day, and it was beautiful. Now Madonna, you know, she was ahead of her time, but Madonna wears rosaries hanging over her. But they were beautiful crosses. I didn't know she was Catholic or Episcopalian, and I didn't think about it at that time, I just remember her . . .

TS: I think she was Episcopalian, wasn't she?

JK: She would wear that cross. She was very, not strict, she was warm, but she was very formal. She kept her distance. I remember we were doing the names in the classes. I think she could remember everybody's name by where they sat, and then when she got to me, she said, "Mrs. (sounds like she's pronouncing it "miseries") June Rowland." And I said, "It's Ms." Of course, you know, college. I'm in college, and I missed the Sixties because I was having babies. So I'm doing my Sixties, and I said, "It's Ms." And she said, "You're married aren't you?" I said, "Yes ma'am." So she said, then it's "Mrs.," and she just went right on. She was correct English-wise, but I think that was the way she was correcting me, not the fact that I . . .

TS: And that was just when Ms. was coming in. I don't think that term existed before just about then.

JK: I don't think so, but I'll never forget that day. That was a good lesson. And then you know who Dr. Beggs had in our class here?

TS: No.

JK: Newt Gingrich.

TS: Oh.

JK: He was like a nut. I thought, "Who is this guy?" But then later on Dr. Beggs was the wiser one, wasn't he? I guess they were friends. I think he had lost a race at that time or something, but he was in politics, and Dr. Beggs said to us, "This guy's going places." Not in front of him, but he said, "I want to have him come, and he's an astute politician, and blah blah, blah." Well, Dr. Beggs—maybe they're still friends today.

TS: Well, I wouldn't put it as friends. [laughter]

JK: But Newt is very, in fact, I'm not a Republican but I could vote for him, if he was a Democrat.

TS: You can edit that out.

JK: Yes, we might have to edit, but in my old age I've started to listen to the other side more. I used to just detune people. But Nursing has served me well, oh mercy, served me well.

TS: So you took the remedial math, remedial English, all those things.

JK: I did.

TS: You got that out of the way and then went on and got a Nursing degree.

JK: Yes.

TS: We were talking about Charlotte [S.] Sachs before we turned on the tape; you want to say anything about that?

JK: Oh, I do, I do. There are two stories I want to tell. She may not know about the second one. Of course, she was present in the first one. I was separated from my husband. It was toward the end of Nursing school, and I was called to her office, and my heart was just up in my throat. She said, "I know you're separated from your husband." I asked, "How did you know that?" She said, "I know everything about all my Nursing students, and I care about them." I don't know if she used those exact words, but that's the way it came out. She urged me to take my time and not make a snap decision because Nursing school, though it wasn't medical school, was still stressful. I will tell you she demanded excellence, and she ran a pretty tight ship, and I'll have a story about that, but she said some other things about life and marriage and told me some things about her. I didn't know about, you know, I think our family has barely escaped the war too, all of that and I was, oh . . .

TS: Somebody in her family died in a concentration camp. [Edith Stein (Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) was her aunt].

JK: Yes. I told her I was most upset about my church. I had been excommunicated because the preacher had called you in and if you don't go a certain way they write you a letter in the Church of Christ. So she drew a circle. She turned over a piece of paper and drew a big circle, and put a dot in the middle of it and then little marks around and said, "Here are all the churches, and this dot is God. All of these churches, we're all going the same way, and we talk about it a little different." She said, "Find you another church, but go to church." So I have done that. I tell that story to people who get hurt feelings in their churches and whatnot, and, I mean, you just find you a little place to fit in because she's right, we're all talking about the same thing.

The other story that I have to tell about her, maybe you might want to cut this out of the tape too, because it may not be true, but I know this much of it to be true. Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis came in the old Student Center one day and said, "June I want to talk to you." We just went around to one of the little tables, and he started talking to me about my nursing math, and he said, "I understand that there's a policy now that if you don't pass this math you're just out of the Nursing school, you're kicked out regardless of all you other grades." I said, "Well, that's right." But you get three chances and it was twenty questions. I said, "I missed two questions the first time, but Dr. Sturgis, I made a hundred the second time." He said, "Well, how do you feel about that?" I said, "Well, the instructors say there's just all the errors in medication." There are so many errors [nurses

can't afford to make errors with patients' medications] and they just have to demand excellence in this area. But I said, "This is the way I look at it, Dr. Sturgis. I'm just the average person, and I'm not a rocket scientist, but I made a hundred, I did it." I was scared to death; it makes you nervous. You get nervous just because you know you've got to make a hundred. But I said, "It made me learn the math." I went out here to get people to help me, people who knew math, people that knew the metric system. You don't know how I was studying on this, and I really understand it, and I made a hundred. I figure if I can do it probably anybody can do it, that's the way I look at it." Then later I found out, I guess there had been some complaints, and there was this pretty influential doctor in the community that had had some issues with the Nursing school because I guess he had a daughter here. She didn't fail the math; she actually failed the clinical part. Of course, they won't even wash you out now in these days on the clinical. I don't think you can be washed out of Nursing school because you don't have the knack for taking care of people or you're doing it for maybe just a degree, but you don't really have the skills and the character for it or something. But evidently this girl, she put the wrong cream on somebody or something and just really, and she was out the door. But she had straight A's. So I guess there had been some other issues like that and then this complaint. But as far as I know that policy stayed that year; I don't know if it carried over the next year.

TS: I remember Charlotte Sachs justifying high standards by saying something to the effect that if you're a patient in a hospital, you want the nurses to get it right.

JK: Nowadays, just look on the news and everything. Not to say that you're not going to make an error; everybody does; but you have to come forward immediately when you do. That's the thing because there's always a drug to reverse what you did if you know quick enough.

TS: Right. Well, in addition to going through a pretty rigorous two-year nursing program, you got involved with student government and lots of other things, so why don't you talk about some of the activities that you got involved in?

JK: Well, I don't know. I decided to run for president of student government. Somebody suggested that I should do it, so I did, and I won. Be careful you might get what you want, as they say.

TS: But you'd been involved before you ran, hadn't you?

JK: I think so. I started going to the meetings.

TS: And you had some other offices before president, didn't you?

JK: I think so. I can't remember what I did before I was president, but I clearly remember being president. I think that's why I decided to run. I thought there was some hanky-panky going on, the waste of the money by the current administration. They were going

on these retreats and taking their girlfriends and just spending the night. Just like real politics now!

TS: Taking the student activities fee.

JK: Oh, maybe so. Maybe squandering it a little bit, but really looking back now there might not have been. I mean, if they were doing their business and having to take their girlfriend along, so what? I go along on my husband's business trips now, but back then, I took that to heart. I thought, "Hm, I'm not going to do that." And then if you run based on that stance then you really have to tow the line, which I hope I did.

TS: So you got elected president and this would have been '74 or '75?

JK: Yes.

TS: Well, you took three years so you graduated in '76 so this would probably be about '75 maybe that you were president? I know you were involved with the politics of the four-year conversion and that's '76 that that took place, April of '76 when the Board of Regents voted us four years.

JK: I know in '77 I was not president.

TS: What do you have there, the old *Sentinel*?

JK: I kept that. I kept a few things, and it's probably in there.

TS: There's Dr. Sturgis.

JK: They said that was really out of character for him.

TS: To be out there?

JK: Oh, to even touch a student or anything.

TS: Well, he was pretty reserved, and I don't know that I've ever seen him without his coat and tie.

JK: Very conservative.

TS: In this picture he's got a . . .

JK: There was some music going on out there on the quadrangle, we called it.

TS: There's a sweater over his shirt, he doesn't have his tie on. It looks like a bear or something.



JK: That says Four Years Kennesaw. No that's the Owl, you know we had those four-year Kennesaw t-shirts, and I've got one somewhere, and I'm going to dig it out.

TS: So this is from KJC Day, June 6, 1977. It looks like a bunch of hippie students.

JK: Isn't that awful? We even had streakers. You remember the streakers we had?

TS: Yes. That looks like it might even be your nursing uniform.

JK: It is.

TS: My goodness. Frank Wilson.

JK: He's an Episcopal priest now, a rector.

TS: Yes. And he was a counselor I guess at that time, but he looks like a hippie himself out there.

JK: Can you believe that?

TS: Oh, we had Palestinian students at that time because they're involved in the tug-of-war.

JK: And I kept this letter from Dr. Sturgis. I adored him.

TS: At any rate you're dancing with Dr. Sturgis out there outside the student center.

JK: Yes. Now when I was student government president, you know, Dr. Scott, I got to looking for stuff because now I see why it's so important to write things down because you cannot remember diddly-squat.

TS: Oh this is wonderful, the state of the campus address. And Frank Wilson was coordinator of Student Affairs.

JK: You know I thought I was president of the United States, so I had to write that down!  
[laughter]

TS: That's wonderful.

JK: I sent it to Dr. Sturgis, and he wrote me a note back.

TS: Let's see if we can make a copy of this before we leave here today.

JK: Here's the letter he wrote me back.

TS: His letter is January 2, 1976. Here's your copy of the State of the Campus Address.

JK: I sent it to him!

TS: Well, you know Dan Papp does the State of the University Address now, so you took on that job yourself. Dr. Sturgis says that he read your letter “with a great deal of interest” and comments on “this excellent summary of your activities for the past two quarters. I’m very proud of our Student Government Association and the many contributions that it has made to our college during the past nine years. I congratulate each of you.” And so on. Okay, so you were definitely president on January 2, 1976.

JK: I didn’t put a date on that, but he wrote that letter.

TS: That would be in response . . .

JK: To that.

TS: So this must have had to be right at the end of ’75 or beginning of ’76 then. Well, great. We’ll try to make a copy of this before you get away from here. Talk a little bit about what you did as president of student government.

JK: Oh, well, we had a budget, we had money, and we could spend it on, like the Chautauqua series, I remember. That was one of the best things we ever did.

TS: So we already had Chautauqua.

JK: Then we had a student film series where I guess we did movies or they had different classical movies or something. But the students really voted how to spend the money and how to divide up the pie. There were some really good folks and smart people, and they were service-minded people—they really wanted to serve their community. Now that I look back, I wonder why in the hell would anybody want to do that. Usually you get kicked in the teeth for really wanting to serve, and you have to fight to be president of the United States like a dog and be ridiculed and chopped to pieces just to get to “serve the people.”

TS: Right. Well, I see Bowman [O.] Davis, [Jr.], was the advisor.

JK: He was. Now let me tell you, that’s one smart man. That is one smart man. Of course, I was exposed to him through the anatomy and physiology.

TS: Part of the Nursing program, yes, he would have taught those courses.

JK: Absolutely. We had to cut up these frogs and all this stuff, but he taught this holistic approach to the body like if one system breaks down how it affects the other, and he really stressed that. It served me well today in my little teachings that I do for my little folks now out here in the settings where I try to train them to bathe and dress and groom. They always want to know more, you know, and you don’t always have to know or understand why. It just happens, and do it. I can’t go into the depths of the explaining,

but I do use some of the principles and everything he taught. The simple, the basic, to make you understand how the body is so intricate and how it's just a miracle the way the human body works, really and truly. But, anyway, he wrote a book, a beautiful textbook on the holistic approach to things, and that was before all these people started giving all these seminars for \$300 and \$400 out in the woods and everything to go try to be whole and understand your body and anatomy [laughter]. He was using that term. But he didn't want to do it at first, when I asked him. I think he was kind of like honored that I would ask him, and I think he knew I was in awe of him as a young student. But he's really smart, and I thought, if we can get this guy to work with us, we'll do well.

He did serve us well because I'm telling you, there were a couple of times if he hadn't stepped in there and pulled in the reins, it would have been the biggest mess you had ever seen in your life. And he did step in a couple of times, and I would just shut up, and I wouldn't take it any further. There's a lot of gossip and politics and things that stir up on a campus that have to do with even the professors and the politics of the teachers that you really shouldn't be getting into. He was a behind the scenes kind of guy, but I can tell you he was steering that ship. I would go out just about on a daily basis to that tennis court—he used to play tennis out there—and I would stand at the fence with my fingers on it like a little child, and I would be telling him about this awful whatever, and he'd give me the best advice, and I'd go do it. Sometimes he'd say, "Just don't say anything. Wait a week. Wait a week. Don't say anything. Let everything else stir, and then come back." Then a lot of times I wouldn't even have to come back to see him because it would be . . .

TS: Resolved?

JK: Absolutely. But he was trying to tell me then, I was going overboard, I was making more out of it than needed to be. It was a great learning experience for me, and student government and student activities help people grow in that way. While it was not a textbook learning kind of thing where I got a grade, it served me well later on. I said that same thing to people that came to me later, I'll say, just like he did.

TS: Just wait.

JK: Yes.

TS: Well, certainly one of the significant long-range things that you were involved in was the four-year campaign. Could you talk a little bit about that?

JK: Oh Lord. It's in this—I wrote a little bit about it there.

TS: I saw that.

JK: Well, I really can't remember how it got started. Who actually was the first person to say, "I think we need a four-year school here." I'd like to say it was me, but it probably wasn't.

TS: Well, Dr. Sturgis told me that the first group of community leaders that he ever talked to when he was introduced as the president, the first question they asked him was, “When are we going to be a four-year college?”

JK: So it was out there in the community all along, a seed, or people thinking about it. That makes sense.

TS: Right. One thing you mentioned in here though is what happened in 1975 when we dedicated the Carmichael Student Center. George Busbee was governor, and he came out here for the dedication.

JK: Following the dedication of the James V. Carmichael Student Center, Dr. Sturgis wrote me a letter, dated October 2, 1975 that says: “I could not have been more proud of you and our students than I was this morning during the dedication of our James V. Carmichael Student Center.”

TS: Explain what the students did, because I think Dr. Sturgis didn’t know you were going to do it.

JK: Well, I didn’t know it either.

TS: You didn’t?

JK: No. I was on the part of the program, and I was to give Mrs. Carmichael a plaque from the students.

TS: Jimmie Carmichael had died by this time. He died in ’72, actually, so his widow was here.

JK: Yes. So I was on the stage, looking back. I had this awful looking outfit on. Oh Lord, I look at that outfit now, and I wonder how anybody could even let me sit on the stage. Dr. Sturgis must have had a big heart.

TS: We all looked awful in the 1970s.

JK: Oh, my gosh, it was awful. But I didn’t know they were going to do that either. It was Randy Krise and Wayne Carter . . .

TS: Randy Krise would be a future brother-in-law.

JK: That’s right.

TS: And who else did you say?

JK: Wayne Carter was the one that was holding the sign [saying “Four Years Now”]. I talked about it in my statement. But when they came across, and I’ll have to hand it to them, it was just at the appropriate time toward the end of everything. They didn’t cause this big disruption, but I didn’t know they were going to do it either. So, yes, it just all worked out perfectly. There were a lot of people that just really wanted to get their point across.

TS: Tell what happened.

JK: Well, we were toward the end of the program, and I think maybe Dr. Sturgis might have been making some remarks there at the end, and all of a sudden upstairs they came across with this huge banner, and it was dropped down over the rail facing all these politicians that were sitting on the stage, like Joe Mack Wilson and a lot of those elected officials from Cobb County that had a lot of influence in the legislature at that time.

TS: Al Burruss and all of those.

JK: Yes. They were all on the stage. It was huge, and they didn’t have to say a word.

TS: Four Years Now.

JJK: The banner said it all. And as they came across, they dropped it down, and they just walked around with it. Of course, we could see it, and then when people started clapping, people turned around, and then it was just a big roar of everybody. I think Dr. Sturgis made some remarks about, “Well, everybody knows that we’re . . .” and he turned around and, I mean, how much better could it have been said, just a sign. It was perfect. There didn’t have to be a rally or disrupting or anything, but I guess they wanted to get their point across, and it really got the point across, and the way Dr. Sturgis wrapped it up, it couldn’t have been more perfect.

TS: Did you catch Governor Busbee’s reaction?

JK: I did. I did. He smiled and nodded, and you know how they do. I think Joe Mack Wilson was really proud. Later on, I found out they were really encouraging—while they weren’t working with the student movement, they really wanted it to go on, and they were happy because it was helping what they were doing.

TS: Absolutely.

JK: They wanted it for the community. They had this vision, like you said, from years back, and this was the time now to move it and to get it through the legislature.

TS: Well, Joe Mack Wilson was already putting money in the budget for Kennesaw conversion, and the Board of Regents just wasn’t spending it.

JK: Right. That would make sense.

TS: And Busbee had promised in the '74 campaign that he would support four-year conversion.

JK: At that time, I didn't know all of that. We were just students, and we knew what we had here. Really, [without] a community college concept, I wouldn't be where I am today, if I'm anywhere. It truly lifted people up that really could not go away to a big college— [students] that maybe had had children or didn't have the money to stay on a big college campus. I don't know if there are that many community colleges now, but I hate to see them go away because I think people came and got an education that couldn't maybe have gone away to get one.

TS: Right.

JK: It seemed to me that the philosophy or the groundwork that was laid while it was a little, protected community—the academics were so high. They wanted them to be so high. I think there were several times that everybody in the Nursing class that went to take the Nursing Board passed the test, 100 percent pass rate from Kennesaw Junior College. That shows you're stressing excellence, and it served Kennesaw College well. But anyway, the four-year movement was just unbelievable. It was really unbelievable. It never got out of hand. We had little projects we did. We got over 10,000 signatures on a petition. It really gave everybody something to rally around. It was a source of great pride for the students and for the faculty, I think. Dr. Sturgis was happy, I think, that we were doing it. While he didn't get out here and feed us information and say go do this or that, he kind of let it play out.

TS: So he stayed totally out of it?

JK: He did. I would ask Bowman. He might have been talking to Bowman Davis, I don't know, but he didn't say, "Don't do this, don't do that, I don't want you out here." Like I said, Dr. Davis was watching everything we did as a faculty advisor. Then, with everything going on at the legislature, anything we did I think helped. I think the community wanted it, and all the students wanted it. He invited me, I'll never forget this, and he didn't have to do this, he invited me to go downtown to Atlanta with him.

TS: To the Board of Regents?

JK: And it was the day they voted to make it four year.

TS: How about that.

JK: And I got to see it!

TS: You mentioned the petition; where did you take the petition to get all those signatures?

JK: Shopping centers and downtown and just, I forget where. Where was the shopping center out here then? We went off campus.

TS: I think you went to Cumberland Mall.

JK: We did, we went off campus.

TS: That opened in '73.

JK: Yes, we went off campus.

TS: But you went other places too.

JK: Yes. I'll never forget him asking me to go downtown. But he was kind.

TS: Do you remember what the petition said?

JK: No, I'd like to have a copy of it. I mean, where is that banner? We could have saved that banner and didn't. It's probably gone. I think I've got an old "Four Year Now" t-shirt; I'm going to dig it out. It's stuffed back somewhere. I kept for years.

TS: We've got a KSU Archives now. It would be a good place for it.

JK: It sure would.

TS: Would you say that is the biggest thing that you did as president?

JK: Well, it overshadowed everything. The business of the Student Government was going on, and it's in my little report. Yes, that overshadowed everything. It was exciting, but we had a lot of other things that were going on, the ways we were spending our money and different things.

TS: This was at the tail end of student protests.

JK: Oh, Lord, I remember, yes, we had a sit-in.

TS: Did you?

JK: Well, I didn't sit in because I just respected Dr. Sturgis so much I just couldn't sit in on his office. I said, "I will not sit in."

TS: Well, you had open access already; you didn't need to sit in.

JK: You're right. [laughter] You're right. And he had an open door policy. I don't know why they sat in there, but he didn't stop it; he let them sit in. They could sit in every day, all day; he didn't try to have them hauled off by the police or anything; he just let them. I remember it just played out, and somehow it got resolved. I can't even remember what they were sitting in about now.

TS: It seems like it was some frivolous thing like going on a trip to Miami to play some kind of games down there or something.

JK: It was. And while I might have agreed with them, I remember saying I just couldn't. I mean, Dr. Sturgis was very dignified. He was kind of like the Pope, although I'm sure he had his faults! [laughter] He was kind of like the Pope. He was reverent to you, at least when he was with me. He just treated me like royalty when I wasn't. His eyes were kind; his mannerisms were kind. Was he ever mean? Did you ever know him to be really mean? I guess you did. [Laughter] But to me he was not. He couldn't have been more gracious and kind and helpful and tried to guide you in the right direction. Even when I would criticize somebody, he'd never say a bad word about it.

TS: After he had retired, we did ten hours of interviews about his presidency.

JK: That reminds me, when he was on his way out, and Betty Siegel, Dr. Siegel, was on her way in, I approached him. He had an office here, and, of course, I just couldn't imagine him being gone. I was happy she was coming; she was a ball of fire; but I said, "Let's do something, let's get this going, let's don't let this die, and we'll do something out here." "June," he said, "no, and I'm going to tell you why. I need to be as far removed as I can be. It will not serve her well, or the university well, for me to stay involved in any way."

TS: That was his attitude.

JK: Well, I thought, at the time, why wouldn't he help her, why wouldn't he want to just stay involved in the college. But as time went on, I saw the politics, and she had some rough days in those early days. I guess maybe there were some people that were not so happy she was coming like some of us, or in other words, people would have used him against the current administration. I think that was what he was trying to say without saying it; I saw that later. And, you know, he was right. He was the past president; he needed to go on and not meddle. People would have used him or asked him, "What do you think," when these issues came up.

TS: Right. And he doesn't need to be second-guessing.

JK: He was the wise one, always the wise one.

TS: Yes, absolutely. Okay, so you graduated, and so you go on with a nursing career at that point?

JK: Yes. Lord, and what a road it has been.

TS: When did you remarry?



JK: Right after I graduated from nursing school, I remarried in March 1977. I think it's actually the first day of spring. I was working at Kennestone Hospital, and Cecil Fike [Kennestone chaplain] married us in the chapel there.

TS: Oh really, the chapel in the hospital?

JK: I wanted to be married here in the college, and Dr. Sturgis said "June, don't do that." More good advice. In fact, I should have just had another big huge white wedding, but I didn't. I just got married in the little chapel at the hospital with a preacher and all that.

TS: But he said don't do it because . . .

JK: He said, "Marriages are very personal. I know your feelings for the college, and you and Richard met here, but you really need to think about that." And he was right. It's a family thing and all of that, and I guess it would have started just a rash of people getting married here! [laughter]

TS: So did you and Richard graduate at the same time?

JK: No. Richard was at Georgia State University, and then he went to UGA, finished his doctorate there. I remember he was talking to Dr. Fred Roach about principalships and the politics, and he said, "Don't rush it Richard, you'll have that position soon enough. They burn out fast." Back in those days principals stayed at schools for years and years, but he could see then how education was moving. You're lucky to stay three or four years as a principal anywhere now. Education is a lot different, just like healthcare. It's changed.

TS: Yes. So Richard got his associate degree at Kennesaw and then went to Georgia State and then kept going.

JK: And then on to UGA. We would have gone to Emory, but it was so expensive. Man, it's expensive. At that time, of course, we were both working and raising a family.

TS: So Richard took on your two little children when you got married.

JK: He did. And he said, "June, I really don't desire to have children. I'll help you raise yours." I said, "Well . . ." [laughter] Of course, our parents were really pressuring us, my mom and his mom, they were just pressuring us to get married. And do you know, he was living at my place at the time over in Woodstock, and our neighbors would not speak to us, but the day after we officially got married, the neighbor on the other side came over there, and it was just like, just because we got a marriage license, okay, you all are official now. They came over and couldn't have been nicer, but while we were just living together, they didn't speak and wouldn't let their children come over in the yard and play with my children. One of them said they weren't going to let their kids play. I thought, well . . . of course, that didn't matter to me. We were young and in love, and luckily it's lasted this time as long as it has.

But, anyway, getting back to Richard not wanting to have kids, we did have one, even though he's never shown any difference, and they're all close. He kept saying, "Why do you let them run all over you?" My two older ones have some of the good values they have now because he could say "no" more than I could. So I said to myself, we're going to have one child, and he's going to see. Now you think that's crazy for me to say that, and maybe you need to do a study on that. I'm not saying that he was mean to John and Amy, he was not, but I wanted him to see how it felt when you actually see somebody that looks like you that is your blood and how they can just run over you because you know, maybe mothers are that way because they go along with them nine months and then spit the little aliens out. But we had Matthew, and, honey, did that Matthew ever run over him, and I remind him of that to this day. "Okay, look, you didn't say 'no,' and you let him have all of this, and you shouldn't have, and I was telling you not to."

TS: So Matthew Krise is the third one.

JK: Yes. He's the young one. And he's in Chicago. He was a big Obama guy way before, because he lived out there. I said, "Now, Matthew, uh-huh." But you see how that turned out.

TS: I guess he was right.

JK: Well, it looks like it.

TS: Okay, so you're working at Kennestone, Richard is teaching and still going to graduate school, I guess, and somewhere along the line he was assistant principal at North Cobb High School.

JK: Oh, yes. He worked a lot of years in the system at Cobb as associate principal. Then we went on out to Tallapoosa, Georgia, and I got to know Tom Murphy. It was too conservative out there for me. They had a big rebel flag on the side of their school, and when we went over there Richard said, "Now, June, I know what you're going to say, but that flag is not coming off the side of that school, I've already been told." I said, "My God, how can they get away with that?" You know, it was huge! In fact, somebody did do something to it, and they blamed Richard because I was so outspoken about it. Other schools would come in there to play football, and the African American football players would see that, and they'd just stomp the snot out of us. That's the truth.

TS: Was that Haralson High School?

JK: Yes. And they had a little incident out there about that. Somebody did paint it off. It wasn't me, it wasn't Richard. I think it was one of the football coaches because they got tired of hearing about it . . .

TS: Of getting beat!

JK: When the other teams would come in. But I got to meet Tom Murphy and got to know him. He wasn't a big mean thing with horns. I got to know his daughter, Ms. Martha Long. Martha Murphy Long. She's in the insurance business out there. Those girls, I'm telling you, that was just a good, solid, American family, a good American story. One of his daughters was married to a guy that had Lou Gehrig's disease or something like that, so he [Tom Murphy] really helped the handicapped and was concerned about people who couldn't do for themselves, and I think he always looked out for folks like that and although I know he was shrewd, but I really did like him. I would go see him, and he'd have those little twinkly eyes, and he'd just listen to you. A great guy. They don't come along like that every day. I didn't think well of him from hearing about him in the news, but after I got to know him and his family from being out there, I would sing his praises, so I was glad that I lived there and got to know him.

TS: What years were those that you were in Haralson County?

JK: Let's see. I left state government in 2002, so it was 1996, '97 and '98 to '01. I don't know exactly. I was working for state government at that time in regulatory services. I did a lot of different things in the nursing field, and I was paid a high compliment by a doctor at Windy Hill Hospital one time. He said, "You must be an old Georgia Baptist graduate." I said, "No, sir, Kennesaw Junior College." At that time two year degree nurses weren't looked on [highly]. The diploma programs were still considered the premier programs. In the diploma programs you get one year; you work in there free in those hospitals. [One of the KJC instructors] said: "How many times does it take putting a bed pan under somebody to learn how to do it?" She said, "In six months you'll be as good a nurse or better." You've got to have the educational part of it, not just the technical part of it. I'm sure they knew this was coming to Georgia, and the hospitals had already instituted a longer, more rigorous orientation program. I had a good little nurse over there who took me under her wing on the night shift. I made \$4.25 an hour as a graduate nurse. Then when I found out I passed [the Nursing Board exam] I thought I was going to get this big raise; a dime! So then I moved to this other hospital over at Windy Hill for \$1.50 more on the night shift; they really needed somebody. But, you know, now nursing pays very well. There's a shortage of them like teachers now.

TS: Who was the nurse who took you under her wing?

JK: I was on the night shift, and the night shift supervisor there on the orthopedics was Linda Carpenter. She taught me more than . . . you know, you learn stuff in school, but she just took me under her wing.

TS: That's where you really learned it?

JK: Oh, man.

TS: When did you start getting involved with the Alumni Association?

JK: That was another Dr. Sturgis. He hand-picked that first group, I do believe, of people he knew. It was a diverse group because now, you have to look back; I'm not going to get my Ph.D., he knew that. I'm not old money in Marietta, not anybody that could do anything influentially, personally, or financially for this college. I was not. But he saw some sort of value that I might have or place that I might serve. I will never forget that. I did not know that then, I was so caught up in myself and what was going on. But looking back, he put that mix together and knew of, I guess, my passion, the fact that I did see the worth of education at that time and see the dedication of the professors here, and they had time for you. If you needed a little help now, I guess you don't, it's so big. But maybe that's why he picked that first group. The president was the banker.

TS: Ed Mulkey.

JK: Perfect choice, wasn't it? And then others on there that would sing the praises of the college and weren't afraid to get out here and talk about it and praise it and still had that student aspect that would have the legs and the voice to run while the older, more wise ones could sit at the table and do things that needed to be done that way.

TS: So you were involved from the very beginning then of that group that started it in '77?

JK: Yes. I saved that. I didn't realize how to say you're a pioneer; it makes you feel so old; but you're the first; it's all here.

TS: A little bit over thirty years ago.

JK: It's too long.

TS: So what do you have here?

JK: I'm feeling kind of old! The Alumni Association, the first one where they incorporated it.

TS: Oh, the incorporation papers: June 13, 1977.

JK: And the first board of directors.

TS: Signed by Ben Fortson, the Secretary of State.

JK: I know that's probably in the archives.

TS: I wouldn't count on it. Fred Bentley, Sr., did the incorporation work, 272 Washington Avenue.

JK: Yes, he was always a big advocate for the school.

TS: Let's see, you have the charter and then the initial Board of Directors: Hoyt D. Amos, Michael Baker, William B. Bone, Lewis V. Brendle, Jr., Frances B. Holt, William L. Holt, Steve Knighton, Randy L. Krise, Brenda A. Moore, June W. Rowland—it was still June Rowland when you incorporated.

JK: That's right.

TS: Donna R. Wilson and Starr C. Worley. Then the incorporators were Ed Mulkey, Bert Frye, Richard M. Krise, R. Kaye Wilson, and David T. Worley.

JK: Do you know David Worley? I still see him occasionally. He serves on the election board for the Democratic Party, and he's on the national Democratic committee now. He's an employment attorney. He handled a case at the State while I was there. I referred a friend of mine to him and David is quite a guy; he'd be a good interview. He surely would. He's had some exciting times.

TS: And then it's got others who participated in the organizational meetings and some additional names: Nina D. Alexander, Patricia A. Ashcraft, Shari Baker, Mrs. Cornelia Garner, Patricia T. Hatch, Michael R. Hosford, Julia O. Howell, Elaine Hubbard, Marie H. Mulkey, Ken Rogers, Kathleen Scott, Lynn Stephenson, Lucille C. Thomas, Laurie L. Weaver, Donna R. Wilson, and Dr. Steven Wilson. Very good. This is great to have.

JK: But Dr. Sturgis was a visionary, and I guess a lot of the people that served with him and the people he called on were laying that foundation. Of course, I didn't realize it at the time. I was just happy to be involved, and it was a very positive experience. I can't say one negative thing about it. It's one of the most positive experiences of my life.

TS: So you all got together; you incorporated; and let's see, you were actually the third president. Your first term as president was 1980-'81. Ed Mulkey was first, Bert Frye was second, and you were third. Then Elaine Hubbard and then Steven Knighton and then Kathy [Scott], and then Melonie Wallace and then Elaine Hubbard again and then John Delves, and then you served a second term from '87 to '88 or the '87-'88 school year, I guess.

JK: Yes.

TS: Can you talk a little bit about what you all did in the Alumni Association in those days?

JK: I do remember one thing: you know, you always remember these things. We had meetings, and we did what alumni associations do. We had an executive director that mostly ran things. Now, Spec [James D. Landrum], didn't he go on to become the athletic director?

TS: That's right.

JK: I think he was better at that. He liked athletics. I remember one time we had a little run-in, and we ended up in this lawyer's office in Marietta. I learned then how people can push things through. I learned how valuable minutes are of the meeting, and when groups come together, they vote on the minutes, and those minutes stand, and that's official. We were in this lawyer's office, and he was trying to do something, and I just said no.

TS: The lawyer was trying to do something?

JK: No, no, Spec.

TS: Spec was trying to do something?

JK: Yes, it was an official thing to do with the Alumni Association. Anyway, I said, "No, no, no." We went to this lawyer's office. He was that adamant about it; he wanted to meet me at such-and-such a lawyer's office down there on the Square in Marietta. So I went down there, and we were having this discussion. So he pulls out the minutes of the meeting, Spec does. He reads the minutes of the meeting, and I said, "No, I was at that meeting, and that is wrong. That is not what happened in that meeting." The lawyer said, "Well, the minutes of the meeting . . . ." And I said, "No, we haven't had another meeting, and we haven't passed off on those minutes." And he said, "Well, you know what? This meeting is adjourned. Y'all come back when you . . . ." I'm trying to think of what it was now, but Spec just went . . . [she bangs on the desk]. That was another learning experience for me. Then we had a battle royal at the next meeting, but in those early days you do when people are trying to get things going. Looking back, he probably knew more than I did, but it was something that was just in my gut was not right. Then when he read those minutes, I said, "Absolutely not. That's not what happened at that meeting. Who wrote those minutes?" Then I realized people might write minutes just like they want to write them, not like what really happened in the meeting.

TS: Sure.

JK: So now I serve on a board, and I'm just a stickler, and the guy will say, "Why are you just so detailed?" And I say, "Because I had an experience one time, and I want it detailed in there because you can go off and do what you want to and say the people voted on it when they didn't." That's stuck with me to this day. So I'm probably overboard on that.

TS: Did you all do any fundraising while you were involved with alumni?

JK: I'm sure we did. But you know. . .

TS: Phon-a-thons?

JK: We did. But it just seemed like the money came. It wasn't the focus like we had to go out here and raise millions of dollars. It was like, we put those things in place where

alumni would do phon-a-thons and things, like that but I just don't remember anybody ever being worried about money. We were just laying the foundation because they knew as the college would grow, everybody is going to donate money to the school. Some a lot more than others but some \$25, \$30, \$50, and you think when you get thousands of graduates, hundreds of thousands, and they're all sending \$100.00, you're going to have money on top of what philanthropists can donate through the efforts of a dynamic and charismatic president like Kennesaw had. Surely we won't ever have to worry about having money to do stuff, but everybody needs money.

But I remember too, after Dr. Siegel came on, thinking about that. I think that's when I really realized that it was a cut-throat money game. Maybe we'd gotten away from being so close to students and lifting them up and giving them learning experiences. I remember some of the people leaving that I had been so close to. Now this is just a very personal note. It doesn't amount to a hill of beans, but I remember just having a very bad feeling when I saw some of the people I had known at the college being what I thought was being forced out because of the new regime. But as I've gotten older and grown and been involved in things like that, I know that has to be. When the new regime comes in, the new people have to come in. You might as well just smile and go on down the road. But that part of the change in the college I didn't like. This was just kind of sad. But it's over, and we're all happy now, and things worked out great.

TS: Your first term, '80-'81 was the transition period when Dr. Sturgis announced his retirement right at the start of fall quarter in 1980.

JK: We didn't want him to retire. We begged him not to. I say "we"; I said, "Dr. Sturgis, you don't really have to retire." You know what he said? He said, "June, it's always best to go out on a winning note. Look at what all has happened, how great it has been. Any day something could go south, and then all this, that's what they'll remember. It's just, this is my time; this is the time for me to go."

TS: Well, he was able to preside over the first graduation of the first four-year class in 1980 in June, and then three months later he announced his retirement. So I guess it was good timing.

JK: Yes.

TS: But you would have been alumni president during that transition period when Gene Huck was acting president, and then Betty Siegel came in. Were you on the search committee?

JK: I was.

TS: And you were there as the alumni president?

JK: Dr. Roach said, "June, let's go have a cup of coffee." So we went down to McDonald's up near Bells Ferry, that McDonald's. I don't know if it's still there.

TS: Yes, it's still there.

JK: I said, "Sure, I'll have a cup of coffee." So he said, "Now, you know, we're going to search for a new president." And I hadn't been asked to be on the committee or anything; he was just talking to me. He said, "What would be your idea of the perfect college president for Kennesaw?" I said, "Just what we've got, like Dr. Sturgis, but handsome, charismatic, I mean, can get out here and just grab people; you just look at him and you go, 'Oh!'" I was talking in terms of male gender. I was describing—and I said, "Like a superman, kind of a superman." I said, "Dr. Sturgis is so conservative. Grounded like that, but just a charismatic, good-looking, somebody who's really on fire!" Then it turned out to be that, but the female gender! [laughter] That was so funny. I remember thinking, gosh, I was describing a guy; it was a man in my mind. I don't know if he'd remember that, but we sat there, and that's what I said. Then later he said, "Would [you] be on the committee." Oh Lord, was that ever an ordeal. But, you know, Dr. Davis, Herb Davis, Roger the controller.

TS: Roger Hopkins.

JK: I'm trying to think of some of the ladies that were on there; the Landrum lady was on there, wasn't she?

TS: Mildred? I'm pretty sure Cary Turner was on there.

JK: I'm trying to think who some of the ladies were that were on there. Who is that?

TS: That's Wyman Pilcher.

JK: He was on there. He adored Betty from the first time she stepped in the door and just cocked her head and smiled. It was hard for him to admit that he was captivated, especially after she started talking and she was smart too. I could just tell.

TS: Well, she named a building for him.

JK: Well, he was one of her big [supporters] from the get-go. He didn't want to have to say so, but now Roger and some of the others—and we had a lot of good candidates. It was her charisma, her style, her energy. She was ready to go. She wanted to get out here and make something and build something and be something; you could just feel it. But they said, "Oh, well, now, she's not going to do this, and she doesn't have experience in that, and she can't make the money decisions and what not." I said, "Roger you're going to take care of the money. We don't need anybody to do the money. And Herb Davis isn't going to let anything happened to the academics. Y'all will stand up to any president that wanted to tear Kennesaw College down. We need this here. This is what we need. Y'all can take care of all that, can't you?" I remember we had this big discussion about that, but I understand how they felt. They came back, somebody said, "We're going to go out and research." Can I tell this?



TS: I guess so.

JK: Well, one of the members of the committee said, when it got really down and we all had to recommend three to the Chancellor, but we couldn't put them in order, but we had to recommend three. Some of us were really pushing for her. This one, I believe it was Herb Davis, but I'm not sure, "Now, I'm going to go out here and I'm going to make some calls. I'm going to do some digging." Well, I was worried about it. I thought, well, maybe two people ought to do the digging; you might not come back here and tell the truth. But anyway, when he came back, he said, "I'm going to tell you something. I made some calls over to this school and that school and the other school, and I know somebody over there who knew somebody, and they said that, 'No, she would not do the cut-throat things that needed to be done, but you could damn well bet she was going to have somebody who would do it.'" That's what he said. "No, she won't do it, but she'll hire somebody that will. That's going to be the person that's going to be doing all this here." So that was that.

TS: So Herb was satisfied then?

JK: Yes. Her style was that she would not be the person, who would do it, but there was going to be somebody there that would do it, and they'd be good at it. That's not always a good thing to be good at, reorganization of the college when a new president comes in, but I think that Ed Rugg maybe was the one. Is he still here?

TS: Yes.

JK: He was very instrumental in those early days I think. I remember him. I was not as close to things, but I followed Betty Siegel. You can bet I always followed her. I liked hearing about her, and I took great pride in anything that had to do with the college. In fact, I interviewed this nurse the other day for a position at this company where I was directly employed, but now I'm consulting with them, and she's getting her master's in nursing here at Kennesaw. I told her it was a junior college. She said, "Oh yes, I remember, they said it used to be just two buildings and a pasture."

TS: [laughter]

JK: That's what she said, "That's what they said; it used to just be out in a big pasture, and there were two buildings and this big pasture." I said, "Yes, well, that's sort of when I was there." I didn't hire her, by the way! [laughter] No, she's a bright girl; she's going to do well.

TS: Good. Was there any big difference in your two terms as president of alumni? Did things change much in those years or was it pretty much the same?

JK: No, I didn't see myself as initiating anything for the college. I would have ideas, of course, but I saw myself as a vehicle for carrying out what Dr. Sturgis had in mind. That may sound awful, and not to say that I wouldn't have had my own ideas, but I very much

would not have gone against him, I just would not have. That's the loyalty that I felt after getting to know him just as a student, and it was a very professional getting to know him. I didn't view him even as a father image, but he just in my eyes held the greatest respect, and so that's sort of the way that I viewed what I was doing now. If I come on to an organization now at my age in my time in life, I'm very different, but then I was wanting to serve, listening, just carrying out whatever the plans were that the college had and the executive directors had. It was their creating, and I was placed there because they viewed that I would be that way, be honoring of what the administration needed and wanted as far as the direction of Kennesaw. That's the way I viewed it then.

TS: Okay. Well, what are you proudest of of your involvement with Kennesaw?

JK: The relationships that I built. I might not see Kathy [Scott] or different ones every day. But I feel like, if I called her at any certain point in time, and there was something huge that I needed to talk about or a direction I wanted to take or something that we needed to do, she would listen, and she would come. And I'm just picking Kathy because she was one of . . . but there are some relationships that I built like that. I'm just proud that I was here at the time, and it was other people that did it. I just happened to be in the mix and was one of the benefactors of an event of a group of people working together at all levels that swirled up and created something beautiful and actually helped a community. A college in a community should be loved and nurtured and lifted up because if anything is going to save us, it's our liberal colleges. And I do hope that even though it's in a very conservative area, it keeps the liberal college image.

I did notice, there are quite a few ethnic groups. I went over to the Jolley Lodge first, and there was an Asian club meeting over there. It was a large group. Even when it was a junior college, we had some people who had come from other countries here to go to school, but it's even more now, and I hope that it stays that way because I think you learn from people like that that are on your campus that you meet and interact with and not even as part of the bookwork; it's just other learning like that. After all, this is the real world now; we're not little Marietta, Georgia. So I hope Kennesaw will stay that way, and I think that was the best thing for me—just being lucky enough to be involved with a group of folks that was so small, and you were there, you know what I'm talking about. And you know the people that planned that are maybe still alive—those people in the community that planned this school and where it would go. They planned it. If they had not done that long range planning, it would not have mattered where I was. But I got to be a part of that, and that is a great feeling.

TS: Okay. Well, what have we left out?

JK: Just one thing. We didn't leave this out, but even an associate degree is important. The education that I received here, the learning, I just cannot put a value on it. You just can't; it's priceless. Students need to come here; you need to beg them to come here; you need to have more scholarships; you need to get them here any way you can get them here. The HOPE scholarship is good, but maybe there would be some other ways. Drag them in by hook or by crook, and try to get them in a classroom somewhere, and try to get

them to graduate. And you know that. That's what Kennesaw does better. Of course, I'm prejudiced. I guess all colleges are doing that around the country. You just can't put a price on it. I know it costs a lot, but it's worth the investment. Oh, Lord it just pays off down the road so much.

TS: Okay, well, thank you very much.

JK: Thank you, Dr. Scott.

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