

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES A. FLEMING

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

EDITED AND INDEXED BY SUSAN F. BATUNGBACAL

for the

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Interview with James A. Fleming  
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TS: Jim, let me just begin by the routine questions we start with everybody of when you were born and where you were born and where you grew up and a little bit about that.

JF: I was born in Florida—the first Fleming not born in Georgia for a long, long, long time—in Miami Beach, Florida. I grew up in Florida and graduated from high school in Ocala, Florida. I attended public schools in Georgia as well as Florida. After high school I left for college and never returned.

TS: I notice you got your master's and bachelor's, too, at the University of Alabama. Any particular reason why you went to Alabama?

JF: Well, I went to Emory [University] as a freshman because my family had always gone to Emory—my father and my grandfather—and I was just in that phase of life where you go a lot of places, for me anyway. So I went to Emory, then I went to Stetson [University, Deland, Florida], then I went to the University of Florida.

TS: You tried them all out!

JF: I tried them all out. I didn't go to UT [University of Tennessee], but I went to Oklahoma and then actually began my doctorate program at the University of Georgia when I worked there. So I have journeyed through—I think I've taught at maybe six colleges and universities, public and private, and been a student at—I'd have to think about that, but four or five, something like that. In sum, I've spent a life close to academe with a few short sojourns out, mostly in government; state, federal and foreign service.

TS: We want to talk about those, but first, let's see, you got your bachelor's at the University of Alabama and then your master's at Alabama in '63 and '64.

JF: Correct.

TS: What were your degrees in?

JF: They were in business administration with a major in marketing. I took the first Master's of Arts in Marketing that was given awarded at Alabama. The second one was earned by the current dean of the school of business [Culverhouse College of Commerce and Business Administration], [J.] Barry Mason. We were

students at the same time. We took our comprehensives across the table from each other, literally, and have been friends over the years.

TS: Right. Did you go into the Foreign Service from Alabama, or how did that come about?

JF: No. I didn't. After graduating from Alabama I went to work for Georgia Tech [Georgia Institute of Technology] in Atlanta. From Tech I went to the University of Georgia, doing applied research at the University. They encouraged everyone to have earned a doctorate or be working on their doctorate. So I began post-graduate work there and was doing consulting with the State Department, the Agency for International Development. They asked me to go to South America on a consulting assignment, which I did, and then came back to assume my normal duties at Georgia. A short while later they contacted me and invited me to direct the program I had reviewed for them. So I went into the Foreign Service from the University of Georgia and was overseas a number of years, I guess about three or three and a half years.

TS: What kind of program were you running?

JF: First I worked for the US Agency for International Development as the senior marketing advisor. After a year, and after language training to the point I could work in the language, the Brazilian government made me an offer to be the chief of party and run a program—Michigan State did the initial study—to convert the study to reality, which was to construct, hire, train and manage the world's largest and most modern food distribution system. It was a multi-national effort with an American team, French team, Spanish team and Brazilian team. I was the chief of party.

TS: "Chief of party" means what?

JF: It means overseeing the work of the consultants and technicians, being administrative head of the project, handling contracts, hiring contractors, reports to the Brazilian and American governments, and approving the disbursement of funds. Twenty-two humongous markets were constructed and operated nationally, from the Amazon to cities like Brasilia and San Paulo.

TS: You must have still been in your twenties at this time?

JF: No, I was in my early thirties. Work on the Amazon, for example, was challenging. I spent a lot of time on the Amazon and in northeast Brazil. Not a lot of people were visiting there or other parts of a country geographically larger than the continental United States. My daughter was born in Brazil, and she has dual nationality. I returned to the states and found a position in Mississippi, ultimately becoming the Chief of Staff to the governor—I had never been in Mississippi before—but he had been to South America as had Jimmy Carter and some others.

TS: Which governor was this?

JF: Finch, [Charles] Clifton Finch, and then I transitioned for a very short period of time to William [Forrest] Winter. My wife, Nancy, was a graduate of the University of Georgia—she said, “I’d really like to go back to Georgia.” So when an opportunity came up to return, we were interested.

TS: I don’t know much about William Winter other than they’ve got that Institute for Racial Reconciliation named for him now over there at the University of Mississippi. You’re smiling like maybe . . . .

JF: I’m a great fan of William Winter. He was, as you may know, a heavily favored candidate for the chancellorship at Ole Miss but unexpectedly withdrew his candidacy. He later told me —when he came to speak in Atlanta, after I was at KSU, for a major address to a professional group—he thought the worst decision he’d ever made was not to take the chancellorship at Ole Miss. But a wonderful person, yes; I can’t say enough good things about him.

TS: So you came back to Georgia then. What did you do when you got back here?

JF: Well, I came back to be at Kennesaw.

TS: That’s ’84.

JF: Yes, July of ’84, to work with Betty [L. Siegel].

TS: So was this a national search, or how did she find you? Is it something you applied for or did they contact you?

JF: Well, no, it’s interesting, to me anyway, maybe not to anybody else, I guess all our searches are national searches and I had not really seen the ad. A friend that I had worked with first at the University of Georgia and then overseas, who was a Wisconsin grad, had seen this ad and called me and said, “Kennesaw’s really a neat place.” And I said, “Oh, I don’t know about that. When I was at Tech, I think they were just starting. And I don’t know anything about Kennesaw,” and all those sorts of things. He said, “No, let me just tell you Jim, you ought to look at it; it’s just a great place. They’ve got a new president who is just a ball of energy. The school is right near”—I don’t play golf, but he said—“right near a golf course, and you can live there and it’s just idealic. Don’t rule it out; you ought to apply.” So I did apply and was selected for interviews and came over and interviewed. One of those that I interviewed with was Kathy [Kathleen S.] Scott, another was George [H.] Beggs. I went through the process, but I still wasn’t convinced. What did convince me was [W.] Howard Ector called me at home one night and talked to me about how great the school was. Howard was a legend at Georgia Tech, a Georgia Tech grad, and well known. He gave me a

sales pitch, and I thought, “Well, that’s really pretty nice,” so I said I’d think about it. The next evening after work—I was still at Ole Miss—Jasper [N.] Dorsey called. I knew of him but did not know him. Dorsey was as much a legend for UGA people as was Howard for GT people. He called and said he knew I’d been over at Georgia for about five years, and he was supportive of anybody that had been there. He said, “Kennesaw was a great place and he and Howard would love to see me come and be helpful to Betty.” Those two telephone conversations really played heavily on me because I really had great respect and admiration for both men.

TS: Yes. For the record, we’ve got oral histories with both of those two individuals and Howard Ector was on the Foundation at that time.

JF: He was; they both were.

TS: And Jasper Dorsey had been the first chair of Private Enterprise before Craig [E]. Aronoff. I guess Craig was there by this time.

JF: I think Craig came in ’84 also.

TS: Yes, same year so he may have still been the chair of Private Enterprise at the time he made the phone call.

JF: Yes, he was certainly a giant to UGA folks.

TS: Right. So that persuaded you.

JF: Yes, that was impressive and influencing.

TS: I know somewhere along the line your title was Special Assistant to the President for Capital Fundraising. Was that what you were actually recruited for?

JF: I think, and you might have a better sense of this, I had a lot of titles.

TS: Yes, they did change a lot.

JF: I was Special Assistant to the President. I was Special Assistant to the President for Capital Fundraising, Senior Advisor to the President, Vice-President for Institution Advancement, and ultimately President of the Foundation. For many years I also held the academic rank of Assistant Professor (of marketing). I was initially recruited in the field of development, and to advance the Foundation, to strengthen it, to be supportive of Betty, to increase external resources in support of the institution.

TS: What did she say to sell the institution to you?

- JF: Betty Siegel is an excellent one-on-one salesperson because she has advanced—that’s probably not the right word—but has advanced, incredible, inter-personal relationship skills. When somebody else probably couldn’t get you to come in out the rain, Betty could convince you. She was very impressive with her vision of where Kennesaw could go, where it had been, where it was, and where she wanted it to go, and the kind of help she needed to get there. So, yes, Betty was a fantastic salesperson, and I was totally convinced after talking to her that we could work together.
- TS: Right. I just wondered, at that time did she say, “I want you to come in because we really haven’t raised much money before, and we need to raise “x” millions of dollars?”
- JF: No, she didn’t use words like that. She said we needed to have more external support than we had. I’m not sure she had any of the specific details. I learned the details in a hurry when I got here, but no, she was more interested in building a team. We didn’t call it a cabinet in those days but a team—that had a shared vision of a shared objective of what she wanted Kennesaw to be. And she worked very hard at that.
- TS: So when you came in, your job description is really to run Development, I guess.
- JF: Yes.
- TS: And that also made you work directly with the Foundation also from the beginning?
- JF: When I came to Kennesaw, Cullene [M.] Harper was the primary contact with the Foundation. She had one person that worked with her, a secretary, executive secretary, Ellen Smith. So it was a very understaffed office, and it would have been hard to meet Betty’s expectations with just two people, and very few members of the Foundation at that point.
- TS: And Cullene’s real background is that she had done the PR for the college in the early days.
- JF: Oh, absolutely, and she was still involved in that too because that office was almost non-existent. When I arrived at Kennesaw it did not have the staff resources because it was not a priority until Betty became president. That’s not a criticism of anybody. The mission of the institution is education first and then everything else. The last things people think about or value are college relations, public relations, alumni relations, so all of those areas are undeveloped.
- TS: So you’re really coming in on the ground floor?
- JF: I think that’s right.

TS: When did Jack Gibson—was he here before you?

JF: No, I hired Jack. Cullene, who had this incredible strength, and I'm a great admirer of Cullene for many reasons, but she couldn't be all things to all people. Betty and I agreed to enlarge and match skill sets for individual and institutional objectives. As you mentioned, Cullene's talent was in writing and PR and college relations, media relations, things like that. I discussed all these things with Betty, and Betty was very supportive, and I'm very grateful. So we convinced Cullene to take the leadership in creating and building a college relations function and staff. With Cullene providing the leadership college relations became better than any other four-year institution in this state and was running very hard at besting our universities. I can't say enough good things about that. I asked Betty to let me hire somebody that had formerly worked for me in development at Ole Miss, Norman [H.] McCrummen. Dr. Norman McCrummen. So Norman joined KSU and I tried to build that office because when he arrived the office was vacant. When Norman left for seminary school, Ron Hyde became the director. Ron, who was very detail-oriented, and very good was the former Commander of the Naval Air Station who had retired, He was very focused, very detailed. After a short time, he received another job offer we couldn't match. So, in a meeting in Miami of CASE—Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, Dr. Jack Gibson and I talked. I had known him professionally and recruited him. He was Assistant Vice-President for Development of Georgia State [University]. When Jack began at KSU we were able to begin to develop staff in terms of equal numbers and more resources. And, at the same time, I was interested in completing my doctorate. He was helpful in that, as an external Ph.D. candidate—I was required to have a mentor on campus—and I asked him to administer and monitor my exams. He didn't grade the exams, of course. He just sat there and watched me as I took them, and then certified they were taken under required exam conditions. He received the exams in an envelope and put them back in the envelope and mailed them. But, yes, Jack was a marvelous person and had an unexpected and untimely death.

TS: So you were getting your doctorate at the University of Georgia?

JF: I started it there because the president at that time decreed that everyone would have their doctorate or be working on it, and when they got it, if it was from Georgia, they would be terminated. They wanted to discourage any academic "inbreeding." There were four of us who worked very closely together, Wray [W.] Buchanan, who later joined our faculty here, John Rhodes, who was a vice president at Memphis, Red Sanders, and myself. We all huddled together to see how we were going to do that, and this Sanders said, "Well, I grew up at this university; I'm from Jefferson and I earned my undergraduate and my master's degree here, and I want to retire here, I don't want to do this. I don't want to get fired because . . ." He was in a real quandary. Rhodes said, "I'm on real good terms with Noah Langdale, [Jr.] and I'm going to Georgia State and I can get my

doctorate at Georgia State and I'll work there as the vice president." And he did. Buchanan said, "I've got my whole family here, I'm just going to gut this thing out, and I'm going to get it." I was working as consultant to USAID at that time, so we all started working toward the degree. I was going the business route and so was Buchanan, although he was an engineering undergraduate from Georgia Tech. I left for South America, and Rhodes left for GSU. Sanders completed his dissertation, but left it in his in-box because he didn't want to get fired when he turned it in. Buchanan was the first one to finish his degree, and they terminated him. He went to UT [laughter]. So that's how that worked out. I finished the doctorate at Kennedy Western [University, Cheyenne, Wyoming, current name: Warren National University] because they would accept my credits from the University of Georgia. Nobody else [no other doctoral program] wanted to do that because they were too old, and they said, "Oh no, you've got to go back and start all over again." I said, "I can't do that, I've been doing really significant work where I am. Every six months I crank out the equivalent of a dissertation. I don't need to take a language. I'm worked every day for years in another language." So that's a boring story, but I kept up with those guys and still do. I still know that original group of four.

TS: I think I missed the fact that you were in development at the University of Mississippi. You mentioned that you worked for the governors in Mississippi.

JF: I was. I was Chief of Staff for the governor. I didn't start that way. I started as the Director of State Planning in Mississippi and went through a series of titles there also. I headed up his task force for economy and efficiency, evaluating state agencies, recommending changes in the structure and how they worked—and saved money, millions and millions of dollars, with the help of many other people. Then I became Chief of Staff, and it was an incredibly intensive job, meaning seven days a week, sixteen to eighteen hours, sometimes twenty hours a day, not making my family real happy. The governor could not succeed himself at that time—we sponsored the legislation to let a governor serve two terms—but to make that work we couldn't let it apply to the sitting governor. It was the appropriate thing to argue that succeeding governors could. So he couldn't succeed himself, and my family wasn't interested in him succeeding himself. Towards the end of the term I gave my resignation to William Winter, who was going to come in, which caused a little bit of a stir. The governor reminded me that William Winter didn't hire me, and if I was resigning I should resign to him. I said it was just a protocol courtesy and no offense to Governor Finch. That's when I talked to William Winter, and William said, "You're the only one in the previous administration I would have had stay." So I went home and told my wife that, and she said, "Well, if you decide to stay, I'm leaving. It is too much. I want to go back to Georgia." So these things dovetailed at about the same time that was happening, and I said, "Well, I've got to look around, I don't know." The chancellor at Ole Miss and the executive vice chancellor—the chancellor is currently deceased, Porter [L.] Fortune, [Jr.], and the executive vice chancellor is not—Harvey [S.] Lewis, who later was vice president at Mississippi State, came



to me and said they wanted to have their first capital campaign and they just needed somebody who . . . .

TS: Their first capital campaign?

JF: First capital campaign, to raise \$25 million dollars. They just needed somebody with the skills to put all that together and pull it together, and would I come up there and do that?

TS: Isn't that incredible that as late as the 1980s they're doing their first capital campaign?

JF: First capital campaign, \$25 million. I think they thought that because I had been the governor's chief of staff I must . . . you know, but I don't work that way. I mean, I know some people, but Ole Miss has some very successful alum, of course, and I think before I left \$42 million was raised against the \$25 million campaign goal. It was a good experience and it's a wonderful university. So from Ole Miss I came to Kennesaw State.

TS: I see why they wanted you to come here. I'm sure there wasn't anybody else applying with those kinds of credentials.

JF: Well, I don't know. I've never been very impressed with me, so it's hard for me to say.

TS: Let's just talk—when you came here, you're starting at really the ground floor as far as—what were we raising about that time?

JF: The most money the Foundation had was thirty-five thousand dollars. Our first audits and all of our documentation fit in a shoebox. I would take that shoebox to an individual who did pro bono auditing/accounting work for us, which wasn't a good idea either, to prepare tax returns. We quickly stopped that practice, although we were grateful. The answer is we did not raise very much; we had fifteen members, fifteen trustees. We were concerned about it because a funny thing about fundraising is people get in the habit, and maybe they do this in churches and in other eleemosynary organizations—of giving ten dollars a year, for example, and it's hard to move them to fifteen a year a year. So my view was very strongly that people who would give us a thousand dollars thought the gates of Heaven should swing open. It was hard to move those people, who thought of themselves as generous, higher than a thousand dollars. We had thirty-five thousand dollars in a shoebox (literally in a CD) and that became the corpus. The trustees were very supportive, but we wanted first to encourage more. When development really began to achieve, with Norman's help, it raised about a hundred [thousand]. Norman and I felt if we can raise a hundred thousand with the process we had been using with fifteen trustees, perhaps we could change raise two hundred with thirty and three hundred [thousand] with—so the short

story is we did. We went from fifteen to thirty to forty-five to sixty trustees and then in the last couple of years we've been trying to—at least I was trying, I don't know where it is now, to tell you the truth, Wes [Wesley K. Wicker] would probably know—but to reduce that sixty down to . . . .

TS: Really—too unwieldy with that many?

JF: It's too difficult to get a decision even with a really great executive committee—and we've been blessed with that. When we first decided to build the dorms our bylaws required the signature and approval of each of the sixty trustees. And there was a deadline. I was prepared to send one of our staff to Rhode Island to track down one signature; another to Naples, Florida to secure another trustee signature. We had two other trustees [who] weren't sure they wanted to sign the agreement necessary to borrowing the money to build the dorms. Now, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know if you've got fifty-eight people that say, "We have faith in you, we trust you, let's go ahead," and two that don't, the two shouldn't be able to hold up the fifty-eight. So we had to bring that process into a new . . . .

TS: Sounds like you needed new bylaws.

JF: Well, we did. We got new bylaws. We also added in the bylaws a provision for electronic voting, e-mail voting, to simplify the process. We also modified the by-laws so a 100 percent vote was not required. Now a simple majority is acceptable. These are procedures that you would think we would have discovered, but there was no need to discover them because we were just essentially doing annual funds, as opposed to acquiring the debt and the sophistication of where we are now for dormitories, infrastructures, parking decks, and real estate.

TS: So you start with fifteen and these are probably the ones that Horace [W.] Sturgis had put on the Foundation.

JF: Yes, essentially so. Correct.

TS: People like [R.] Sidney Clotfelter and the senior [William Horace] Dunaway and people like that.

JF: Yes, and Wyman Pilcher, Sr. and Henry [D.] Meaders, [M.D.] Sidney had his ninety-third birthday last week. Yes, absolutely, people like that, Robert [T.] Garrison.

TS: The ones that were there when we became four years and that group.

JF: Great individuals.

- TS: Was there no minimum that they had to contribute to be a member of the Foundation at that time?
- JF: No written minimum. There was an understanding that each member of the trustees would make a contribution of a thousand dollars a year as a trustee. Then later in life we decided to increase the amount. The reality is the more recent trustees, as far as I know, exceed the expectation many times over. I won't throw any names out, but I remember a couple of years back when we were hopeful that trustees would give three thousand—for the purpose of funding an increasing unrestricted budget. Most donors would give money to the scholarships, but we were looking for unrestricted money that could be used to support the mission, the margin of excellence as we say. I remember one that I talked to said, "Oh no, I can't do three. I'll give you sixty [thousand]. So he made up for everybody else in one fell swoop. So the trustees are very generous with their time and their resources.
- TS: So there had to be a culture change that developed over time, I guess, really as a matter of expectations.
- JF: Yes, and thank you for saying that—culture change, yes, culture shift, absolutely. There was a mentality not attributable to any one individual, but when you look at the history of the establishment of Kennesaw Junior College, the [Harold S.] Willingham influence and all the people that, you know, claimed success for the college, you understand that success has many fathers and failure is an orphan. There was a mentality that Kennesaw, because of its name and location, belonged to Cobb County. It was insular and many did not want anybody else.
- TS: Right, "Harvard in the Pines."
- JF: Actually, I heard that prior to one of my interviews, and I had been to Harvard in the [John F.] Kennedy School [of Government], and I thought, boy, I don't know: (a) if you want to be the Harvard [University] anything, is my personal opinion, and (b) "Harvard in the Pines," let me tell you, when I was at Stetson they called their place Harvard in the Pines.
- TS: I think Betty Siegel always hated that designation.
- JF: I didn't like it. Many schools had it. There was this insular thing. Betty was trying to break that grip, if you will, and I don't mean that in a negative way, but if you have a group of people who think that for a thousand dollars a year that this little school can grow, as some of the trustees would say, until we're able to break out and get across the Chattahoochee River; until we're able to attract people who are corporate and community leaders in Atlanta—the all inclusive term—we can't break these bounds. So I would say under [J.] Larry Stevens' leadership it began, Tommy [Thomas M.] Holder has really been incredible in that regard, but only in the last three, four, five years have we broken loose. Now, they've got to break

- loose again, I mean, this has worked very well, bringing people in, but they're going to have to break loose again. The point is when the alumni of the institution are fifty years old—you can't do it when they're twenty-five or thirty or thirty-five—they're going to have to break loose and go national and get somebody who is with a company [outside the area] to be a trustee. Find alums wherever they may be that are successful, and put them on the board as opposed to more prominent local people.
- TS: So the next step is when the alumni are going to ultimately take over the Foundation?
- JF: Yes, that's not imminent, but it is desirable in my judgment; it is desirable at some point in time. That may be twenty years from now.
- TS: We've been giving bachelor's degrees for twenty-six years now, I guess, since 1980, so some of them, if they were traditional-aged students, they're at least in their late 40s by this time.
- JF: Yes. And of course, the other thing is you need to seek them out. Now the Foundation, per se, is not looking just for our grads, but you would turn to the alumni association and say, "Tell us where they are." We have two, used to be one, two alum that are trustees: Ralph [W.] Walker [III], who is I think actually the secretary of the Foundation. He was at the time I left in February of 2005. He's a very, very incredible individual. And Matt [Matthew] Towery—he, at least, was a student—not for long.
- TS: I didn't know that he was a student.
- JF: They claim to be the two that actually have attended a class or classes at Kennesaw.
- TS: Well, Stevan [H.] Crew is on there now. He was a student back in the '60s.
- JF: That's right.
- TS: He contributes to our Civil War Symposium.
- JF: Good for him! He's a very fine man. But at some point in time you would hope all of these alum would step up. If there were thirty members of the trustees at that time, then twenty-five would be Kennesaw State alum.
- TS: So that's the next culture change that you see ultimately?
- JF: Yes, in my judgment now, I'm frequently wrong, but in my judgment, yes.

- TS: Okay. But you're saying that it's really only been about the year 2000 that we've gone metro and broken away from the Cobb County control.
- JF: Well, it's kind of a mindset. I hate to say control because that has some negative overtones and connotations, but there was a mindset by some people that this institution was a local institution. That was not the vision. That was never Betty's vision, and I guarantee you it isn't Dan [Daniel S.] Papp's vision. He can speak for himself, but neither is it in the vision of the newer trustees who want to reach another plateau, who want to be a university in more than name.
- TS: So if the mission is to be a regional university or a metropolitan university, the Foundation ought to reflect that, is what you're saying.
- JF: It ought to but I'm not sure that's not limiting. I'm not sure that the trustees . . . .
- TS: That regional is limiting?
- JF: No, they want to be a comprehensive university, however you define that, and not just regional in scope. If the University of Georgia is considered a research university - and it is - should KSU be more research oriented than it is? If UGA is an international university and a global university, not just a national one, then certainly Kennesaw State is a national university.
- TS: We've got international students from something like 130 or 140 different countries.
- JF: That's what I understand.
- TS: Yes [laughter]. Okay. Let's talk a little bit about how this transition took place. I know by the time we got into the '90s, the Foundation is doing everything under the sun in preparing the way for dormitories and getting that property for the KSU Center and a whole variety of things, not to mention the [Newt] Gingrich controversy and how that affected the concert hall and so on. But how did this change come about? Who are the movers and shakers that get us from where we were when you got here in '84 to where we were by the '90s?
- JF: First, I would have to describe Betty as "the Unsinkable Molly Brown" for trumpeting residence halls. Initially, she was not successfully in winning support. But she was not discouraged, and she continued to lobby the Board of Regents with vigor. They would nod and roll their eyes, and explain that UGA had room vacancies. In the community, people were very polite but didn't do much to be supportive. To Betty's credit she kept saying, "You know, it would be great to have dorms." She and I did share the vision that you couldn't be more than a commuter university until you had residential housing. I believe one of the great moments for Kennesaw State was when it was able to add residential students to the mix on campus. It changed the character of Kennesaw State forever. Whether

we like that or not—some people do, some people don't—that was a significant step in changing the personality and mission of the institution. So Betty trumpeted that. She did it in many circles. She was a great external president. I heard people talking on campus, off campus, who had some sense of the perceptions of Betty's ability, but let say, as an external president, Betty was one of the best ones in the country, not just the state, but in the nation. People love her, and they flock to her. The only better external president—in my judgment—was Father [Theodore M.] Hesburgh at [University of] Notre Dame. He was unique. I would ask people in the community, "Can you name the president of Princeton." No clue. "Tell me Stanford, any of the big schools, tell me the name of their president." "Well, I don't know." I think they'd get [Derek C.] Bok maybe at Harvard, but they couldn't get anybody else.

TS: Notre Dame's got a natural advantage because they've got people associated with them all over the country.

JF: That's true, but I would wager you can't find ten people today, eight of whom know the current sitting president of Notre Dame. They don't know. Hesburgh was a legend. Betty, in that regard, in this part of the country, is a legend and she capitalized on it. I do think the Newt Gingrich affair, if I can put it this way, helped torpedo Betty's dream of a capital campaign—although we started one in conjunction with Southern Tech [Southern Polytechnic State University] at that time—because people became nervous about what was going to happen to their contributions in terms of the Internal Revenue Service. It also, I think, shook the confidence of some of our trustees in the competence of the Foundation to be successful. They'd say, "If our Foundation can mess this thing up, are they good enough to handle a campaign and the things that are associated with it?" I didn't agree with that perception, but I know some people held it. That was unfortunate.

TS: You were on the president's cabinet at that time. How did that decision come about at that time, as you remember it, to have that Gingrich course?

JF: I think that question was critical. I spent a lot of time with the Independent Counsel for the Congress, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Foundation spent hundreds of thousands of dollars of unrestricted money defending itself. There was the perception that a public university was involved in politics.

TS: Do you know how much it eventually came to altogether, half a million?

JF: No, I think the defense for Foundation was between \$300,000.00 and \$400,000.00 for representation by King & Spalding [Atlanta, Georgia].

TS: Of people's contributions?

JF: Yes, and we were defended magnificently.

- TS: But not to mention how many hours that the staff and you had to put in.
- JF: The number of pages and documents were thousands and thousands. I think it really did age me about ten years, and I say that seriously because of the number of meetings – not all friendly - that I had to attend. I, of course, became the touchstone for whatever had gone wrong. So it was very stressful on me personally. And dealing with the press—*The New York Times*, the *LA Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *Roll Call*, all those folks would come here because they'd never heard of Kennesaw and wanted a first-hand explanation.
- TS: I remember *The Wall Street Journal* coming. They interviewed me even.
- JF: Yes. I remember the writer from *The New York Times*, who was the dean of political reporting. I had to go to New York. He was in New York, so I sent him a KSU sweatshirt with a note, "You can wear this when you go to work and everybody will know where you've been." It was just a little gesture. He tracked me down in my hotel in New York. He told me he'd gotten the sweatshirt and really liked it and it was very thoughtful, but he wouldn't be able to keep it. It would be seen as a bribe or conflict of interest and it was against the *Times* policy to accept gifts, so what did I want him to do with it. I said, "What do you suggest?" He said, "Well, I could wear it one time and then give it to the Salvation Army. I could get away with that, or I can just return it to you." I said, "Why don't you wear it one day and then give it to the less fortunate. I hope I don't see it in some alley," which he did [laughter]. So the Gingrich event had a really profound affect on some trustees.
- TS: It actually got us known, I guess, in a way.
- JF: Well, that's the old adage, you know, spell my name right and people will forget in time whether I was innocent or guilty, but they'll remember the name. I'm not sure I would want to go that far. The IRS was difficult to deal with; King & Spalding was grand to deal with, but it took a lot of staff time and money, and more importantly it impacted the Foundation. In some ways it ripped the fabric a bit by people who thought, "Oh, we haven't done this well, it's got this negative impact, I don't know where I want to come down on this."
- TS: Or even if I want to be on the Foundation?
- JF: Right, or even if I want to be a trustee any more. So it was negative in that way. But it was positive in the sense that the executive committee and the Foundation handled themselves professionally and well. Of course we believed Newt, so when he came out and said, "I really lied," it shook us because we were operating on the assumption that he was telling the truth, because we certainly were. But, ultimately, after dealing with the IRS people individually for many hours, and many different times, they wrote a letter that said, "Dear Sir or Madam," which

was a little offensive since they knew my name, “Dear Sir or Madam, you all are free to go,” sort of thing.

TS: Was I the only one that thought it was suspicious that they dropped the case right after Gingrich resigned from Congress?

JF: No, I think they were going to drop the case because of the evidence and the excellent work of the Foundation’s attorneys. The IRS non-profit office is in Nashville, even though they would fly attorneys and accountants from Washington to Atlanta. Nashville still controlled the non-profit tax investigation. King and Spalding said, in effect, to the IRS, “You’re just going to have a real hard time proving the Foundation did anything wrong.” I got a little off-track in answering your question about how the university got involved. I believe Tim [Timothy S.] Mescon had seen Newt and said it would be a really good idea for him to teach at KSU because he—Newt—was a former professor at West Georgia [State University] and earned his doctorate at Tulane in history. That’s a good idea on its face. I suspect many people would say, “The Speaker of the House, that’s a wonderful idea!”

TS: Or almost Speaker at that time.

JF: Almost Speaker at that time, and an important political person in our community and the nation. I think at a chamber meeting—I don’t know whether it was the same day or a couple of days later—but in a short period of time—Betty also saw Newt and said something like: “This would just be marvelous, this would be grand.” So Betty probably was thinking the image of the institution would be enhanced by having someone as articulate and as bright as Newt on the campus. It’s really hard to argue with that. Of course, Newt’s people wanted to involve the Foundation because they wanted to raise money to support the course. Now the Foundation had no knowledge of donors; never asked anyone for a contribution. The Foundation was not fund-raising for this course. But others were and when checks would come to support the course, the Foundation received those funds. We deposited those funds and paid from expenses, primarily for up-linking the course. Of course, some people said the course was for political purposes, and that sort of thing. But the reality is, at the end of the day, when KSU discontinued the course, Reinhardt [College, Waleska, Georgia] decided they would carry it forward. And they did. Whatever money was left over from the expenses for producing the class at KSU was turned over to Reinhardt. KSU did not profit at all, did not make one solitary dime, and I think that what was sent to Reinhardt was less than \$1,000.00. It was not a moneymaking venture, and it caused a lot of heartache.

TS: So not one of our finest hours.

JF: Well, I don’t know [laughter]. History, no pun intended, will judge that.



- TS: Well, I know that we're now building our concert hall, but we had all kinds of plans then for the concert hall, as I recall, that was going to be the capital fund campaign, I guess, wasn't it?
- JF: It was going to be the major thrust of a campaign and, of course, it was very dear to Betty because of her love for the arts and support of the arts on our campus. You're right. We had talked with different architects; we had looked at different kinds of structures. We had some drawings from Seattle, Washington. I don't know what you call that architectural style of ceiling that looks like a circus tent, if you know what I mean. We looked at many drawings and the idea was to have something to support the arts on campus because Cobb County wanted it, too. And we wanted to engender support for a concert hall. That's correct. That was Betty's dream.
- TS: So that gets shot out of the water at that time.
- JF: It did. And so the funds that were collected were shifted to different categories. They were still supportive of university initiatives.
- TS: Okay. So that really took pretty much the midyears of the '90s with the Gingrich controversy and the IRS investigation, and I guess was it late '98 when they finally said we were all clear to go ahead?
- JF: Yes.
- TS: We really have gone gangbusters since that time. So is after that when we really get serious about buying those houses on what used to be Frey Lake Road and now is called Campus Loop, and started putting together the plan for the residence halls and all that?
- JF: We did, and let me give some credit here. Michael [J.] Coles, the trustee for whom the Coles College of Business is named—everybody knows who Michael Coles is, currently CEO of Caribou [Coffee, St. Paul, Minnesota]—is a great activist. You can agree or disagree with him, but when Michael wants to accomplish something he is a very focused individual. He was a great supporter of Betty and a great leadership figure for the trustees. He carried forth the idea to the Board of Regents advocating resident halls on campus. The same horn Betty had been tooting for years. The Regents were still reluctant to agree because I think—I don't know all their reasons, but I do know that part of the reason was, at that time—historically interesting to me—the argument, “Well, you know, we've got all these dorms at UGA, and we can't fill them and so why would we build more dorms that you can't fill?” That's really the short of it.
- TS: The fear that it's going to cost a lot of money.

- JF: And the traditional argument is you can make the freshmen go into dorms, but as sophomores they want to live in an apartment off campus. There were all those arguments, but Michael Coles essentially said, “I’m not listening to those arguments, and I want this Foundation to get going. So, Jim, you gather up the troops and let’s move.” Michael was truly the initial driving force to make residential housing on campus happen.
- TS: Was he chair of the trustees at that time?
- JF: He was. He said, “I want you to get going; no more talk.” He transitioned out of that role and Tommy [Thomas M.] Holder became Chair. Tommy was as driven as Michael, and construction was his line of work. He knows construction and he knows all the people in the industry. So Tommy became the implementer of the dream that Betty had, that Michael Coles advocated. The “Let’s do it” fell to Tommy to accomplish—and the executive committee. You can give credit to one person, but as you know, it’s a team of people. The executive committee was critically important. And they said, “Let’s try and not do too much of this piecemeal. How big of a piece can we bite off?” The campus had always wanted the houses across the street. Actually just one house. Michael owns one still over there, which I suggested he buy personally before we began this process.
- TS: Which one is it?
- JF: Well, it’s the one nobody’s occupied. As you come down Frey Lake road, past the church, I think there’s only one house north of that, then there’s the pond . . . .
- TS: You’ve got the church and then you’ve got the Catholic center.
- JF: Yes. Further.
- TS: And then there’s a house that’s back from the road that’s relatively new. Is that the one?
- JF: It sits back, that’s right, that nobody’s ever been in. That’s it.
- TS: He owns that? I wondered why anybody would build that house back there, and then I never saw any activity.
- JF: Well, he bought it; it was built I guess as a spec house. I said, “Michael, this is a great house.” I was thinking selfishly that he didn’t need a house, and if he would buy it and tie it up, maybe we’d move the Foundation into it. In fact, we did go over and look at it for that purpose and even had an architect come see how we could convert it, but it turned out that wasn’t going to work. So it just sat there essentially, unoccupied. Anyway, Michael bought it.
- TS: It would be a great president’s house on campus, if they wanted to go that route.

JF: Couldn't do that even if we wanted to. I supported a president's home, and actually wanted to buy the one that was—if you go on up, the white house—there's the lake/pond and a vacant lot there, in the flood plain, and then there's the white house—I always wanted to buy it, but couldn't make that come to pass. Later I convinced an architect to design a president's home, pro bono. The Regents got involved in the issue of President's homes and said, "We're not doing president's home any more. We're stopping that practice; the presidents don't want them; we've done a survey." That's a whole different topic, but that wasn't going to happen and it "ain't" going to happen. So we said okay, we've got to see if we can borrow the money to get the other houses for the university's use. That idea just grew. The thinking was if we can get the money for that, then we can change the infrastructure, and then we can see about doing residence halls. And if we're going to have dorms we need the space where the physical plant is currently located. So the physical plant was moved to another piece of real estate the Foundation purchased, at no cost to the university. The Foundation said, "We'll tear the Physical Plant down; we'll provide newer and bigger space; we'll renovate the new space; it'll be better space than you've ever had; and there's no cost to the university at all."

TS: So the Foundation owns where Plant Ops is now?

JF: They do. They own those buildings. The whole package, when you put the whole thing together to buy those nine houses—even though I had a real estate attorney, I negotiated for a couple of those houses. We were making people mad everywhere, it seemed, homeowners and subdivisions, so we wanted to make a blanket deal for all nine homes. As always, it seems, there is one hold out who has a smaller house but wants as much money as for the larger houses, but we wanted to average it out. So I negotiated until I was blue in the face, but finally purchased those houses, worked with everybody; it was just an incredible project. I think the houses cost about \$3 million, an average of about \$300,000 per house. The student residences cost about \$160 million of private sector money. I know there was a long waiting list of students, as many as 800 students who wanted to get into dorms. We did not have another phase. Now whether the trustees will decide to add another phase right away or not, I don't know. The Foundation did acquire the office building across from Chastain, which is where Development and Foundation offices are now located. [Town Point].

TS: The Foundation does own that?

JF: Yes. The point of this harangue is the Foundation went in 1984 from being worth about \$35,000 to having assets (and also liabilities obviously), of about \$200 million. At the same time, doing what I think is the most important thing—forget the money—forever changing a junior college and a senior college into a university. Now it's a real university. You can like it or not like it, but it is. So the task now for Dan Papp and our faculty, and others, is, how do we live up to

the dream? Cullene Harper would probably tell you, and I don't want to put words in her mouth, but we always thought in staff meetings, "If we could just live up to the image that we're trying to create and project." Now, that "chasing the image" has been true probably with Coca-Cola and Lockheed [Martin] and everybody else. We've been chasing the image of a major university and a force, not just in Georgia, but in the Southeast and in the nation. Papp's job is going to be, how do we fulfill that mission? How do you...

TS: How do you fulfill that mission?

JF: How do you go from what Betty liked to tout, which was, "We're a teaching university." You know, universities are teaching, research and service. Those are the tripods of the stool on which we sit. Papp, if he wants KSU to be a real university, has got to shore up the short leg of research. If you have been a teaching university and value the professor in the classroom—now you've got a shift and say, I value you in the classroom, but you better be publishing, you better be writing, you better be researching.

TS: Well, it's coming.

JF: Yes. The pendulum has swung back. It used to be publish or perish. So Dan's going to have that challenge of saying, "Folks, if we're going to be a university, we're going to have to do what universities do, whether we like it or not." It's a great challenge. It'll stress a lot of people.

TS: Well, that's the way we're hiring nowadays, on their scholarship as well as teaching.

JF: That's right. And you know a skilled professor is just a jewel, and you don't get one all the time. You have people who have knowledge of their field and they can stand before a class and they can do all that sort of things, but there's a difference between that and being one that inspires students.

TS: Right. But your point is that the Foundation has really done its part in creating the infrastructure for us to be a significant university.

JF: Let me suggest—and I don't know the status of this any more—the Foundation did this and then wanted to make it a presidential function. The Foundation established the Foundation Prize and I thought ought to award it. I created and named the Prize and recommended to the Executive Committee. You're familiar, maybe, that its purpose is to recognize scholarly research and publications of our faculty and to give them, at that time, a meaningful cash award in recognition of what they were doing to promote KSU faculty research and publication.

TS: Well, the Foundation has been very generous because there is actually a prize for one person from each college.

JF: Yes, I worked with Teresa.

TS: Teresa [M.] Joyce?

JF: Yes, I said, “Teresa, we want to recognize our faculty because this is the way we’re going, and we’re going to allocate the money for them. We want to call it the Foundation Prize and we want the chairman to award the prize. We want you to work with us”—I served on the committee—“I want you to select faculty that are published to form a committee to look at the work individual faculty have done, and decide on and recognize a winner.”

TS: Right, well, actually, I’m probably getting my terminology mixed up, but we also have the Distinguished Professor Award now, and I think Tommy Holder actually presented that this year at our opening faculty meeting.

JF: Yes. I am immodestly the conceiver of both of those.

TS: Well, those are wonderful, and when I got the Distinguished Teaching Award ages ago, it was like a thousand dollars, I guess.

JF: Yes, big deal!

TS: And they’re getting big bucks now with those awards.

JF: That’s right. Ten thousand, I think, is what the Foundation is awarding.

TS: They’re very generous.

JF: It ought to be better, but it’s a start.

TS: It’s a good start. So the Foundation is actually encouraging scholarship.

JF: Absolutely.

TS: What about the KSU Center? That is the old Outlet Mall. I don’t know what we would do without it. Every time we want to hold a public program, as well as Continuing Ed, and the [A. L.] Burruss Institute. How did that come about? Did we actually own that or do we lease that property?

JF: The Foundation owns it. I think it paid \$16 million for it, and my office was there, originally, in the bridal shop.

TS: I remember. I didn’t know it was the bridal shop. I knew where your office was.

JF: Yes, that had been the bridal shop. We paid \$16 million, still paying for it, and it is leased to the Board of Regents.

TS: So that's where the lease comes in; the Regents lease it.

JF: That's right, through the university. It's with the university, but approved by . . . .

TS: But the Foundation owns it.

JF: Yes, owns it, and the Regents permitted this lease because we said in our documents to the university that it was the Foundation's intention at the end of the lease to give it to the university. "Our intention"—intention is a big word because in reality, if it turns out that when we finish paying the note off, which—it was pretty short actually—maybe we've got twelve more years or fifteen more years, but it's not like twenty-five years or twenty years, it's less than that. When that's paid off, if it turns out that that property is worth more than the initial value—and you've seen what's going on around that area—we used to track real estate sales, price per acre—but if it turns out somebody, for example, a Marriott wanted to buy that piece of property for \$50 million dollars, then I would think the Foundation's intention would be to sell it for \$50 million, rather than give the building to the university, instead using that \$50 million dollars to fund something else the university would like to have, such as another piece of land, or another facility. To simply give the facility to the university when the note is paid doesn't make a lot of sense to me. I take some pride in the fountain in the center of the building.

TS: The fountain?

JF: Yes, there used to be a little sputnik thing in there. I contacted people and had them come out and put in a European-like fountain, which pleased me. Of course, the Foundation, through Mr. Holder and his generosity—made the Anne Frank exhibit [*Anne Frank in the World, 1929-1945*, KSU, Anne Frank Center in New York, Georgia Holocaust Commission], a reality. He did all that construction at cost. The Foundation paid for that, but Holder's company did it, and he took nothing from it. I personally am a bit distressed that it's leaving our campus. I never envisioned that would happen, at least this soon. But, yes, that's a great piece of property and a great location.

TS: We're going to have new exhibits in that site.

JF: Really?

TS: Catherine Lewis is working on it. It's going to be a holocaust type exhibit, like World War II through the eyes of youth, something like that [*Parallel Journeys: WWII and the Holocaust through the Eyes of Teens*].

- JF: She's excellent. Good, I'm glad they're doing that.
- TS: And also the *V for Victory: [Georgia Remembers World War II]* exhibit from the Atlanta History Center is coming out as part of that.
- JF: That's excellent too. That's good, I'm glad to hear that. That cheers me. And like I say, I'm a great fan of Dr. Lewis. She does very well with external things.
- TS: Yes. Well, that's interesting. I hadn't ever thought about something bigger and better going into that site. The dollars that you're throwing around are just mind-boggling to me. Maybe we ought to talk just a little bit more about how we got from where the Foundation had \$35,000.00 to these million figures that you're throwing out now. I know how hard it is to raise money just by trying to raise a few thousand for public programs for my Center for Regional History and Culture. It's just mind boggling of how we got into all these millions that the Foundation controls nowadays. How did we raise that kind of money?
- JF: The short course in Fundraising 101 is one word, and the word is "relationships." Everything else is detail. KSU, or any university, moves from \$35,000.00 to whatever amount of millions it wants by the relationships it establishes. Of course, Betty was a great relationship builder in the community and that opened a lot of doors. And then the trustees that were recruited are great relationship builders with people who have two things: resources, that meaning not just money, but time and more importantly influence, and secondly, leadership. So when they do something, support something, they have others that will also support it. There's a camaraderie and understanding among high level executives that, "Hey, if you support the thing that I am for, I'll support the thing that you're for, so let's work together." Or, more importantly, "I am a great advocate of KSU," for example, and "we need you to be a great advocate." Betty did a lot of this work in the '90s. Betty and I would make calls together, and I thought we were a really good team in talking to corporate leaders. We had a good story to tell and she was a marvelous storyteller. The new executive committee has circles of influence they can bring to bear in support of the school. I joke about it, but we got maybe the first hundred million dollars we borrowed because we had the support of the county. I went to the Cobb Development Authority accompanied by the Foundation's attorneys and bankers and made the presentation for approval of the bond issue. From time to time I would come back to report on the progress at KSU and plan seeds about the value of using tax exempt bonds to support Kennesaw State through its Foundation. They were very supportive of Kennesaw State. Many people have influence in our community, and every one has decision-making power. So I'm not trying to say, "I did it, or my team did it." People I don't even know did it because they went to church with this member; and they were in the same club with this member. So fundraising is never a solo act. It's a team venture, and it's all about relationships. Betty was a great relationship initiator. We were able to come up with a great team of trustees, and the two together are just really unstoppable. The Foundation started with a loan

from Wachovia. We talked to a number of banks, and I liked them all, they did a good job. But at one point I thought well, I think we have probably exceeded our credit limit with Wachovia. I was really concerned about that, we owed more than one hundred million dollars. The decision was made to explore other avenues for bigger resources and I remember—at a country club in Atlanta—one night, we met with Citibank. They had flown in people to make a presentation. Essentially, Citibank said, “We have substantial financial resources, and if you can meet our requirements, we can write the check.” So we did that and we got just a humongous amount of money, which made everybody nervous, including me, worrying about the payback. The reality of this—and this is a very important historical point, and I know I’m boring you—my judgment is, even before they do the next phase of housing, if they decide to do that—and I don’t know if they’re going to do that or not and I haven’t asked anybody, but let’s say they don’t—if they don’t do anything else in terms of what the Foundation currently owns and has constructed, it will, if the occupancy levels hold—and we know what those levels need to be to break even and to make any profit - make more unrestricted money for the university than we’re likely to ever raise by asking for money in any given year. The Foundation’s investments and its construction projects have been so astute in business terms that it probably couldn’t raise that same amount of money by just going to its friends and saying, “Can you write me a check?” And all of this is very helpful to the university. It’ll give them resources for the margins of excellence they can’t get some place else.

TS: Right. Let me just ask you about the future for the residence halls. I understand that the Foundation already has plans for the next phase?

JF: Yes. They’ve had plans for the total project, but they didn’t want to get too far out, and so the ones that they’ve built now, originally we didn’t know how that would work out, what the occupancy level would be. It was sort of a trial phase that we were comfortable with. Now it turns out that’s worked out, not only well but even better. So another phase that the Foundation already has the architectural plans and designs for could be built whenever they want.

TS: Where would that go?

JF: It’s up about where the new ones are. There’s a large open space between Idlewood Drive and where you see the dorms. That open space is another wing, another series of buildings.

TS: That’s where they’re going to go.

JF: Yes.

TS: I know that the Institute for Global Initiatives has rented a house over on East Shiloh Trail. Dan Papp was quoted in the paper, I guess yesterday, saying that unless we get more space we may have to have non-contiguous campuses to grow



to the 40,000 or 45,000 that they're talking about now. But I know when I was at the University of Tennessee they just expanded into old neighborhoods and took over everything under the sun. Do you envision, or does the Foundation have any plans of doing that? Like they've already bought houses on what used to be Frey Lake Road and now Campus Loop, and it looks like they're beginning to buy houses on East Shiloh Trail. Is that part of the vision to maybe expand our campus by buying some of the older residential neighborhoods?

JF: Well, it's unfair for me to comment on what the current vision is because I'm not currently here, but I think the model that President Papp is talking about is certainly the model you're familiar with. That's how Georgia grew and that's how Tech grew and that's how Agnes Scott [College] grew and that's how Emory [University] grew, and so it's not unusual to say that that may be the way we grow. I think Dan is also correct in his assumption and it's going to be how he works this out with the trustees, but it's very likely that we will locate property that is not contiguous to the campus. I mean you've got to think about it; there's not a lot of directions to go. There's the interstate, you know what I'm saying? We had, when I was at the Foundation—and I stayed on as a consultant to them until July of '05—in the previous couple of years, overtures to buy Pinetree Country Club, and we weren't interested in doing that. And also, what's the other one, Canterbury [Golf Club], they wanted to know would the Foundation want to buy it. At the time, of course, we had no interest in buying.

TS: Canterbury would be a further distance away [just west of Canton Highway between New Chastain and Hawkins Store Roads].

JF: It's a further distance away, and then also we had people ask all the time whether we were ever going to buy one of the neighborhoods behind where we have the houses [on Campus Loop Road]. The short answer is I have no earthly idea. That's something that the new president, Dan, and the trustees will have to work out. It would not be unusual.

TS: Do you think it would be a good idea?

JF: I would go south before I went to another neighborhood. I would go across the street.

TS: Where the Foundation is already?

JF: Where the Foundation is now [Town Point]; there is property there. I would go that way, and frankly, I advocated for a long time, kind of Don Quixote, that I would build a bridge over Chastain.

TS: Yes, we need a bridge across there.

JF: That would really link us up, and even if we only acquired one area, I'm not sure I'd make an athletic field of it, but it's a possibility. You'd put athletics over there and where we currently have athletics on campus could be used for academic buildings to keep academics close together.

TS: Oh, that's interesting.

JF: But that's just me, what I would probably do. But I have great confidence in Dan Papp and the trustees. So they'll work that out.

TS: A bridge would be a great project for the Foundation.

JF: It would be. It'd be helpful to everybody.

TS: It would. It's unsafe to go across that road.

JF: Wendy's would even like us!

TS: I imagine they would. I know there was talk at one time when Walmart left [from Busbee Parkway], about maybe buying that property.

JF: I think it was just talk. People mentioned it to the Foundation, but it didn't at that time have interest in buying it. The executive committee thought it too far from campus.

TS: Pinetree would be interesting because that was the Frey Farm all the way up to the tenth tee, or something like that.

JF: That's right. That's a beautiful piece of property.

TS: But you say the Foundation didn't have an interest in Pinetree?

JF: Let me say, Tommy's philosophy and the executive committees, is they're interested in anything where they can break even or make money, but don't have enough resources to buy something that cannot be productive by itself. Projects have to generate money to be able to support other things the campus wants.

TS: Right. And you've got a golf course there that you wouldn't want to take away, I guess.

JF: Well, how could you make a golf course work for the university? Of course, we would say, well, our golf team could practice there but, well . . . .

TS: That's expensive.

- JF: That's expensive practice. Or maybe the faculty—I mean, some universities do have—Georgia has a golf course, I don't know about Tech, Ole Miss has one. But you're really flush when you can afford just to have a golf course, and we we're not at that stage.
- TS: Sure. I was thinking that would be a great place for a football stadium, but if you put that there it would mess up the golf course and I guess you can't do that.
- JF: I think there are locations that are feasible for a football stadium, if that's the way the university wanted to go, that are better suited to a football stadium than is the golf course or a neighborhood.
- TS: Now that we're on athletics, what has been the relationship between the Foundation and the growth of our athletic program at Kennesaw?
- JF: That's a good question and an interesting one. I would say that the athletic director, [David L.] Waples, and his coaches have done a fantastic job with relatively limited resources. I salute them every day. Several of our teams are just fantastic by any measure, and they deserve an awful lot of praise. The Foundation needs to do more for athletics. I think they would like to do that. I don't think they do enough now. They're trying to. I remember we were initially very helpful in the sense that it was the trustees and one particular trustee who paid to put the lights up so we could light up the ballfields.
- TS: [Fred E.] Stillwell?
- JF: Yes. Dave Waples, the athletic director, had said, "Jim, if we don't get lights we can't do anything." I was very supportive of lights because I said people can't come watch a game in the middle of the day, they have jobs, their kids are in school, so wouldn't it be nice if they would come in the evening with their kids. But they were expensive lights. Trustee Fred Stillwell and I went to Des Moines, Iowa, together to watch our baseball team. It's a small town. It's kind of a "Field of Dreams" stadium [*Field of Dreams*: Movie (NBC Universal: Universal City, CA, 1989) (adapted from the book, *Shoeless Joe Jackson* by W. P. Kinsella (Houghton Mifflin: New York, 1982))] with lights and we sat together. I used that trip to hopefully persuade Fred to let us have enough money to pay to light those fields, and he did. He's very modest, so I'm not sure we ought to even say his name because he gets kind of upset.
- TS: Well, his name's on the stadium.
- JF: Well, it is now, so I guess it's okay—which was the thing to do—but that's how we started it. We need to do more. I know that President Papp is very supportive of athletics, is going to be a great friend of athletics. Athletics, as you know, is a great tool for visibility, and visibility is more important than competence. I can say that ten times. So many of the things from my area, visibility is more

- important than competence. That's why you see some unknown teams playing the University of Tennessee or Alabama or Georgia.
- TS: Well, I saw a game on TV last night, part of it, University of Central Florida playing University of Southern Mississippi. I guess without a football team I don't know who would know that there was a large university in Orlando called the University of Central Florida.
- JF: With 48,000 students. I still don't believe that [laughter]!
- TS: That's incredible. And that may be where we are before long.
- JF: Maybe. Here's the difficult thing; there are always going to be a number of people who say, athletics, we need to have it. And I'm confident that President Papp, and I've known him for a long time, is going to be very supportive of athletics, and he loves football and I love football. You've got to balance that with what I call the traditional academic community, who may or may not love athletics and football the same amount, or basketball or any other sport. But they are looking more to meet academic needs. So the trick, obviously, is to balance and keep both constituencies happy, and that's a delicate balancing act.
- TS: Well, at major universities, it seems to me that at the University of Tennessee, the athletic department raises a ton of money separate from their Foundation.
- JF: They do.
- TS: Is that the model at most places that you create another . . . .
- JF: Georgia does the same thing. And Alabama. There are essentially two models: the traditional model is the foundation primarily supports academics, and the athletic foundation supports things solely for athletics. The other model tried to bring the two interests together in raising funds to support the total university. The university determines its priorities. That is a difficult act to do, and so the model has shifted. For a while it was two foundations. When I was at Ole Miss I tried to bring them together and saw that that was a major battle. So the prevalent model now is separate foundations, at least in this part of the country.
- TS: Do you think we'll go that way at Kennesaw?
- JF: A separate foundation?
- TS: For the athletics?
- JF: Well, it depends upon if the president decides we're going to raise money separately for academics and athletics. For example, are we going to try to raise money for a stadium? Are we going to try to raise money for a football team? I

- mean if we're talking tens of millions of dollars, probably there would be an athletic foundation with the boosters versus the current Foundation. That would be my guess.
- TS: Let me ask you what you're proudest of in your twenty-odd years at Kennesaw.
- JF: I'm not sure I'd say "twenty odd years." I hope they weren't too odd [laughter]! And my ten more with the rest of the system—five at Tech and five at Georgia—I would really say the best part was the relationship I had with people. I greatly admire the trustees individually as well as a group, and the relationship I had with them in support of the university was personally satisfying. In terms of accomplishments, obviously the building of the dormitories and the parking decks, and the roads, and the first roundabout—I got a lot of grief about that with phone calls saying, "You know the faculty is going to have terrible accidents."
- TS: It works pretty well, doesn't it?
- JF: It's more efficient. All roundabouts—that's why Europe has roundabouts, they're more efficient.
- TS: The roundabout is on the Campus Loop Road near the Jolly Lodge.
- JF: Yes, when we built that one people just really bent my ear unmercifully about what a disastrous design it was, but it's efficient. It's cost effective, it's time efficient, it's fuel-efficient, it's all those things. Hands down it's a winner. The infrastructure, the dormitories, the relationship with our trustees, being supportive in seeing the university all developed to where it is, is all very satisfying to me. There are gobs of little things that I could not have done without the support of a really good staff. We wouldn't be where we are now without the Cullene Harpers and the Norman McCrummens and the Jack Gibsons. I mean we used to do everything. I designed the first class ring at KSU. That was a nightmare. We did the colors for the athletic program and all those sorts of things were what I call minute accomplishments. Having the first four-color magazine of any senior college. Cullene was on the forefront of that. And just the joy of working with people that you respect and have a very high regard for, which made my life better. That's kind of it.
- TS: Well, I think we've hit the highlights, at least, of your tenure at Kennesaw.
- JF: You're not going to ask me about the low lights are you [laughter]!
- TS: We'll hold that for an off the record interview [laughter]!
- JF: Works for me!

TS: It's really remarkable with what you were able to accomplish and the Foundation was able to accomplish.

JF: And our staff and working with our faculty; our faculty are wonderful.

TS: Thank you very much for the interview.

JF: You're welcome.

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