

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT J. GREENE  
CONDUCTED, EDITED, AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT  
for the  
KSU ORAL HISTORY SERIES, NO. 68  
FRIDAY, 3 AUGUST 2007

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Friday, 3 August 2007  
Location: CIE/CETL House, Kennesaw State University

TS: Bob, let me just begin by asking you when and where you were born?

BG: I was born in Belmont, New York, which is upstate New York, south of Rochester—1933 in the height of the Depression. I grew up there and went to school in Belmont, New York, elementary through high school. Then I went to Bowling Green State University in Ohio and took courses in science education with the object of becoming a science teacher. Then I graduated there in 1954. I went into the army after that from 1954 to 1956. I primarily served in Alaska in the quartermaster corps.

TS: I see. Did you get drafted into the military?

BG: Well, I volunteered for the draft. You could do that in those days because I had gotten deferments up through the time I was in college.

TS: And it was pretty universal back then, just about everybody got drafted, didn't they?

BG: Right. So to get it out of the way—and I felt because I had gotten deferments that I really should go ahead and do my duty, so I volunteered for the draft. I went to Alaska and was there for almost two years in a big warehouse near Anchorage—it was a warehouse for all the army in Alaska; so there were all different kinds of supplies that the army used there. Then I went to Florida State University.

TS: So you'd been in cold places your whole life up to that point, I guess.

BG: You're right. Yes, western New York is noted for that.

TS: Did you go straight from the army to Florida State?

BG: Actually I taught school one year in Swanton, Ohio. It's just south of Toledo, right by the Toledo airport. I taught general science there six times a day, doing the same thing for one year there.

TS: That persuaded you that you'd had enough of teaching six classes a day?

BG: Right—that and the magnificent salary of \$3,800.00 a year at that time.

TS: But this is the 1950s.

- BG: Right. So I started looking around for something else, and one of the areas of science that I was really interested in was geology. So I thought I'd go ahead and get a master's degree in geology. So I found a good program at Florida State University in Tallahassee and started that. Unfortunately, geology employment goes in kind of a cycle, sometimes it's high and sometimes it's low. I hit one of the low ones. I found that out because most of the other students in the program were taking jobs as forest rangers and so forth because they couldn't get jobs in geology.
- TS: Which were probably paying about the same as your teacher's salary.
- BG: Right. So I just happened to be in the library, and they had a bulletin board in the basement, which was where the library school was. There were just jobs all over the country; you could take your choice. So I talked to the dean there, and he was very interested in getting people with science backgrounds into library science, so I started there the next year and completed it in . . .
- TS: So this would have been '58 that you started doing the program?
- BG: Right. I started in '58 and completed it in '59; it was a one-year program. I got a master's in library science. Then I went to work at Georgia Tech.
- TS: Straight from graduate school?
- BG: Straight from there in the fall quarter of '59. I was a science librarian in the Science and Technology library at Georgia Tech. I stayed there for seven years. Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis had been appointed the president of Kennesaw Junior College. He knew me. I didn't know him well, but he did know me. He had seen me in the library and had talked to me some.
- TS: He actually taught physics classes at one time at Georgia Tech.
- BG: Right. At that time, when he worked there, he was in the Registrar's Office. But he was appointed as president, so he was recruiting administrative personnel and asked if I was interested. I was definitely interested in starting out a new institution and a new library there.
- TS: So that's the way you were recruited? You didn't actually apply; he came and asked you if you were interested?
- BG: Yes. In 1966 I resigned from Georgia Tech, and April 1 of 1966 I started at Kennesaw Junior College.
- TS: Which would be six months I guess before the first fall semester started in September, so you had about six months to get ready. Before we get too far along, one of the questions we've asked people along the way is about mentors; of course you mentioned going to talk to the dean, but sounds like you pretty well decided on your own that you wanted to

go into library science. But were there any particular mentors along the way that steered you in any direction, either in your school days or at Georgia Tech or anything?

BG: Well, I'd say that Dr. Louis Shores, who was dean of the library school. He taught the reference courses there. As I said, there were not that many people with science backgrounds going into libraries at this school, so he took me kind of under his wing and was interested. And then Dr. Gerald Jahoda taught the science and technology and the informational retrieval courses. He also got me interested in research. He had done a lot of research in information retrieval.

TS: What kind of research do you do in something like information retrieval?

BG: Well, in those days it was really just the beginning of computer searching for putting databases in the computer.

TS: In '59, I guess so.

BG: Right. So he was prominent in that area. I had gotten interested in that. And then, let's see, I went to Georgia Tech and worked there. Dr. Graham Roberts was the head of the Science and Technology library, and he was a very good administrator. He eventually became director of all the libraries at Georgia Tech. He was my boss for all the time I was there, and I would say he was a good mentor.

TS: Did you have to write a master's thesis at Florida State?

BG: No, we had a choice of a thesis or just a paper, and I did one on resources for junior colleges. Dr. Shores was working on that. I don't know if you know, but at that time, the early 1960s was a very big time for the development of junior colleges in this country. There were many of them being developed. At the same time that Kennesaw was chartered, there was Gainesville, Dalton, Albany—all those were being started. I understood that there were eleven of them being started in Alabama at that time.

TS: I guess they were really expanding in Florida at that time when you were down there too.

BG: Dr. Shores had gotten some funding from I think the Office of Education for resources for junior colleges, and what I did was a paper, thirty or forty pages long, on science resources for junior college libraries.

TS: Science resources like what books should they be getting in a junior college library?

BG: Right, right. I did that by surveying various lists and also checking existing junior college libraries and so forth.

TS: Wow. That was good background for coming to Kennesaw.

BG: Yes, that was a fortunate thing for me to have done. However, when I was appointed as librarian at Kennesaw Junior College, the campus was still under construction.

TS: The buildings weren't built?

BG: Right. We started at Banberry Elementary School, which was a partially used elementary school. The Marietta School system . . .

TS: Were they actually teaching little kids in the school at that time?

BG: Right.

TS: But they didn't need all the space.

BG: Right. They had the one class of each, first, second, and third grades, I believe, and the cafeteria because we often ate lunches there. We ate for thirty cents for our lunches, the same things that the kids got—a little carton of milk and all that. So we had a number of spare classrooms there and in addition to Dr. Sturgis there was Dean [Derrell C.] Roberts and, let's see, Mark [E.] Meadows was the first dean of Student Services and Cecil [L.] Jackson was the Registrar and Director of Admissions. We all had office space there. Also, this is kind of foggy in my memory, but I seem to remember that Jim [James W.] Woods started his operation there because I remember a number of cardpunch—we didn't have a computer in those days.

TS: We did not?

BG: We did not have a computer, but the area vocational school had given them a lot of punch card equipment and sorting equipment, so all the student records were being put on punch cards.

TS: Let's see, let me see if I can follow that. What today would be Chattahoochee Tech but was Cobb Marietta Vocational Technical School . . .

BG: Right, the one out on South Cobb Drive.

TS: Right. So you say they had a lot of punch cards.

BG: Right. I think they were getting a computer because they were starting to teach computer classes out there, so they didn't need this punch card equipment.

TS: So they did it for us, but Jim Woods had been hired to do computer work for us?

BG: Right. Well, he had been hired to do the data processing, and at that time we didn't have a computer; in fact, we did not get one for another year or so, at least.

TS: Even after the campus opened up?

BG: Yes. Jim Woods came from Georgia Tech as well. In fact, he worked for Dr. Sturgis there.

TS: I didn't know that.

BG: Yes. They, at that time, were keeping the student records on punch cards there too, so that was just a natural way for them to do that. But all that was there. The classes started at Southern Tech, and we had, of course, no library there; our students could use the library at Southern Tech, but in order to have a small collection we got permission to use one of the branches of the Marietta Cobb County Library System.

TS: Which branch?

BG: It was the one that was at Marietta Place, which was a housing development.

TS: So that was still in operation at that time?

BG: Right. Really all we had there was a small reserved book collection that students who were given assignments by instructors could go up there.

TS: So Marietta Place was along Clay Street, I guess it was at time.

BG: Right. This was up on a hill, the branch was, and it was called the Marietta Place Branch of the Cobb County System. I'm not sure if it's still open.

TS: Oh, it's been gone a long time. But that location is where the transfer station is for the CCT, I guess. At least that's along what today is South Marietta Parkway. I don't know exactly where the library was back in there, but I think there used to be about 500 concrete block buildings that were back in there that were built during World War II.

BG: Right, a number of low income housing units there.

TS: Right. Actually I think they used those for married students at Georgia Tech right after the War and then it became public housing.

BG: Oh, no, I didn't know that.

TS: But by the time Kennesaw was being created it would have been public housing for Marietta. There was a property transfer between the City of Marietta and Cobb County where the county got the site of Southern Poly and Marietta got the public housing. So I guess a library in there, that branch would have dated back to World War II. Was the library right along Clay Street or was it—you say it was back on a hill?

BG: Yes, back up above. I don't remember the exact location or the street it was on but it was not on Clay. I just remember I went up the hill and there it was.

TS: Right.

BG: Then I was of course in one of the classrooms in Banberry Elementary. The first thing I started doing was working on the collection, ordering books, primarily reference books for the reference collection. As I said, it was a busy time as far as junior colleges in the country, and so at least one book company, and we call them book jobbers in the libraries, and the company was Brodart up in Erie, Pennsylvania, and it's still a well-known library company. It sells primarily books to libraries. But they had developed what they called opening day collections for junior colleges, and it consisted of several thousand titles, and what they'd done is they'd fully processed these books, catalogued them, put covers on and labels, and put the catalog cards in pockets in the back, so you could order those. They supplied a big tray of punch cards, and you just picked out a punch card for the book you wanted, and they would send the books to you. They were books that most junior college libraries would need, so it was a good, easy way to do it.

TS: So they had a list of the essentials, but you just checked which ones you wanted for our library.

BG: Right.

TS: You didn't have to take the whole collection?

BG: Right. I wouldn't be surprised if they hadn't used my paper and other papers in compiling those things. So the books would arrive in boxes, and they were all ready to go on the shelves, so we took a few of them and put them in Marietta Place, but most of them stayed in boxes until we could get them in [our] library. The great thing about it was that since we were doing this in volume and it was their labor and so forth in doing it, they supplied these books for \$6.50 a piece, and that was a fantastic price.

TS: Even then.

BG: Even then. Many books would have been \$15.00 or \$20.00, especially reference type material. So all we would have had to do when the library opened was put these on the shelves and take the cards out of the back and file them in the catalog.

TS: So you could get a thousand books for \$6,500.00. That's good. You had mentioned earlier that you were in a big classroom and you had mentioned all the administrators that were in there; what about secretarial staff?

BG: Each of the administrators had a secretary, and I can't remember all the names.

TS: But were they in that big room too?

BG: Yes. Well, each of us had a different classroom for our own—in that classroom would be the administrator and his secretary, and maybe more than one secretary or clerk, I'm not sure. We had one secretary, and I cannot remember her name either.

TS: For the library?

BG: For the library. So it was just the two of us for that first year.

TS: So when you mentioned the dean of Student Services and so on, you all weren't in one room together; you had separate classrooms?

BG: No, right, yes. I believe Dr. Sturgis had the principal's office at Banberry, and the rest of us just had classrooms.

TS: If they were still teaching classes there did they not have a principal at Banberry at that time?

BG: I do not remember that. I doubt if they did because they just had the three classes, so probably they were under the jurisdiction of some other school.

TS: And so Dr. Sturgis was able to get the principal's office.

BG: Right and the secretary had the secretary's office. Let's see, I guess the next thing was when we moved out to the campus; and, of course, it was just the buildings that were connected by the walkway. Those were the first buildings of the . . .

TS: Going south to north it would be Science, the Library, and Social Science with the Humanities Building to the west of Social Science.

BG: Well, and going west from the Science Building was the Student Services center and the Administration building. I don't know what all of those have become now but they're all different now.

TS: They're all different now.

BG: Including the old Library [now the Pilcher Building]. The Physical Education facility was part of the original campus as well. But, the Library and the Physical Education facilities were not ready even when we moved out, and so we move the library into two Physics laboratories in the Science building; that's where the first library was. We had the books set up on the lab benches in the Physics labs, and that's where we opened up for service.

TS: Wow. And the old Science building, what today is the Nursing building, and I guess of course, they just gutted the building when Science moved out in '96 for their new building, so it's very different inside now, but were the Physics labs up on the top floor or bottom floor? There were three floors.

- BG: Well, both of them were on the main floor, not the ground floor but the second floor, I guess you would say.
- TS: Right. It's strange in that building I guess because it would be the second floor if you entered from the parking lot but the first floor if you entered from the walkway. Isn't that right?
- BG: Yes.
- TS: So you had two Physics labs, and I guess we didn't have very many Physics classes at that time.
- BG: Right. Charley [G.] Dobson, [Jr.], was one of the original members of the faculty, but I guess they were not set up to teach Physics at that time, so I don't know if he taught math or what. But he was one of the original members.
- TS: How long did you stay in the physics labs?
- BG: Well, this would have been the Winter Quarter of the year and until the end of that, and I think we moved into the library building in March of '67, I believe.
- TS: So it's just one full quarter you were in the Physics labs.
- BG: Right, one full quarter, and it was just because the Library looked about ready, the carpet was down and everything, but I guess some of the electrical support was not quite finished. That was a fortuitous thing which I will get to in a second, but the other thing was the Physical Education people had to have their classes in the Social Science building, and I remember there were ping pong tables set up in some of those classrooms, and we used to play occasionally there. But, one of the benefits of those buildings not being ready was that money had been allocated for those buildings, but the contractors could not be paid until they were ready. So Dr. Sturgis put the money for those building in the bank; and, of course, they started drawing interest, and he gave the interest money to the Library for the collection.
- TS: Right. I guess you were saving on utilities and maintenance and all kinds of things.
- BG: Right, right. So all that money amounted to several thousand dollars; and, of course, we were ordering books from Brodart, and they were quite inexpensive, so we could have quite a few books. We moved into the new building, and by that time we had acquired about 6,000 volumes when we moved in. Dr. Sturgis, you could not have asked for a person to give stronger support to the Library, because any extra money that he found any place always came to the Library. He always said that next to the faculty the Library was the most important component of the college. He, of course, from the very beginning or close to the beginning was interested in the college becoming a four-year school, and critical in that was building a library. So this was one of the reasons any money he found

any place he was quite willing to give it for the Library. Also, we didn't have competition from sports teams and so forth, so there weren't other places to put the money, so he was glad to do that.

TS: Let's go back, if we could for just a second, to that first quarter at Southern Tech; could students check out books at that time, or faculty, if they needed to? How did that work?

BG: No, the only books that we had really for them were these reserved books in the Marietta Place Library. Faculty did not have offices there, so they just came to campus when their classes were meeting. I assume that if there was some special need for some books we would have found them. We did start checking them out, however, when we were in the Physics labs. We had some kind of rudimentary circulation system, and you could check them out then, but in fact, really, we didn't have much contact with the students. I do believe that we did offer some kind of library orientation and started that up pretty quickly, but I don't know how much help that would have been since they didn't really have a good library choice.

TS: So, students just knew for those first two quarters that they could not check out books.

BG: Right. Now, of course they could go into the Southern Tech library and use the materials in there; I don't think they were permitted to check out books there, but, of course, that was mostly technical material. John [W.] Pattillo is the librarian there and he was an historian, so he built up a good history collection, I know that.

TS: I remember him.

BG: He was also from Georgia Tech; I had known him for a long time. He was very cooperative and helped us. I guess I really never said anything about my wife. My wife, Elestia, was also a librarian, and she was working at a branch of the Atlanta Public Library. She started out at the Atlanta Public Library as a children's librarian, but moved to a branch in Buckhead of the Atlanta Library system. Her boss was Mary Louise Rheay, who became librarian out at Cobb County.

TS: The head librarian.

BG: Yes. However, that first year, the library director of the Cobb County system was Bob [Robert W.] Bullen, and he didn't have a good reputation.

TS: Well, he was asked to leave.

BG: Right. But one of the things, he was the one who arranged. ..

TS: There was a question about money, the embezzlement of money.

BG: Right. He was the one that arranged for us to use the Marietta Place branch, and he also gave us the first book in the Library of our collection. We just happened to be walking

through when we were talking to him, Dean [Derrell C.] Roberts and I. He showed us around the Cobb County main branch, and he came to this place where there a number of books there, and that was when the *First Hundred Years* had come out, and they had them all up on the shelves ready to go out to the branches. There must have been thirty or forty copies of it, and he just picked off one and gave it to us. And that was our first book.

TS: Sarah Blackwell Gober Temple's *The First Hundred Years: A Short History of Cobb County, in Georgia* (Atlanta: Walter W. Brown Publishing Company, 1935). [The book has been reprinted a number of times].

BG: Right. Mary Louise Rheay was director for many years and still is living. I saw her just a short time ago. She is doing well.

TS: So Sarah Temple's *First Hundred Years* was your first book for our library.

BG: Right.

TS: Where did you meet your wife?

BG: She was in library school down in Florida State as well.

TS: Okay so you were in school together.

BG: Yes. When I came up here to work at Georgia Tech she came up to work in the Atlanta Public Libraries, and that's really where I got to know her really well.

TS: After she came up?

BG: Yes. I guess it was maybe a couple of years after that before we got married. Anyway, we were living in Atlanta at that time, so I was commuting from Atlanta out to Cobb County, first out to Banberry and then out to the campus.

TS: Right. Did she continue to work in Buckhead?

BG: Yes, she worked in Buckhead and we did not move out to Cobb County until I finished my Ph.D., and that would have been '73. So she was working in the Buckhead branch for most of that time. Then we had one child, Louella [Alice Greene], who went to Kennesaw and graduated from Kennesaw. She is now down in Decatur and teaches visually impaired students in the DeKalb system.

TS: What year did she graduate from Kennesaw?

BG: In 1986. She had a double degree in English and history.

- TS: Did Dr. Sturgis say when you were hired, “Now, we expect you to get your Ph.D. one of these days.”
- BG: Yes, really he did. Not say “expected,” but he encouraged us to, and he found money to help me do that, Foundation money, and I got a fellowship from the Higher Education Department, and so it was relatively painless to do that, to go down there.
- TS: A fellowship from Higher Education?
- BG: Yes, they offered those. I think it was just library fellowships in those days, but it was a pretty substantial fellowship.
- TS: This was a fellowship provided by the government?
- BG: Yes, the U.S. government, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for librarians, and it took care of all the fees, out of state fees and all that, at Florida State.
- TS: It seems like you took a leave of absence to finish up, didn’t you?
- BG: Right, yes. I actually took two—I took a year leave of absence for the class work. Then I came back here and started working on the dissertation trying to find a topic, but really couldn’t get one that Dr. Jahoda, who was then my advisor, would approve of. I eventually found something and decided to take another year off to do the research for that.
- TS: What was the dissertation?
- BG: That was the study of the microform catalog that Georgia Tech had. They had developed that; that was quite an innovative catalog. I studied the faculty use and acceptance of it. It was really more than a catalog; they called it the LENDS system; and it was a system involving putting a microform catalog in each of the departments of the campus and then providing a way that they could request books by telephone and then sending the books out to them, so they really never had to come to the library unless they needed to.
- TS: Did they abandon their old card catalog at that time?
- BG: Right, yes. That consisted of machine readable records converted to microform, and they converted their catalog to microform, plus micro-forming the cards for a part of the catalog that hadn’t been converted. So it was two parts: it was this big collection of microfiche for all the catalog cards in the card catalog, plus the material that they had added after that which was in machine readable form and could be updated every other month or so, so it was always up to date. We kind of emulated that with our microform catalog, although we completely converted our collection, our cataloging records to machine-readable records . . .
- TS: Which means computers?

- BG: Which means computers. And then we put it on microfilm. Do you remember those microfilm readers?
- TS: I do vaguely. Gratefully we've moved long beyond that.
- BG: Yes, those were cumbersome, but still you could have several copies of them, so we had copies up on the second floor of the library and downstairs.
- TS: So basically it's all on computer, but nobody has a personal computer back then, so it's a central computer, but you can copy the computer records straight to the microform. Is that how it works?
- BG: Yes. Let me go through how that is done because part of this was we became a member of SOLINET [Southeastern Library Network], which was the big library automation consortium, which was located in Atlanta. They were connected to a big consortium in Ohio, and so they had gathered all these records converted from all libraries all over the country and converted their catalog records into computer records and then were stored in the computers in Ohio. SOLINET provided access to that, so we had a SOLINET terminal in the library.
- TS: Where you could see what any other library had?
- BG: Right. So what we would do was take a card from our catalog and just identify it and check and see if it was in that collection. If it was, we just informed them, and so that was added to our database there, so all of the computing part was done at SOLINET, and all we had was the terminal.
- TS: But that sounds labor intensive that you've got to check each book against each collection.
- BG: Right, but it's a lot easier than key punching or typing all this information in because all you need to do is put in the LC card number and then tell them that you had that book. If you had more than one copy you'd indicate that, so it was relatively simple to do that. That was another way in which Dr. Sturgis had helped us because that was a pretty expensive proposition, joining SOLINET, because there was a big membership fee, and he had no problem doing that.
- TS: Were we were unique in being a junior college and doing that?
- BG: Definitely so. I know of no other one in Georgia and probably very few in the whole country that were doing that. I'm sure that we were one of the first, if not the first, but certainly one of the first that completely converted our collection to machine readable, to computer, form before most any other places did. Certainly places like Georgia Tech had done this, and lots of the other primarily research libraries had done this, but very few of the junior college libraries, and so once that was done it meant we could immediately do

the microform catalog or we could have done a book catalog or whatever. Then the next step was since it was all machine readable form, once the Internet came along, you could put it on there or if you had a big computer on campus you could put it on that and have terminals and so forth. Actually that was not done until after I left that we used the access via the Internet to get to the records.

TS: There really was not an Internet when you left.

BG: Right. And I tell you nobody predicted that, nobody saw that coming. That was always kind of interesting to me.

TS: It's hard to imagine now that we all got along without personal computers.

BG: I'd like to give credit as I go along to Laurelle [H.] Hampton. She was the one primarily responsible for this and the one that oversaw getting all these records into the computer. One I haven't mentioned is Marty [Martha Ann M.] Giles who I think was really primarily responsible for developing the library collection.

TS: Maybe we ought to say a word or two about the growth of the staff. When you got here I guess you were the only librarian?

BG: I was the only one, and as long as I was at Banberry I was the only one, but about the time we moved to campus we hired Marsha Ingles, and she was just out of library school. Her father was professor of biology at Georgia Tech, and so Dr. Sturgis had known him and had known that he had this daughter who was going to library school, so we hired her, but she only stayed a year because she married a lieutenant in the army and went off with him somewhere. That's when we hired Marty Giles, and she came to us from Atlanta Public Library.

TS: And Marty is really Martha?

BG: Martha Ann Giles.

TS: But she went by Marty.

BG: Yes, and hardly anybody would have known her by anything else. She was primarily concerned with selecting and acquiring the books, so I give her most of the credit for developing the Library collection. Of course, we had a very good cooperation from faculty; Dr. Sturgis would always bring new faculty into the Library, and we would show them what we had and then say, "Whatever you need, let us know." That was a good instrument for getting the collection built. It really gave us a method that the collection was one that was useful to students because we did get very good use of the Library by students. I always encouraged faculty to give students library assignments and so forth to involve students in using the Library.

- TS: I remember when I started in Kennesaw in '68, about the first thing that Dr. [George H.] Beggs [chairman, Division of Social Sciences] said was to make out a list of books for the Library.
- BG: One of the things that helped was a newsletter called *Library Review*, which had a summary of book circulation on the front page usually. That, I think, stimulated a lot of competition among the divisions. I know Dr. Beggs and Dr. [John C.] Greider [chairman, Division of Humanities]....
- TS: And Wesley [C.] Walraven [chairman, Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics].
- BG: Wesley Walraven and Herb [Herbert L.] Davis always noted that, and whenever that came out they saw how many books were attributed to circulation by their division, and so they wanted to keep that up, and I think they encouraged the faculty to have their students use the Library. Anyway, for whatever reason . . .
- TS: So it was competition of who checks out the most books: science books or English books or history books?
- BG: Right. I don't know if you knew that, but they were quite competitive. You could detect that in meetings. But anyway, I always was pleased with the use of the Library by students. Some of the other library staff, Valerie [B.] Yarbrough, was primarily responsible for the reference service and developing the reference collection and eventually starting our use of on-line databases. Before the Internet we had access to a number of databases like *Chemical Abstracts* and *Readers' Guide* and so forth, all available from Lockheed of all places. Lockheed of California had this sub-company that had acquired all these databases, and they were available by terminals by telephone lines. She had a terminal in her office, and she could do searches for people on various databases.
- TS: So somebody would come to her and say I'm looking for a book on blah, blah, blah and she would get on her computer?
- BG: Well, it was primarily subject things. "I want information on a particular topic." And it was more used by faculty than students although it was opened to students' use. The problem being that if you did a search there you would end up with lots of references that we didn't have, particularly from something like *Chemical Abstracts*, and we would get what we could through interlibrary loans and photocopies and so forth, but you couldn't do that for hundreds of items; it was expensive to work. That was a service that we did offer, and she was primarily responsible for developing that. Then let's see, I mentioned Laurelle Hampton who was primarily involved in cataloging and the conversion of the catalog to machine readable form, and then John [David] Kelso who was in charge of our audiovisual service. In general, junior college libraries did have that responsibility for audiovisual resources; in universities and colleges probably but that's not true, but in junior colleges it was, and he offered that service. We developed a thorough collection of

movies that we used and then borrowed movies from a state service. He took the equipment out and set it up and usually ran equipment for the people.

TS: Those were the days when faculty could call for somebody to come over and set up a film for them, and he would come over.

BG: They don't do that any more?

TS: No, that was gone long ago.

BG: I didn't realize that. Also, we had a pretty extensive collection of music recordings and listening equipment in the library, and that was primarily for our Music program. They gave assignments that students were supposed to come and listen to certain selections and so forth, and he was in charge of that. That was the basic faculty until . . .

TS: Did anybody have the assignment of journals, building up the journal collection?

BG: That would have been Pat [Patricia A.] Johnston, and she came to us as a government documents librarian.

TS: Right. Well, you might mention that because we had that government documents collection from the beginning, didn't we?

BG: Right. Well, within a few months. Actually before we moved to the campus, I believe, we had applied for that. Each Congressman—I think at that time it was Congressman [John W.] Davis, the Seventh Congressional district, I believe—and each congressman has the right to have one depository in his congressional district, and since we didn't have one here, we applied for it, and he did that, and so we became one. It was very selective in the beginning; because that was before Pat came on board, and I did most of that myself, and so we selected really just what we could take care of, the really good things. But when she came aboard her primary responsibilities were the periodical collection and the government documents. Actually, I should say John Kelso took care of the government documents before Pat came; she didn't come for a couple of years after the library opened.

TS: So I guess your original staff [after Marsha Ingles] then is Marty Giles, Laurelle Hampton, Valerie Yarbrough, and John Kelso, so those four.

BG: Right. And then in a couple of years Pat Johnston. Those were primarily the ones until I left, up through four-year status and so on. Plus, a number of clerical people.

TS: Do you all still stay in touch?

BG: Occasionally I talk to Marty Giles. Her husband has passed away, and she just doesn't get out much because she doesn't drive, which is unusual because she commuted from Roswell for all those years, many, many years. I haven't seen Valerie in a good while; I

did run into her one time in a restaurant. And John I've not seen in a good while either. I would like to see him.

TS: I saw him I guess back in May. He came to a symposium we had on campus.

BG: Yes, I'd like to catch up with him again. He left Kennesaw and went to Fort Mac [Fort McPherson] and did their audiovisual services down there. I kind of lost track of him then.

TS; But you had a small staff but a staff that stayed together for a number of years.

BG: Yes, we stayed together—they were all there when I left except John, I guess John had left by then. I left in '86. They were all there those first years.

TS: Right. Let me ask you about process; when you were talking about joining SOLINET, did Dr. Sturgis come to you and say, "I think we need to be in SOLINET?" Or did you go to Dr. Sturgis and say, "This is something . . ."

BG: No, I would have gone to Dr. Sturgis because he would likely not have known about something within the library profession. First, the OCLC [founded in 1967 as the Ohio College Library Center; currently known as the Online Computer Library Center] started up. That was fairly early, and then shortly after I got to Kennesaw SOLINET would have started up [founded in 1973]. I was interested in it starting up because of my interest in automation and computers, and so I went to some of the original meetings when that was starting up. In fact, Graham Roberts, whom I mentioned to you, was instrumental in getting that started up. Once I saw what it was going to be doing and how it could help us, I asked Dr. Sturgis for the money, and he immediately with no problem found the money some place; I don't know how much it was, several thousand dollars though. We had to buy a terminal and so forth and take training. We had to send Laurelle to SOLINET to get training and so forth, so it was expensive, but he had no problem. He was, I think, eager to see it because he could see how that would help in developing the library.

TS: How were budget decisions made back then, like did all the administrators get together and talk about the budget?

BG: No, we all submitted budget requests and with the Library, very helpful in doing that were the American Library Association Standards which told that junior college libraries should have 20,000 books, and we knew we should be aiming towards 20,000 books. Dr. Sturgis knew that figure. He had that figure in his head, and so that's what his immediate goal was as well as ours. Anytime we asked for whatever we thought we could use, he definitely approved it. If the money was available, he approved that. But all the division chairs submitted budgets.

TS: So Dr. Sturgis really made the decisions?

- BG: Yes, he definitely made the decisions and I guess with the help of Roger [E.] Hopkins, the Controller at that time.
- TS: But the Library actually probably had a higher percentage of the overall budget back then than it has any time since.
- BG: I'm sure it was. Especially if you consider the money that was not surplus, but the money that was like the interest from the banks and so forth; that could have very well gone to laboratory equipment or travel or something like that.
- TS: Or intramural sports.
- BG: Right. But it went to the Library and there was never any question about that. Anything like that, like the theft protection system, we were one of the very first in the state, probably in the country, to have a theft protection system. Again, Georgia Tech was first, and then we came right along after them, but that is a pretty expensive system to get because you had to put a strip in each book, so that was expensive not only from the point of buying those strips, but getting personnel to put them in and the gates. You know, we had two gates. But that was effective. Whenever [Dr. Sturgis] had a visitor to campus he always showed them those things. He would come in, and he would grab a book, and unfortunately he would show the visitor that if you held it up high, which he could do, that you could walk through and not [set off the alarm]. You would walk through and hear it go off—tick, tick, tick. He liked things like that.
- TS: As I recall theft was a pretty big problem, wasn't it?
- BG: Yes. I think until we got the system, and once we got that I think there was really more a psychological thing. Students knew they had to go through that, and I think it died down. In those early days we also allowed anybody with a Cobb County library card to use it, and so we got lots of high school students using the Library. They, I think, were more responsible for some of the theft. Again, most of the people that we caught going through the gates were those high school kids because they didn't realize what they were, and they'd go through and they'd set that thing off. But it was pretty effective I think, more psychologically because it made a big fuss; alarms went off and here you were standing in the middle of that thing with a book or maybe in your bag or something so I think it was pretty effective.
- TS: You mentioned 20,000 books as a goal; what about professional journals?
- BG: I think they always said that the standards there were just adequate; well, that's open to interpretation, but immediately we tried to acquire everything that was indexed in *Readers' Guide* and then selectively in other indexes. We, also, at the same time, started the microfilm collection, and we acquired microfilm with the aim of going twenty years back, back collection for all those collections, particularly for what we called the scholarly things. Those were all indexed in the *Social Sciences Index* and things like that. At that time, we immediately went forward and started binding the books for periodicals.

I think we started out with 180 periodicals and journals when we opened the Library. But they were all things that were indexed.

TS: That sounds good for an opening junior college library.

BG: Yes, yes. I suspect that was good, because periodicals were expensive too, I mean, the common ones like *Time* and *Newsweek* aren't very expensive, but a regular scholarly journal . . .

TS: *American Historical Review*?

BG: Yes, they could be well over a hundred bucks for four issues a year. That was part of the budget too, and we had no problem justifying that either. I think also we were somewhat unique in building the back issues in microform too because we had no opportunity to go back and get those issues; back issues of periodicals are fairly hard to find.

TS: I remember when I started here all the books were on the second floor; we had the two-story library which is the Picher building nowadays, and I guess periodicals were downstairs and books were upstairs.

BG: Right.

TS: And all the shelves were four-foot shelves.

BG: Yes, counter height shelves. When we moved in, we had about 6,000 books. When we put those up on those shelves and spread them out, that made them look pretty sparse that first quarter or so, but one of the things we did was we added 10,000 or so a year after that for several years. We built up the collection very rapidly.

TS: You added 10,000 books a year?

BG: Yes, which is phenomenal for a junior college. But it meant that we would soon have to go to the high shelving which we did before we moved out of the old building.

TS: I remember at one point, I'm trying to remember how it worked; I guess we got the shelves offered to our faculty offices, and I remember I claimed some for my office at that time.

BG: Right. And I know for some reason Georgia Tech got a lot of those because I remember Graham Roberts coming out with a truck and his people loading them in. I don't know where they used them because I didn't like them because that put a third of your collection down on the floor, and that meant you had to crawl around on the floor to find them. It seemed kind of cumbersome to me. One thing it did, it was nice that you could pull a book off and you had some place to put it down and look at it before you decided to check it out, so that was kind of nice. But for overall book storage it just was not the way to do it. Let's see, the reference collection, you'll remember was at the back of the

upstairs, and we had the reference desk up there, and so we tried to keep that desk staffed all the time the Library was open. The card catalog was close to the stairs if you'll remember that.

TS: I've forgotten; I remember where the checkout desk was, but I had forgotten where the card catalog was.

BG: Yes, it was up there. The one nice thing about the low shelving was you could sit at the desk and you could see all of the things.

TS: You could see everything, right.

BG: Yes. But the one nice feature also was we had all those small study rooms around the periphery of the first floor, and so small groups that wanted to talk, we could ask them to take one of those rooms and cut down on the noise.

TS: Yes. I'm trying to remember, I think there was even a smoking room, wasn't there?

BG: Yes, yes, there was smoking in the corner room, well, it would have been on the left hand side as you're looking from . . .

TS: Looking from the front desk?

BG: Near the Social Science building.

TS: The left hand side would be the side closest to the walkway.

BG: Yes, we did that. That was just when no smoking was getting started, and before that most libraries would allow smoking all over the building, but we managed to confine it to that area. I hated to go into that room; that was a blast of smoke coming out.

TS: I guess. Did we have a sprinkler system?

BG: Yes. I don't know that it ever went off.

TS: I don't think it ever did.

BG: Yes.

TS: That would have gotten a lot of really wet books if it had. I don't believe it ever did; not that I ever heard. But we did have it in case one of these smokers set off a fire, I guess.

BG: I remember there were a few students that just stayed in there and smoked, and I couldn't see how they could do that because when you went in there, there was just a fog of smoke.

TS: People are horrified nowadays that we had to let students smoke when they were taking an exam in our classroom.

BG: Oh, I don't remember that.

TS: We would stick them up over near the windows, and we'd have a couple of rows of smokers near the windows.

BG: But we had a lot who chewed gum.

TS: Well, I guess we should have. Actually there was a sign up front saying "No Smoking, Drinking, Eating" in the classroom, but they would say, "Oh, we can't get through a test if we don't smoke; our nerves will be so frayed if we don't smoke." So we would let the smokers line up near the windows.

BG: Well, I think that's most everything.

TS: Why don't we talk a little bit about the new building?

BG: Oh, yes, right. That soon became apparent once we had reached four-year status that the Library was not going to be adequate, that we would need to expand it. So Dr. Sturgis asked me to start submitting plans for a library addition. So I plugged in our projected enrollment and what our projected collection would be, and I came up with a figure of I think about 60,000 square feet addition that would be required. Of course, that was counting on using the old building as part of the Library.

TS: How big was the old building?

BG: Twenty thousand square feet.

TS: Ten thousand a floor.

BG: Yes. So Dr. Sturgis took those and added a little here and there and put in a request for 100,000 square feet. Much to my amazement and surprise it was approved, but I think primarily because we had not received a lot of additions or buildings and so forth, and so he had not gotten a lot before. This was something he really wanted. I'm sure he made a strong case for it at the Board of Regents. So it was approved, and that was a big surprise.

TS: Yes, I guess the only new buildings at that time were the [Carmichael] Student Center, and the new Humanities building opened up about the same time as the library, I think.

BG: I guess. I really don't remember the time frame.

TS: But we hadn't had much expansion.

BG: But I did know that one of the things he'd been asking for from the opening day of the campus was a Fine Arts building. He never got that, so I'm sure every time he went to the Board of Regents he would request something like that and not get it. But he seemed to have no problem getting the Library. So from then on it was a matter of planning what we wanted to put in it, where things would go and so forth.

TS: How was a decision made to build it where it was built?

BG: I think that was more the architect had decided that because I think we had planned on someplace by the Science building, over in that area.

TS: Beyond the original Science building, which would be Nursing nowadays.

BG: Yes, right. Probably over where the new Science building is, somewhere in that area, I believe. That would have been a new building, not an addition, but I think the architects decided that an addition would be better because it would keep it central and could have been more easily planned, I guess, so that's what was approved was that 100,000 square foot addition, so we would have had 120,000 total library. But immediately when it was opened, of course, they took the fourth floor for other things: audiovisual services and some kind of counseling and things like that.

TS: What year?

BG: It was '80 I think.

TS: So Dr. Sturgis is still here when it opened up?

BG: Yes.

TS: But he was not the one who decided to take the fourth floor, was he?

BG: No, no. That would have been Dr. [Betty L.] Siegel. I have no problem with that because they were desperate for space and all kinds of things that they needed the space for because the campus was growing, and no other buildings had been built.

TS: And the Library didn't need it at that time?

BG: No. The Library did not need it. I would have preferred that they would have made things temporary up there, so we could have expanded. So far we haven't done it, and I'm not sure, it probably could be done. Once the institution became a university that really means that you need big subject collections, deep subject collections, and probably those are still not available. If you've got people doing research in subject areas you can exhaust the collections, so that would have been nice to have. I think also having access to a lot of material over the Internet has meant that's not quite as essential as it would have been.

TS: Not essential to have 100,000 books today as at one time?

BG: Well, still it should have been well over 100,000. You look at any decent university library; it's close to a million. We would never have been able to come close to that even with four floors, but when you've got faculty and graduate students doing research, particularly doctoral research, you need really substantial materials. [Ed. Note: The Library collection by 2006 exceeded 600,000 books and government publications, 3,300 serial publications, and 1.2 million pieces of microforms. ("Introduction to the Horace W. Sturgis Library" <http://www.kennesaw.edu/library/about/intro.htm>, accessed 12 February 2008)].

TS: So the day may come when the Library needs that floor back?

BG: Yes.

TS: You said you understood the need for taking the top floor, but they also put a lot of faculty offices on lower floors.

BG: Yes. I hated to see those study rooms [along the west wall facing the old Library (Pilcher)] go because that was one of the things that we had seen from the old Library. That was very useful in controlling noise and activity and so forth, and it was a good thing for students to have conference rooms and so forth, but they immediately took that over. I think Nursing faculty was one of the first to go in. They built along the other side over there [east wall] too, some offices, which . . . .

TS: Did they do that while you were still here?

BG: Yes. Again, that was not particularly anything wrong with that, although I can see where it would have been a problem for faculty; you want access to your office whenever you want it, and we had to close the library at 11:00 or 12:00 at night. Also, books tended to disappear into those offices without being checked out. A lot of things we didn't know where they were sometimes. Again, when you've got fifty or a hundred faculty looking for offices, and you don't have any place to put them, you need to come up with something.

TS: Yes. Let's see, I guess the Library was named for Dr. Sturgis after you left. It was after he died before that took place.

BG: Yes, but I was strongly in favor of that. In fact, I talked with Chancellor [Vernon] Crawford, at the time, and asked him when that would be possible, and he said, "Unfortunately not until. . ."

TS: You couldn't name it for a living person.

BG: Right. But soon after that, and it was very appropriate because Dr. Sturgis had this primary interest in the Library, and I imagine he came in the Library every day that he

worked here. He just came in to see how we were doing, and, as I mentioned, all that strong support for it. I don't know that any other president would have given us that kind of support, so I was very happy for that. Also, one of the requests he made when he retired was that he have his office in the Library.

TS: That's where I did my oral history interviews with him in that office on the third floor.

BG: He requested that, and I was happy to find room for him.

TS: Let's see, it was '86 that you left?

BG: Yes, '86. I had thirty years in by then; twenty years at Kennesaw, seven years at Georgia Tech, and I could buy in my two army years and the year I taught high school, so I bought those in and had thirty years and decided I'd retire. I was only fifty-three. At the time I was thinking of something part-time, but something opened up at Emory, and I actually started there part-time, but that soon evolved into a full-time job. I was the science bibliographer there, so I was selecting science materials, and I would go out and talk to the science faculty. It was a great job. The only problem was commuting down to Emory; there was just no good way to get there. I retired from there in '97.

TS: Well, you've done at least one book on [William] Bartram's Trail [Charles D. Spornick, Alan R. Cattier, and Robert J. Greene, *An Outdoor Guide to Bartram's Travels* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003)]

BG: Yes. Bartram's Trail, and I did a book while I was at Emory. It was really a reference book on where you could find resources. I compiled it from indexes and so forth. The Bartram book was a lot of fun, and I did it with a fellow that was at Emory; I was the science bibliographer, and he [Charles Spornick] was the humanities bibliographer. We had been hiking trails up along the Appalachian Trail, the Georgia part of it, and we came to this Bartram Trail, and we wondered what that was. Neither of us knew about Bartram, and we got to looking, and he decided that there should be something written about him since there was nothing written about him. It got to be a pretty big project because we went to all the Bartram sites in the southeast, wherever he'd been, and visited all those sites. I primarily took pictures for it; I've always been interested in photography; and then I wrote some of it, but he did the bulk of it.

TS: Bartram was a naturalist who came through Georgia in the late colonial period, I guess it was.

BG: Right. Actually the Revolutionary War was going on while he was down here, and he visited all the way over to Mississippi down through Florida and Georgia and the Carolinas. We visited all those places, especially places like Augusta and Savannah and so forth. There is the Bartram Trail which is up in the northeast Georgian, North Carolinas. It starts in South Carolina, goes into Georgia and up into North Carolina.

TS: Well, what have we left out?

BG: Golly, I don't know! I don't know. I have mentioned everything that I think Dr. Sturgis did, and I would like to mention the accomplishments of the Library or what I think were important. I mentioned most of these: the collection which I think was really high quality, useful materials; the library use, which I think was really a compliment to the faculty because they encouraged it; the library automation, which we had a leadership role in; the library addition; and the online services which we were early in doing. Those particular things; so I think that's about everything that I can tell you.

TS: I must say that I think our Library now is wonderful with what it does with electronic resources, but if you're looking for a book written by a historian that was written back in the 1960s or 1970s, it's there in our library.

BG: That's great.

TS: You're not as certain that you're going to find things that have been written since then.

BG: Again, I think that was primarily due to the input of faculty because when they knew of something that they wanted that they thought was important, they'd come and tell us. Fortunately, I can't ever remember turning anybody down on that because we almost always had the resources to buy the books.

TS: I must say that even today if a faculty member asks for a book, they're going to get it in the Library—particularly if it has an instructional purpose.

BG: Which is as it should be; there's no reason that should not be true.

TS: Right. Well, I thank you very much for this interview.

BG: I've enjoyed every minute of it; it's been fun.

TS: Great.

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