KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH ANN W. ELLIS PULLEN

for the

KSU ORAL HISTORY SERIES, NO. 159

PART I – CONDUCTED BY CODY BISHOP AND CHRIS HARRIS

THURSDAY, 7 APRIL 2011

EDITED BY CODY BISHOP, INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

PART II – CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT,

TUESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2024

EDITED AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 159
Interview with Ann W. Ellis Pullen
Part I – April 7, 2011; conducted by Cody Bishop and Chris Harris; edited by Cody Bishop; indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Location: Social Science Building, Room 5074

CB: We appreciate you coming out today. Thank you very much.

AP: Glad to be here.

CB: If you want to go ahead and start off with telling us a little bit about your childhood and where you grew up.

AP: I was born in Newnan, Georgia and I grew up in Hapeville, Georgia, home of the original Dwarf House and Chick-Fil-A and a Ford Plant. So, I graduated from high school there and went on to the University of Georgia where I got my undergraduate degree curiously in math, though I had a minor in history, and then got a master's in history, having decided that history is a lot more fun than math.

CH: That in itself is interesting because the constant joke that math people—not that math and history are polar opposites—but a lot of math people are not interested in history, and a lot of history people don't want to deal with math. It's funny that you were interested in both.

AP: Yes. I taught in public school for several years in the Fulton County school system. Actually, I started before I finished my masters. But I taught math for a year and a half, and then taught history for two years, and then went back to get a PhD. I decided that was honestly easier than teaching in high school and it was. I really think it was.

CH: Now what was the attraction? You were attracted to both, but what was the draw for history growing up?

CB: Did you have any mentors that got you interested in it?

AP: My family is very oriented towards history. There are many, many teachers in my family, though none taught history as a single subject. My mother taught middle grades, or today what would be called middle grades, and particularly liked Georgia history. She used to tell me stories based on Georgia history. Other kids get 'Winnie the Pooh' [Disney] or something, but she was always doing 'Tomochichi' [Chief of Yamacraw Indians] or some such. So, she was a major influence.

I had some very good history teachers in high school. I didn't major in history when I first went to college because I thought a) math was more practical; I could get a job; and b) I had a history prof early on in the honors program who really liked to humiliate students. I thought if the other professors in the department are like this, I don't think I

want to be a major in history. And I didn't. But as time passed, I got to know some other history professors through having to take core classes and started taking history courses as a minor. I actually ended up with enough to have been a major except that I was in the science track; so, I didn't have all the other requirements I had to have for a B.A. I ended up with a math major with a whole lot of background in history.

The gentleman who was then the chair of the history department at the University of Georgia, whose name was Dr. [Joseph H.] Parks, offered me a graduate fellowship in history. I thought that was a pretty good deal. Once you get on the campus at Athens, it's pretty hard to leave. The chance to stay another year to two with money coming in just sounded grand to me. So, that's what I did, and it was very enjoyable. I wasn't sure at the time what I would do. I don't think I had in mind that I would teach in college, necessarily, but it just seemed like an interesting thing to do. I couldn't see any reason not to go for an assistantship that the department was willing to give me.

CH: Master's by 1967, right? You then went to teach? Were you teaching concurrently?

AP: I started teaching before I finished the master's. While I was writing the thesis I started teaching. But the first job I got, not surprisingly, was to teach math. I started in the middle of the year in January; it was a year and a half before I moved to a different school and actually taught history for a while, which was a lot of fun. I don't want to make it sound too negative, but increasingly it seemed that teaching in college would be a lot more interesting. I'd really enjoyed the course work for the master's and thought getting a PhD would be a fun thing to do. At that time, also, the University System of Georgia was expanding a great deal, so it seemed like there might be jobs out there in history.

CH: You went on to get your Georgia State doctorate in 1975 and stopped teaching in high school in 1970?

AP: I spent an extended time getting the PhD. As it turns out, I was married by then and had a child in the middle of the PhD with the bright idea that "Well, kids sleep don't they?" "No. Not always." That delayed things a good bit while I tried to cope with studying for prelims [preliminary examinations] and having a newborn. So I finally finished in 1975.

CH: In those early days of the 1970s, you're working on the PhD and you have a child. What were you thinking? Were you thinking that if this wraps up and you get your doctorate that you had ideas or contacts for where you wanted to go?

AP: I won't say I was focused on that at all. I just assumed a job probably would turn up.

CH: Sure.

AP: I taught classes at Georgia State as a teaching assistant. Towards the end, I also taught part-time classes at DeKalb College, now Perimeter, and at Clayton State. I was

beginning to meet a lot of people from around the state and figured something would turn up. When it didn't, right as I was finishing, I began to get a little more panicked.

CH: Those early days of teaching, whether it be DeKalb or Clayton State, were there things about your style of teaching that you would carry on? Or some things you would have changed?

AP: I was always very interested in trying to get students involved instead of just lecturing. I certainly developed that more and more as time passed. But even as a teaching assistant, I was trying to ask a lot of questions and get people to say things if they would—usually they would. I think I did a better job in teaching classes I knew something about; this will come as no surprise. But one of the rules for teaching assistants as GSU was that you had to teach all of the core classes. At that time, there were two western civilization courses and two U.S ones. The U.S. courses were not a problem. That's what I had mainly taken courses in.

In fact, the second Western Civilization was pretty easy to do, but I just didn't know much then about what was called History 111, Ancient Civilizations. The quarter I taught Ancient Civ. was an especially difficult one, trying to keep one chapter ahead and act like I knew something. Of course, back then there wasn't much technology to teach with. You couldn't go online and look for some handy things to put up on the screen and look like you had done a lot of research. So, again, I'm not sure that during that quarter the students got all they should have, but on the other hand I hope most weren't too much aware of it. I never had to teach that class again, so I was highly gratified.

CH: And through the years, did that change? American History? Georgia History? What area did you enjoy the most?

AP: Well, there were several. My specialty in grad school was U.S. Urban History, which I never taught. I actually concentrated on Southern Urban History. My dissertation was on a group called the Commission on Interracial Cooperation; a pre-Civil Rights Movement group founded at the end of World War I. That organization was headquartered in Atlanta and had branches in other southern cities. So, at Kennesaw I ended up teaching New South which was kind of the logical place to go with that. Once I got to Kennesaw, I became very interested in teaching Women's History, which is what I taught most of the time I was here. That was not available as a course when I was at Georgia State. No one thought about Women's History as being "history," I'm sorry to say. Fortunately, in the 1980s, there were a number of initiatives growing out of the Bicentennial of the Constitution that offered seminars on teaching various constitutional subjects. I went to one that had to do with Women's History and got very interested in it.

CH: You were chair of Women's Studies here from 1985 to 1986. The other areas of history have become a lot more prominent over the last twenty or thirty years—researching and finding points of view rather than the traditional story. I'm sure you've seen a lot of that change over the years.

AP: That's absolutely the case. Certainly, when I was in high school, history involved a lot of names and dates, especially dates. I could never figure out the hang up on dates.

CH: It still has its stereotypes for people that aren't history people.

AP: I know. At any rate, by the time I got to grad school, particularly at GSU, there was a beginning focus on 'new fields' and 'social fields' like Urban History and Labor History, for which Georgia State later became well known. It just hadn't spilled over into Women's History and other areas like that yet.

CH: It was something new and exciting to work with?

AP: Yes. It's been a very interesting field to be in.

CH: You came to Kennesaw in 1976. How did the doors open for you to find your way to Kennesaw State?

AP: I had applied for jobs anywhere in the Atlanta area as it turned out. I mentioned that I was married and had a child, so I really wanted to stay in Atlanta if I possibly could, and there just happened to be an opening at Kennesaw. I didn't think that I knew anybody here, but as it turned out I did. Once I did a little investigation, I learned that my aunt [Mary Wells Elkins] and [S. Frederick] Fred Roach's mother had been life-long friends. I kind of knew who Fred was. In fact, he had done practice teaching at the high school I attended, but not when I was there. I had already gone. [President] Horace [W.] Sturgis, whom I didn't think I knew, was acquainted with one of my uncles. So, that was really good. It's nice to walk in and find the people saying, "Yes, we know each other sort of." Now that was very comforting. I also applied for a position at Clayton State at the same time. I didn't get that one; so, I was very happy that I got the one at Kennesaw. Kennesaw was just moving into four-year status, and that's why they were hiring. They were just beginning to add junior year classes; so, it was a wonderful time to be coming here because you were literally on the ground level in developing courses that you wanted to teach.

CH: You arrived for the first expansion? That was a very exciting time. What was the college like compared with when you left? What was it like in the early days when you first arrived?

AP: There were wonderful students here. Of course, many of them were older students, as you know—unlike today where far more are traditional age. Back then, we said the average age was 26, but I really think it was higher than that. There were very few traditional age students. Certainly nothing like Georgia State or UGA had been. A lot of them were much older than I, which was okay. We had one well-known student that we considered quite elderly. He was in his seventies, which doesn't seem so old now, named Carl Bohn. And he was one of our very earliest [history] graduates. The first time I taught New South he was in the class, and he was always joking that he'd lived through all these events, and it wasn't really history to him. He was quite delightful. And so, I

would say that the student body was unusually committed, more maybe then I expected because there wasn't the party culture that you found at some other institutions. Students were pretty serious about their courses.

CH: They were coming here to go to school.

AP: Certainly, though the idea that many students coming in weren't prepared to write essays was a constant theme in the department. Many students said, "Ah, too much writing" in our courses, the kind of complaint that I'm sure probably still exists now. But by and large, most of them, even if they didn't come from a good background, wanted to get that college degree. A lot of them were really committed to the whole enterprise. I taught a lot of night classes when I first came because I was the new kid. It seemed like new faculty members always got the night classes.

CH: I guess in those days, with it being even heavier in non-traditionals than it is today, the night classes could be as packed as the day classes.

AP: Oh, absolutely, even more so! The 6:00 to 8:00 PM time slot was always totally full. I think the college was indeed quite a different place. I think there were only about 3,000 students [3,211 students in Fall 1976]. Tiny, tiny, tiny!

CH: You come back to visit, and you see the old quad and the old buildings there and how it's changed over the years. So the college went to a departmental structure in 1983 and by 1984 you were the chair?

AP: That's correct.

CH: Those first few years you were here, because you have such a long list of things you're involved in and awards, how much of that had already started? You had your hands in things? Writing and working with journals? You hit the ground running.

AP: Yes. I was panicked about getting tenured. It was a big deal because I was worried about how few jobs were out there in history. The job market also was really closing down at about that time, I think largely because of a glut of PhDs who suddenly thought there were jobs available. There were a lot of history PhDs floating around. I started right away trying to get involved in all kinds of various activities and in writing. I was particularly doing things like summer seminars. I went to Kent State in 1980 for a summer seminar, which had to do with the civil rights movement; activities like this gave me opportunities to meet people from around the country. I also got involved in the Georgia Association of Historians. Fred Roach was quite involved in the GAH, and he got me involved because the organization needed somebody to edit the newsletter. I first got into that position and eventually edited their journal and became the president.

CH: In those early days of the department, he (Fred Roach) was the first chair? Did he have an assistant?

AP: There was no assistant chair.

CH: Was he not doing enough there to consider assistants?

AP: No, that is definitely not the case. The department chair, at that time, did many jobs and was extremely busy. That was true after I became chair. I looked back at some early records and made the interesting discovery that the year Dr. Roach was chair, even though we were moving into a departmental structure, which was very time-consuming for those having to plan it, he had no release time. He taught nine classes, which was the load at the time, and two in the summer because we had nine-month contracts. So he was just overwhelmed. I got one release class the first year I was chair, so I taught eight and two in the summer. This was a huge teaching load, and the classes weren't small. We were facing huge budget cuts from the state, which seems to be an eternal theme in Georgia. At one point, our survey classes were increased to sixty and seventy students in a single section. It was a rather stressful time. At any rate, there was no assistant chair. The chair did all of the scheduling; that meant putting faculty into the scheduled time slots and making sure that there were the correct number of upper and lower classes in each time period. The chair did a whole lot of advising. The chair handled all of the problems that arose and dealt with administrative issues like book orders. The secretary, of course, was doing the typing. But there were many responsibilities—everything from A to Z.

CH: And a time before computers.

AP: Oh, yes.

CH: So, much could have been alleviated.

AP: Sure.

CH: After a year or so, Roach came to you about taking over the chair?

AP: Well, I wouldn't…

CH: I was reading his interview by Dr. Scott. How did you become chair?

AP: I'm trying to remember. I'm sure Dr. Roach must have approached me to see if I would be interested in doing it. It seemed daunting, but an interesting thing to do.

CH: You spent a year watching how easy it was to do. (Laughter)

AP: Right. The dean [George H. Beggs] was the final word at that time. The decision had to go by Dr. Beggs. There were others in the department who had been here longer; so, I was never quite sure whether I was the anointed one or the chosen one. It may be that others turned it down. I don't know. That's entirely possible. As I recall, there was a departmental vote, and people said it would be fine if I did it. I should add that we were a relatively young department because so many of us had been hired in the last few years.

Dr. Scott started before I did and Dr. Keene, but not by very much. And Dr. Roach had been here a while, but there weren't that many faculty members.

CH: So, I guess with the pressure of watching the last year, you were wondering, "What am I getting myself into?"

AP: Oh, yes, absolutely, and not being sure how to manage it. It was a much less formal situation than it is today.

CH: It was still the early days. Dr. Scott talked about this actually. The history of the history department itself, compared to other departments, is relatively pain free. It's gotten along well, a good atmosphere for that.

AP: Yes. It was extremely stable as a department. In the fall of 1987, we added a new faculty member, Dr. Leroy Davis [Jr.]. He was the first person we'd hired in eight years. Can you believe that?

CH: Wow!

AP: Eight years. That is just astonishing to me.

CH: In the 1970s we brought on people, but then had a hiring freeze of sorts; we had a good team with everybody getting to know each other.

AP: For several years, there were people there that I'd known for years. It wasn't really like having to manage a lot of new faces.

CH: I think Dr. Roach said there are two ways for a manager to function: the 'I vow' fashion or the 'we're all in this together fashion.' He said the 'we're all in this together' brings a lot less misery.

AP: That was pretty much the style of the department when he was chair, and I hope so when I was chair. The dean, on the other hand, was much more into the 'let me tell you what to do' sort of thing. Though, as years passed, the dean, Dr. Beggs, mellowed a great deal. He became much easier to work with or maybe I just became less intimidated by him as time passed. I don't know. He wasn't really as tough of a cookie as he presented himself, but he did have definite ideas about certain things, like the way female faculty should dress. This was a big issue for him. "You should always dress professionally," he said, but he didn't quite know how to define that for women. He "knew it when he saw it," he said.

CH: He wasn't talking to you was he? (Laughter)

AP: No. He wasn't talking to me. He was talking to me about other female faculty.

CH: By 1987, were there part-timers you brought on along the way? How big of a staff are we talking?

AP: Oh, I would have to go back and count.

CH: A dozen? Two dozen?

AP: No, no, ten at the most, maybe not that many.

CH: About how many when you left?

AP: I think there were twenty-five full-time and maybe fifteen or more part-time. That's a bit of a guess, but I think the twenty-five is about right. I can't remember how many part-timers we had. But there may have not been but eight of us to begin with. At any rate, the department was quite small when I was hired; it included Dr. Roach, Dr. Scott, Dr. [Thomas H.] Keene, Dr. [Kinsley Gird] Romer [Jr.], Dr. [Apostolos] Ziros, J.B. Tate. Dr. [Linda M.] Papageorge and Dr. [E. Howard] Shealy [Jr.] were hired about two years after I was hired. Dr. [Eugene] Huck was in the administration but also taught Latin American history.

CH: But you talk about full-timers… That's a handful of people who work together and know each other very well. I can understand it.

AP: Yes, that's right.

CH: But at the same time, since you all got along so well, it's a great way to form a department.

AP: It was a great situation. The first professor we hired after this eight-year interlude, Leroy Davis, was hired to teach African-American and African History. We had not really been teaching those in the department, which was an obvious gap in what we were offering. He turned out to be a wonderful person but left to go to Emory after several years. Then we hired Dr. [Lovett Z.] Elango and Dr. [Akanmu G.] Adebayo. We were actually only approved to hire one of them, but they both had such strong resumes that Dr. Beggs—good for him—went to the higher ups and said, "Look, we've got two good people here," and we hired them both, very much to the good of the department.

CH: Excellent!

CB: Well, while we're talking about the campus and why you were here… You've got so many awards and grants. I was wondering if you could tell us a little bit more about those. Which ones meant the most to you or really stand out because you have a lot of them?

AP: Thanks, that's an interesting question. There were several different types of grants. I had several grants for summer study and they were extremely important. One was in 1988 to

go to China; it was a summer study fellowship that Dr. Papageorge was involved in writing up; so, you might ask her about that. And in the summer of 1990, I had a grant to study to Egypt and, curiously, Iraq. We were in Iraq literally just a few days before the invasion of Kuwait. This was quite an exciting time. We didn't know what was going on. There were troops moving south all piled up on rail cars topsy-turvy. And cannons on the side of the road that they had put on train cars so hastily that they fell off. But we were told by the U.S. ambassador that the Iraqis would never do anything like invade Kuwait.

These summer study programs proved to be, in retrospect, extremely influential. I got very interested in the Middle East and China. In both instances, I wanted to look at women's roles in their culture, so that I bring what I had learned into my Women's History class. The summer programs helped me to take a more comparative approach to US women's history. Another type of grant that I worked on involved developing seminars for public school history teachers. Helen [S.] Ridley [Political Science] and I did several of these seminars, based on various aspects of the Constitution. A group called the History Teaching Alliance sponsored the grants; we got one of the first ones [1987] and then two subsequent ones. I was interested in furthering connections with the public schools.

I failed to mention that one of the reasons I was hired at Kennesaw was because I had taught in public school and the college was beginning to develop an education program. When I began, you may never believe this, but both education and business professors were in our division, Social Sciences. There was one business professor as I recall and maybe one or two education profs. We knew that education would be a major degree as we moved to four-year status. I worked with social science education from the beginning. Working with public school teachers was one of the things I was involved in as we began to develop the social science education program. The History Teaching Alliance grants were very influential in my work. A bit later, I received some grants to teach with technology. The Board of Regents gave out some so-called teaching with technology grants and Sarah [R.] Robbins, in the English Department, and I applied for one of the very early ones in 1997. What we were doing was teaching over this system called GSAMS [Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical Systems]. Have you ever heard of GSAMS?

CH: It sounds familiar but I'm not sure.

AP: To use this system, you sat in a classroom in which there was a gigantic monitor about the size of two bookshelves. People from the tech department would come in and make all of the connections; you could actually see a class at another university if it all worked, which it didn't necessarily (Laughter). Sarah and I taught a class, our Women's History class, with a class at Armstrong State. This was very early distance learning. The two classes could talk to each other. Sarah Robbins and I had a good bit of money to gather up materials to use in teaching, which we eventually converted, through doing this several times, into a big website, which I think is still available, called Women's Work in the Long 19th Century. I think you can actually get to it online still.

Students did many of the presentations, and that's what we were putting online along with visuals and questions. So, that kind of grant was important too. And one thing to add there, through that grant Sarah and I did some research at the University of California at Berkley, and someone in the library quite accidentally showed us some diaries and photographs of a woman who had been a mission teacher in Angola in the early 20th century. We have pursued research into her life and writings, and about three or four months ago published a book about her. That technology grant was critical, since I've continued to work on research about Nellie Arnott, the missionary, for these many years.

CH: That's phenomenal. So, you're very busy these number of years being chair of the history department and chair of Women's Studies. Coming into the 1990s, the campus is growing exponentially. We got to the university status in 1996. How did the campus change as the years came by? I myself had moved away, and when I came back the place had blown up.

AP: Well, things changed dramatically after President [Betty L.] Siegel arrived. We had been a college, not a university yet, but a college that was rather set in its ways of doing things. Many of those things had worked quite well, but Horace Sturgis had been the president from the beginning. For example, there were no clearly defined rules about tenure. It was a very informal process. A lot of it was done in what you would consider today to be an old-fashioned style. I don't want to overstate it, but to some degree there was a 'good ol' boy' network. I never really felt that I was handicapped in any way by the situation, but I think it existed. When Betty Siegel came, she was very interested in promoting women's faculty and getting women's studies started by doing all kinds of things. Female faculty would go to lunch with her and applaud her ideas. It was really quite a dramatic shift.

CH: I'm pretty sure she had that effect on a lot of people.

AP: Yes. We began initiatives like Women's Studies. We began to grow and to hire a lot more faculty members. We hired several in our department within one year in the early nineties; we then began to add some almost every year, sometimes to fill requirements and sometimes just because we were getting new positions. Somewhere along in there, philosophy moved into the history department. Originally, our department only included history. Hugh Hunt was the only philosopher at that time. He was in a department called Liberal Studies, which was a catchall name for anybody who didn't have a department to go to within the division of Social Sciences. Eventually, that division was disbanded as new departments formed. Philosophy was attached to history, as it seemed a logical fit, which I think it certainly turned out to be. We also did not have social science education within the department initially; that major was in the education school. But at some point, early nineties I believe, secondary social science moved over into the history department. So, that gave us, essentially, an extra degree program, which was quite good since many of our majors were in social science ed. anyway.

CH: Is it like that with the others? Is there English education and English?

AP: Yes. I think that was a very important development for the strength of the education program, as the students ended up having to take courses that were very similar to the major. Then they also took about as many education courses as they did history courses. They had to do more hours too. That meant that our graduates who were going out to teach in history or geography or whatever were better qualified than those from other state universities, which just required a minimum number of courses in the teaching field.

CH: I don't know why I always tie study abroad with the history department but I do.

AP: It should be.

CH: I think so. It seems like it should be. Even though I know study abroad applies to almost every field of the campus.

AP: Yes, but history had the first one. As far as I can recall, the very first study abroad program was organized by [Eugene R.] Gene Huck and it was in Mexico in San Miguel de Allende. It was later [1994] moved to Oaxaca, and Alan [V.] LeBaron took it over. One reason we moved it from San Miguel is that San Miguel became increasingly a place that in the summer was full of American students, and everybody spoke English to each other. So, it wasn't really like going to Mexico. It was like going to Cancun or something. (Laughter). Everyone decided that some other location might be better, although San Miguel is a lovely place.

CH: When was this? When did they first start doing the study abroad?

AP: In 1987. So, very, very early on it was Dr. Huck's vision that students ought to have the opportunity to study abroad. Of course, Dr. Keene has always been interested in it and jumped on the band wagon, and Dr. Shealy got us involved in the summer program in Italy and many other things. The college eventually developed a number of international study opportunities, with a program office [the KSU International Center] that Dr. Keene headed [1988-2003]. But I really think that the original initiative was from the history department.

CH: Certainly. I guess somewhere in the line administrators and others decided that they needed to allocate money and the professors themselves needed to have some experience in areas where they were going to be taking the kids. Right?

AP: That's right. There was a good bit of money available in the nineties and even through things like the summer study program to train professors in global areas. There was a general awareness in the U.S. that many professors were insular and didn't know that much about other parts of the world. Even some who were teaching those areas, sadly, had not visited them. I think the history department and other departments did a very good job at attracting money and getting professors to do those summer study programs.

Curiously, it was rather difficult initially to convince professors that it was worth their time to go abroad to study. Now, it's taken for granted, but it wasn't necessarily back then. Kennesaw also had what we called a Country Studies Series, and we still do these each year.

CH: With a theme?

AP: Yes with a theme. The history department began those, maybe in conjunction with political science, but I think we did the first one. Anyway, both of us together sort of did it. Every year we took a trip that was organized by the leader of the series; the trip was open to faculty members and community people. There was a trip to Russia, for example. I say Russia, but it was still the Soviet Union. This was in 1987. I went on that one, which Dr. Romer led. That was another way that faculty could travel abroad. There was another one in Israel and Jordan one year. I don't remember what all the different countries were. There was one in Australia and New Zealand and another to India. I think the history department did a great deal to internationalize the curriculum, as we called it at that time. Also, over the years, there got to be an increasing emphasis not to teach the U.S. just as 'the U.S.,' separate from everything else, 'a city on a hill,' but the U.S. as part of a global structure. I think the department's international programs provided a major evolution in the teaching of U.S. History surveys.

CH: Did anybody have any idea of what study abroad initiatives could turn into? That it would be such a global thing with dozens and dozens of areas?

AP: I don't think so. I think that there were people who thought that would be the ideal.

CH: There were some who hoped it might be something bigger than that?

AP: Yes. Particularly Tom Keene and Gene Huck had a vision that this was something we could encourage students to do.

CH: In different fields: English, Spanish, or Business?

AP: Yes, but initially it was thought, "Well, why do business students need to do this kind of thing?" Now, they routinely do this sort of thing. Even education programs were asked, "Why do students need to view some other kind of education system?" But in fact, they do. The nursing students eventually got to go to Oaxaca because it occurred to somebody that maybe participating in a nursing experience in a Spanish-speaking country would be helpful. I think we didn't really anticipate the extent of studies abroad, but I think there were those who thought it was possible to persuade virtually all professors and as many students as possible to go on studies abroad.

CH: Referring to that 'city on a hill,' I was in the business world for a while. In the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of global academic world was something that you were hoping to push for. Mainstream America still didn't think globally. It just seems like, not specifically 9/11, but around that time is when we started to wake up as a country, and

there was just a different feeling in America about our place in the world. We just started thinking globally. So, just in the last ten years or so, mainstream America talks about global more than ever before.

AP: Yes. Sometimes, unfortunately, still quite negatively, but I think the importance of global ideas certainly came to people's minds. Even going back further, in the 1980s, I think that the US was seen as a positive influence in the world, with the fall of the Soviet Union and that sort of thing. In my way of thinking, that made some Americans more complacent. "Well, if we want to get involved and just say a few words like 'Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall,' things will happen." It's certainly not that easy. I think it really did take a few crises along the way to convince people that we really need to see ourselves as part of a global structure and not just separate from it.

CH: Exactly. If you talk to someone today that's not in college about study abroad, they're just fascinated that we're doing this. It's wonderful. It's great. It's what you hear on campus with the professors saying, "Everybody ought to be doing this."

AP: I agree.

CH: We haven't talked to you about the intellectual environment and how things have changed. Technology had a lot to do with how students learned and what they were like. I don't want to say they were more committed, but certainly those students going to school in those early days were working hard to get the degree, and when you start bringing in the more traditional students you start mixing in the kids who are going to college because they're supposed to go to college.

AP: Yes. Not to say that some of the traditional students weren't wonderful, wonderful students, but some were clearly in college because mom or dad said they ought to go. Some were here and unhappy because they really wanted to go to UGA or wherever and ended up at Kennesaw. I had one student, and for some reason I had him several quarters in a row, who just kept saying, "I'm going to transfer next quarter. I just can't wait to get out of here." He eventually got a degree from Kennesaw and went on to talk about what a fine school it was. I think sometimes students' expectations that we were still a junior college were difficult to overcome. Betty Siegel spent her whole career trying to convince people that we were not a junior college; I think finally people have begun to understand what Kennesaw does, because we've now added graduate programs and are getting a lot more publicity. Even in the community, among people whom you would think should have known better, we were thought to be just a small two-year college for many years.

CH: Absolutely. I remember some kids in the community saying, "Georgia Southern in Statesboro is a party school. No one ever lasts more than a couple of years. They end up dropping out because they keep ending up in trouble because they're having too much fun," and "Kennesaw is like 13th grade." I remember hearing that. They just didn't give it credit, and if they were coming here, then they were like, "Well, I'm going to give it two years, and then I'm going to transfer off to Georgia or Georgia Tech or something."

AP: That was very typical. In fact, for a long time we did lose a lot of students between sophomore and junior year. It was certainly a phenomenon that was very real, but I think now we've obviously overcome that.

CH: Was it Nancy [S.] King we were talking about today in class?

CB: Yes.

CH: As Dr. Scott said, in the old days we were taking new students, but we were not making it easy on them. They really had to learn and as the years went by. Nancy King talked about raising the standards a great deal.

AP: Our admissions certainly became more restrictive as time passed; the HOPE Scholarship made a huge difference because all of the colleges that had admissions standards—some of the two-year ones only had minimum ones—began to get students with higher SAT scores. Because of the 'HOPE' they were staying in state. UGA and some other schools were facing an onslaught of applicants, so many ended up at Kennesaw; this was wonderful because we began to get very qualified students.

CH: HOPE seems to have three prongs: the students who decided to stay in state, students who had to maintain a certain level to keep their scholarship, and people like me, nontraditional students, who wouldn't have been able to go back to school otherwise.

AP: That's right. It was a huge influence, and I worry about what the changes that have been made to it are going to mean. They may not be drastic enough right now to undermine it, but I'm afraid the state legislature may continue to think they need to cut the program. I think that that is one of the most beneficial programs that the state has ever had.

CH: I do too as far as education and looking to the future. They say that having a bachelor's degree today is the same as having a high school diploma from twenty years ago. You've got to have a bachelor's degree. So making it harder is just making it harder for the population.

AP: That's probably true. So many of the jobs have probably evaporated that kids right out of high school used to be able to get. There are just not that many now. You can't just go into manufacturing or the carpet industry in the same way that you could in the old days. I think that anything that encourages kids to go to college or technical colleges is good, and we ought to play around with it.

CH: And your last year as the chair…you stopped in 2001?

AP: That's right. I retired [as chair] after summer 2001.

CH: And you stayed here for several years after, right?

AP: Only a year and a half. I was thinking of retiring already; and Linda Noble, who was the dean, offered me the chance to be assistant dean. Today, there are associate and assistant deans, but at that time she only had one other person on her staff. I was in the dean's office for a year before I retired, and I enjoyed it very much. I retired mainly because the state was very generous with retirement at that time. I could get credit for my teaching in public school, and I could get teacher retirement for a good bit of my graduate work. I had enough years, in fact, more than enough, to retire so I did.

CH: The year 2001… that was ten years ago.

AP: Yes, it's hard to believe.

CH: Does it seem like ten years ago?

AP: No it doesn't. I left Kennesaw in 2002 and came back and taught part-time the next year, but I have not taught since then.

CH: And the things you've seen since those last years… the things they've built like this building (Social Sciences building)… what is your impression in general? Do you still talk to some of your old co-workers?

AP: Sure. I stay in touch with folks in the regular department, and there's a group of retired women faculty who have lunch every month. I see Nancy King, Mary Zogby, Linda Papageorge, and other retirees like that pretty frequently. The campus itself… I just never would have believed the growth. When I first started, I would never have believed that we would get dorms. Whether or not Kennesaw needed to be the kind of campus that had dormitories was very controversial, because in some people's minds that meant another set of problems: "With security issues and party issues, would it change the kind of campus we have always been?" It was certainly not something that everyone thought would just be a grand thing to do. When I left, the Social Sciences building was right in its planning phase. I always said I would not retire until I could have an office and spend a year in this building, but it kept getting delayed, and the regents would bump it down the schedule. Finally, the drawings were there, but the money didn't seem to be. Then, of course, it got pushed back to the forefront once I retired. Dr. Shealy got to have the first office in this building.

CH: Women's studies… Because you were so important in those first years do you have an idea of who is in charge now? What's being taught? Things they're exploring?

AP: Yes to all of that. The gender and women's studies group, which is headed by [R.] Ugena Whitlock and Amy [M.] Buddie are working on a major in Gender and Women's Studies. As they've been working on it the last couple of years, I've met with them several times to talk about women's studies in the old days when we had a minor in women's studies. Of course, we never had a major. I think the fact that a major is being developed is a very positive step, and I think it will be good for the institution. I think the proposal has passed the hurdles of the institution and is now being sent to the Board of

Regents, but I'm not quite clear on the time frame. It is underway, though, and I think it's going to move forward in a good fashion. The history department is not as involved in it as I personally would like to see. I keep telling [history department chair] Dr. Keene they need to hire somebody to teach women's history. I hope that will come to pass down the pike.

CH: In that field what kinds of classes are there for someone who isn't women's studies to take? Is there a women's history class?

AP: Yes there is a U.S. women's history class that's in the catalog, but it hasn't been taught in several years, I don't think.

CH: Well it's only 50 percent of the population. (Laughter) It's not like you're doing a particular nationality or demographic.

AP: Right. Sarah and I in English did several team-taught classes in women's history and women's lit, like what Dr. Yow and Dr. Scott have done for Georgia History. In fact, one of the things that I was a pioneer in was these classes that had two disciplines teaching together. Sarah and I taught the women's history class in a lot of different versions. We did women's work, international women, and all kinds of different things. That was something we concentrated on a good bit. There were a number of different team-taught classes, like the Georgia History and Georgia Literature as well. The team-taught classes were part of a general emphasis that the department was involved in, or one aspect of it, that is, doing more teaching with primary materials. In the old days of teaching history, the prof sometimes had rather "yellowed" lecture notes, as was the joke, and would whip them out of the briefcase and just read them. We all wanted to get away from that, in survey classes as well as in upper level ones. During the time I was here the department increasingly insisted that each course, including surveys, involve use of primary materials, whether documents of some sort or literary materials that could analyze the culture of the time. We put emphasis on that and on writing so that all the courses, presumably, required strong writing

CH: Dr. Scott, I remember saying, would get compliments from people who went on to graduate school who said they were better prepared than others.

AP: I think that's true.

CH: Kennesaw felt pretty good.

AP: I think we always did very well with having a research component in the history major. Our original class was something called History 300, which involved philosophy of history and a research paper. It was a killer course because it was really ten hours in one, but you only got five hours credit time. Nor surprisingly, there were complaints.

CH: How does that compare to the Themes in History class or Historiographical Debates?

AP: Well we eventually divided the class up, so the 'themes' and 'debates' class grew out of the parts that were originally structured around the philosophy of history. The History 275 research class also grew out of this initial idea that there ought to be research and initial analysis on these themes. We wanted students to understand that everybody doesn't see history the same way, even if you're looking at the same documents. When we moved into semesters, we were able to make all these changes and add the research seminar at the end. So, the research course was one aspect of our old course.

CH: Right. We talked about how you style of teaching may have changed. Any more?

AP: I think really, through what I've said, increasingly emphasizing primary materials and ways for students to interact in class.

CH: My follow-up was going to be how has history and the teaching of history changed over the years? There are so many people who aren't going to school who don't know what a primary source is.

AP: Yes this is very distressing.

CH: People who watch the news…

AP: They assume the news is a primary source.

CH: Exactly.

AP: I think most history departments that I'm familiar with have moved away from the old 'professor as authority figure model' into a model where students are asked to read primary materials, to assess them, and draw their own conclusions, which is what they ought to be doing. That doesn't mean that any conclusion they draw is accurate. That's another misinterpretation of 'well, anybody can interpret documents different ways.' I think there are certain boundaries, not just politically, but in using a certain framework or criteria for evaluation. There are some central things in documents that you need to be examining, and, of course, you need to evaluate their accuracy. Sometimes you can, and sometimes you can't. You just have to admit that, especially for very old primary sources, establishing accuracy is inexact.

CH: Because that's what you're going to be doing when you go into the real world—analyzing for yourself.

AP: Students learn to do that. I'll have to tell one anecdote from graduate school along that line. It was one of the first quarters that I had taught, and I had a series of notes I had taken in one of my classes about the origins of World War I from a fascinating professor, who is now a good friend. Professors came to visit the grad student's classes and evaluate their teaching. This professor came in to assess my class, and I thought, "Oh, no! I'm using his lecture notes." But he came up afterward and said, "That's one of the best lectures I've ever heard on the origins of World War I." (Laughter) I don't think, at

the time, I had the nerve to say, "Well, it's your notes." Later after I graduated, I told him that "those were your notes."

CH: Professors like to hear the things they've said. And the professor at Georgia, in those early days, that turned you off from history… did you ever run across that person again?

AP: No, not directly. I've run across many people who liked him at the graduate level. I think he had been mandated to teach an honors class for freshman, so he wanted to turn us all into grad students. I think he was just a rather unpleasant individual. You should never let one course turn you against a major, either, but I didn't really know what I wanted to do. It's not like I went in thinking, "I know I'm going to major in history." I went in thinking, "Well, I'll try some of this, and some of this, and some of this." The history class was just discouraging.

CH: We had talked about his recently. Dr. Scott was talking about colleges in general. If I had kids I would think about how in some schools the senior professors only teach upper level classes. It's interesting because Kennesaw had done the two-year thing so well here. I was telling Cody that if I had kids, I would want my kid to take their undergrad classes at a campus that didn't have master's programs. Go somewhere where they're really focused and you're getting the best of their professors. It seems like at schools where there is a master's degree, the best professors are teaching graduate classes. I took that from something Dr. Scott was saying. Just an interesting way of looking at it.

AP: Well, sometimes.

CH: He wasn't saying that exactly; I was just interpreting it as the strategy I would have for my kid.

AP: Sometimes that's true for differing reasons. It's worth a comment. I think at some research institutions, professors are really being paid to do research; so, they just don't teach much. That's certainly not true at Kennesaw. What has been true at Kennesaw, unfortunately from time to time, is that budget cuts mean that some of the survey classes are taught by part-time instructors, some of whom are wonderful. When I was chair, we had several part-time instructors who went on to become full-time and did extremely well. But some aren't. If you have to find an instructor at the last minute, sometimes there isn't time to locate the best person. Sometimes, I think it's not that professors don't want to teach the survey classes; it's just that the institution, at Kennesaw in particular, has historically been underfunded; sometimes we just didn't have enough full-time faculty members to go around.

CH: You see that in a lot of departments.

AP: Yes. We needed more faculty, and this is probably still true. You may have heard of the famous promise, this is not just a legend, that when Kennesaw became four-year we committed to the state legislature that if they'd let us become four-year, we'd do it with no extra money. Well, time passed, and they kept saying, "You said no extra money."

CH: We didn't mean forever.

AP: Yes. We literally were seriously underfunded for several years, and I'm not sure we ever caught up. Maybe by now, but at the time I left, there was still the general feeling that our funding level per capita was way down. It wasn't where it should be. Based on our enrollment we should have been competing with Georgia and Georgia State, who were always our competitors.

CH: Those early years of Kennesaw seemed like a disadvantage because we were doing so well that the regents didn't feel as much priority for Kennesaw.

AP: Well, I think there's something to be said for that. We had a very committed and dynamic faculty, and we got used to making do without much money. We needed a 'squeakier wheel' down at the legislature. I think Betty Siegel began to address some of that when she came.

CH: Like you said, the late eighties and early nineties there was exponential growth at Kennesaw and it continues to grow. I'm sure they were all excited when they built that nice, little West Parking Deck, but it didn't take long for that thing to be a nightmare for everybody because it's too small because we're going to grow way too fast.

AP: Right. Parking… the eternal problem.

CH: It's kind of perfect because it's only three stories because it does provide such a headache for all the social science parkers that it's fitting. (Laughter)

AP: One of the biggest controversies I can remember on campus was a movement to not have faculty parking and let the students have the parking nearby because they needed to get to classes. Well, the faculty was not impressed.

CH: I wondered about that. I've never asked faculty about what the attitude is towards parking.

AP: Very poor, very poor. But it didn't last very long because many faculty members were late. Now, whether this was intentional or not, I can't say, but it certainly was an issue.

CH: Classes were starting late because the professors couldn't make it?

AP: Yes. As I recall, because I was the chair, I actually got a reserved space somewhere. I was not part of the protest, but a lot of faculty members were.

CH: Other things that we may not have discussed?

AP: I should mention that we did a very early faculty exchange. Dr. Keene went to a teachers' college in China and we had a Chinese professor come over here. This was in

1986-87. Again, that was a very early initiative in international matters and took a great deal of cutting through red tape. I wasn't chair yet while the exchange was in the planning stage, but I remember how complicated it was to get required permissions.

CH: For those who know, Kennesaw's had a pretty good reputation with its history department. Correct?

AP: I certainly think so. I think that probably is true. I don't know about students in high schools, for example, but within the state I think it's true. Our department for years has been a leader with the Georgia Association of Historians. Kay [A.] Reeve is the current president, the outgoing president. We've taken the lead in that organization. There used to be a yearly writing contest that the state archives did for student research papers, and Kennesaw won it so many years that it got to be kind of a joke. Again, I think we have a very good reputation for teaching students well.

CH: When people think of Kennesaw, some think of nursing, some think of education, Coles Business, and those aspects. They don't really think of history. Kennesaw is definitely holding its own as far as being a leader, it's just not well known to the public.

AP: I think so from a teaching point of view. The faculty, as a group, never had the time or release from teaching to do the research that you might find at UGA. If you look at the list of publications from Kennesaw faculty, it's not going to look anything like University of Georgia or Georgia State. For many people, what makes the departmental reputation is how much research is going on, but I think that a lot of what teachers need to be doing is keeping up in their fields and not just writing books. I think we've done very well there and as a teaching institution. In that regard, I'll point out that Sarah Robbins and I just finished the book about the woman who was in Angola; I didn't have time to work on it much until I retired.

CH: We were discussing primary sources and how layman people don't know primary sources. Another one is Public History. People wonder, "What is public history?" But we've started the certificate program here.

AP: That's true. And I should have mentioned the public history program in particular, because we were very proud of getting it into the department. There was a lot of discussion internally about whether this was a needed program, but there was also a lot of emphasis on giving people career skills. The business school was taking off and there was 'what do you do with a history degree?' and that kind of question. So, public history seemed a natural fit. Not only for those reasons, but there were a number of institutions around that we could work with, like the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park where one of our early students, Retha Stephens, still works, I think. She was one of our very first graduates and is a ranger at Kennesaw Mountain; a couple of years ago she was responsible for coordinating their huge exhibit about women in the Civil War. Anyway, getting the public history certificate approved in 1998 or '99 was a red-letter day for the department. I assume we probably started it in the fall of 1999.

CH: I wasn't aware when it first started. It was a couple of years in when I realized there was a whole track and career in public history.

AP: Yes, I think creating the track and the certificate among others as part of the semester conversion was a real plus for us because we were able to develop tracks in U.S. history, world history, and history of ideas, which brought in the philosophy faculty. That's the way you go if you want a philosophy major and can't get one.

CH: What were the first public history classes that organized how public history would be done: Introduction to Public History?

AP: No, we didn't start there. Dr. Scott started doing oral history special topics courses, and I think that was one of the earliest routes we took. He'd started doing that before we ever got the public history program going.

CH: That's great though. Because people always say, "If you take history, then you're going to be a teacher or a professor." That's what a lot of people think. But you're right that public history is something people have not thought of before and it's great that we're doing a certificate.

AP: I certainly think so, too, and I think the oral history project that Dr. Scott started has been invaluable. I can't even remember when he did his first interview [1973]. But all those rows and rows of interviews with people who have long since died are extremely important to the history of Cobb County. I think the interesting thing about our department is that there were people in it who had really good ideas and somehow were able to follow through on them, like Dr. Scott and the oral history project and Dr. Keene and international studies. I think everybody in the department tried to develop a route they were going to go; then we tried to figure out how to make that happen so to speak.

CH: Very interesting. Anything else about the history?

CB: No I don't think so.

CH: I think that'll be it for this. Maybe we'll follow up with you on Dr. Scott later on down the road as he expands into the anniversary of the school.

AP: You're certainly welcome to. I've enjoyed talking about it all. It's been a lot of fun.

CB: Well thank you.

CH: Thank you very much.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 159
Interview with Ann W. Ellis Pullen
Part II – January 23, 2024; conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Location: Kennesaw State University Archives

TS: Maybe a good way to start would be with your parents and siblings of the Wells family. We have an interview with you from 2011 that a couple of my students [Cody Bishop and Chris Harris] did. And we found out you were born in Newnan and grew up in Hapeville. I know you had a lot of teachers, principals, what have you, in your family. Why don't you talk about your family?

AP: Well, thank you. I'll say a little about the Wells family. My dad had fourteen brothers and sisters, so there were a lot of aunts and uncles and, of course, eventually, cousins. Many of them were involved in education in one fashion or another. One uncle was principal at Roosevelt High. I had one uncle who was the Fulton County School superintendent for a while and so on. Many, many of them were either teachers or principals. So, it was inevitable that I would go into education, I think, though I really did not want to teach in high school. I did for several years, but it was not something I ever thought I wanted to do. But there was certainly a strong educational influence within my family, which is a little surprising given that my father was the youngest of the fifteen. So, most of them were educated at a time when [the opportunity to pursue] higher education was a bit unusual. One of my aunts, in fact, was one of the early female students at the University of Georgia, and that's where she met [S. Frederick] Fred Roach [Jr.]'s mother who was also there.

TS: Which aunt was that?

AP: My Aunt Mary Wells Elkins. So again, there were a good many educators in the family.

TS: I think it's the teens [1918] when women were first admitted [to the University of Georgia].

AP: Yes. I think Aunt Mary graduated maybe in the early twenties. She wasn't one of the first students, but it was considered early.

TS: [Charter Kennesaw Junior College English professor] Mary [Hall] Swain was one of the first.

AP: Oh, okay.

TS: She had some wild stories about marching them to church or chapel or whatever. She did her best to hide under the bed.

AP: I can imagine. I don't remember much about Aunt Mary's experiences but one of her tales is that I believe there was only one dorm for women, and it was on the North Campus. Interestingly enough, Aunt Mary's daughter, whose name is Mary Beth [Elkins] Henke, was a very early history faculty member at Kennesaw State. In fact, I believe J. B. [Tate] took her position. She was only here for a year.

TS: Yes, J. B. came in 1967. So, she was here in 1966-67.

AP: Yes, I believe that was the year she taught here. So, it was that interesting connection with Kennesaw State.

TS: Absolutely. Now one of your aunts was also a principal?

AP: Yes, my Aunt Josephine Wells was a principal at North Avenue School in Hapeville, and later had a school named after her [Josephine Wells Elementary School, Hapeville, Georgia]. So, there were again many, many educators in the family.

TS: So, you didn't have a chance to be anything other than an educator.

AP: Yes, that's right.

TS: Well, what attracted you to the field of history? I know you actually taught math before you taught history.

AP: That's true. I enjoyed history very much in high school even though it was mainly a "learn dates and things" approach to history like it might have been back in that era. It was a lot of fun, and I had a wonderful history teacher in high school. But when I went to UGA, I was very undecided about what I wanted to do. I had an early professor that really turned me off about studying history because he liked to browbeat students, especially, it seemed to me, females. But maybe I was just being sensitive about that. At any rate I also enjoyed math and science, so I ended up doing that. I considered biology briefly and various other majors. I was very undecided and so, eventually, ended up in math, but then started taking history for electives. I had a lot of upper-level electives, and I took nearly all of those in history and had some wonderful professors that encouraged me to think of going into history, particularly [F.] Nash Boney. You may have known him in the past.

TS: Yes.

AP: So, he and others were very encouraging. Eventually, the department chair, who was Joseph [H.] Parks, mentioned that they had some graduate teaching assistantships going begging, and was I interested in getting a master's in history. So, it seemed like a good thing to do. Why not? And again I was kind of undecided about my future path here. So, I thought getting a master's in history and spending another year in Athens would be great fun, which it was.

TS: I'm assuming you started at UGA in 1961 and graduated in 1965?

AP: That's right.

TS: And then you go out and teach and then come back?

AP: No, no. I went straight into my master's in history from being the math major in undergrad school.

TS: So, you got your master's before you started teaching?

AP: I wasn't quite finished with it. I actually started teaching in January of 1967, because I needed a job at that point, and there was an opening in the public schools. At that time, I had finished my coursework for my master's. I was just working on my thesis.

TS: Okay. What did you do your master's thesis on?

AP: Well, it was on a group called the Know-Nothing Party in Georgia [Ann Wells Ellis, "The Know-Nothing Party in Georgia," M.A., University of Georgia, 1967].

TS: Oh, I didn't know Georgia had a Know-Nothing Party.

AP: Georgia had a Know-Nothing Party. This was an anti-foreign, anti-Catholic party, which in the pre-Civil War actually had a wide following in the state.

TS: I'm not surprised.

AP: I'm not surprised. I wish I remembered more about it now than I really do, but somewhere I have my thesis around.

TS: How on earth did you get started on the Know-Nothing Party in Georgia?

AP: I cannot remember. It wasn't Willard [B.] Gatewood [Jr.]; he left and went to Arkansas. Actually, now that I think about it, Dr. Joseph Parks suggested the topic to me when I was in his research methods class.

TS: At any rate, you had to have a topic and Dr. Parks said, "Write on this."

AP: Well, he said, "This might be interesting," and it seemed like it would be.

TS: [For your master's] did you take a course in Georgia history?

AP: Curiously I don't think I ever actually took the Georgia history course.

TS: But you took Southern history?

AP: Yes, yes, a lot of Southern history. That's how I got into the Know-Nothings, I think.

TS: There were a lot of Know-Nothings up north too.

AP: That's certainly true as an official party. There were many Know-Nothings.

TS: I think they didn't want to tell what they were doing. So, when people asked them, they'd say, "We know nothing."

AP: "We Know Nothing." That's correct.

TS: Officially, the American Party?

AP: Yes, that's right. Anyway, an interesting group of people.

TS: Did any of them ever amount to anything after the Know-Nothing Party disappeared? Did any of the Know Nothings in Georgia ever go on to do anything else that was noteworthy?

AP: Some of them remained in politics, but I confess, I cannot remember exactly which ones went on to other things. I don't think any of them became particularly famous.

TS: Well, we're talking 160-something years ago.

AP: Right. Exactly.

TS: Okay. You finish that, you're teaching math, and you finally get to teach history. But you decided there's got to be something better than teaching high school students.

AP: That's correct. So, I thought getting a PhD would be a wonderful thing to do, though at the time I began my program at Georgia State, I did not really say I was going to get a PhD. I said I was working on a T 6. I took a year's leave from high school teaching.

TS: So, this is like a specialist degree?

AP: Yes. T 6 is a specialist degree. I had T 5 certification because of my master's, and this was the next level.

TS: To get you a little more money?

AP: Right. But at the time, it was in the back of my head that if it went, well, maybe I could just get the PhD.

TS: Okay. So, you went to Georgia State because you were teaching in the Atlanta area and you could teach and go to school?

AP: Actually, when I started at Georgia State, I took this leave from my teaching job.

TS: Where were you teaching?

AP: I taught at Russell High and then at College Park. Russell was in East Point. Both of them are in Tri-Cities High [created in 1988 by combining Russell, Headland, College Park, and Hapeville High Schools].

TS: So, when do you decide, "I'm going for the PhD?"

AP: Pretty early on, but it took me a while to make that clear to other people I knew, like my family. Maybe a PhD would be fun, but it's going to take a while.

TS: Yes, very time consuming.

AP: Yes, but I had some really wonderful professors to begin with, particularly [Gerald H.] Gerry Davis. He was very encouraging, and I thought that I probably was on the right track.

TS: So in 1967 you get the master's. It's going to be 1975 when you get the doctorate. Right?

AP: That's right.

TS: So, there's eight years between the two. You teach a couple of years; then you start Georgia State?

AP: That's right, in 1970.

TS: And then with a leave of absence, do you ever go back to teaching high school?

AP: No, no.

TS: Okay. So, you're raising a family and working on a doctorate full time?

AP: My son was born in December of 1971, after I had finished a lot of my coursework.

TS: Oh, so James [Ellis] is 52 years old now.

AP: That's right. That's right. Yes.

TS: That's shocking, isn't it?

AP: Yes, it certainly is. But, you know….

TS: So, you had your hands full.

AP: Yes, I did at the time.

TS: When you were at Georgia State, they already had a strong emphasis on urban history by that time, plus, southern history…

AP: Yes.

TS: But not women's history yet?

AP: No. There were no courses in women's history. I mean, it was just not thought of as a field anyone taught. Because, after all, women weren't doing anything, were they? [laughs] That's what people would have said; anyway, that is a most distressing viewpoint.

TS: Were there any women on the faculty in history at Georgia State?

AP: Yes, but only two, Ellen [Lovell] Evans was such a good professor. And there was another one named Frances Harrold. Nearly all the faculty was male, but at any rate, they were very interested in what was then the new field rather of urban history, particularly, [Timothy J.] Tim Crimmins and Merl [E.] Reed and Dale Somers. Dale was my original PhD adviser, but he died quite suddenly, and I worked under Merl Reed after that.

TS: I knew Tim Crimmins pretty well.

AP: Yes, I'm sure you did.

TS: And, of course, he would have been very young at that time [joined the Georgia State faculty in 1972, the same year he completed his PhD at Emory University].

AP: Yes, I didn't actually work directly with him. He was just coming on to the faculty as I was finishing.

TS: Right, and it's too early for [Clifford M.] Cliff Kuhn I guess [born 1952, died 2015; joined the Georgia State faculty in 1994].

AP: Right, I knew Cliff, but he was not on the faculty then.

TS: How did you pick your dissertation topic on the Commission on Interracial Cooperation ["The Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 1919-1944: Its Activities and Results," PhD dissertation, Georgia State University, 1975]? How did that come about?

AP: Dale Somers suggested it. I don't know quite how we got into the conversation that led to my thinking it would be a really interesting topic. But I know he and I discussed it, and he's the one that suggested various things that might be of interest to work on. The papers were at Atlanta University. There was a huge organization, which was really

extremely interesting that nobody had done research on except a much earlier dissertation that had largely been a financial history; it wasn't so much about the CIC's activities, I think.

TS: Did they actually accomplish anything? I know that they were ahead of their times in some ways. But after the civil rights movement, it might look like they were not so much ahead of their times.

AP: Yes, I think they did, particularly because one of their major projects was opposition to lynching, and the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching was a spin off from the CIC. So, the southern white women's anti-lynching movement really grew out of the commission's work. I would say that was extremely important. They also conducted a surprising number of educational activities. They had a huge campaign going to try to get African Americans referred to in the newspapers as "Mr." or "Mrs.," not by their first names, which was common at the time, no matter how distinguished they were. Many colleges taught classes in race relations, usually Sociology classes that were kind of, I won't say packaged, but a lot of the materials were developed by the CIC. In fact, [the CIC research director] Arthur [F.] Raper went on to do many other things and taught at Agnes Scott for a good while. He became sort of infamous for taking his female Agnes Scott students on field trips to African American colleges.

So, there were a lot of educational activities that I think were also quite important. I think they made some headway in better legal treatment of African Americans. They had a huge number of attorneys that worked with them. I mean, the CIC was not a centralized organization exactly. It had a small headquarters and then all these state committees that did things out in various states, some much more successfully than others. But they also had a group of attorneys that worked with them if there were cases, let's say, where there was clearly a miscarriage of justice. And in some cases, they were able to get at least fairer trials, perhaps, and bring some notoriety to the unfair treatment. They were very interested in health care. The CIC was one of the many groups behind trying to get Grady Hospital [Atlanta] to have a wing, as they called it at that time, that not only admitted Black patients, but also allowed Black doctors and other staff to practice. In the 1950s, after the CIC ended its work, the Hughes Spalding Pavilion was opened. While many groups were involved, the CIC helped to lay the groundwork. So, it had tentacles in many things.

TS: So, Grady Hospital was there before the Hughes Spalding wing?

AP: Yes, that's right. So, yes, I think the CIC did a good bit to change some opinions, if you will, to prepare the way.

TS: Now, is this primarily a bunch of elite white men that are running it or is it…

AP: Well, that's an interesting question. I haven't mentioned who was in it or the fact that it had a very strong women's committee. But, the men in the CIC were almost all connected to it either as ministers or professors. Will [W.] Alexander who headed it

[executive director 1919-1930] had been a Methodist minister at one time. So, many of the men involved were well-educated professional men. They weren't generally the wealthy men, however. They were more the professional men. And they purposefully sought out African Americans to be associated with it who were also well educated. For instance, one of the most active members was John Hope, the President of Morehouse College and, later, President of Atlanta University. So, while there were others who considered some of the African American leaders to be too conservative, they kind of prided themselves in trying to see what was possible. And their motto is that they wanted to work *with* the African American community not *for* it. So, there certainly was a cadre of well-known African American men involved. I mentioned John Hope. Robert [R.] Moton was president at Tuskegee; Charles S. Johnson of Fisk – there were a number of prominent African American men involved.

TS: Oh, really!

AP: Yes. So, a lot of the best-known names in African American education were working with the CIC. They did develop a very strong women's group, beginning in 1921, and it is from there that the ASWPL, the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching anti-lynching group spun off in 1930. The early women's committee was composed of both white and Black women, but many of the African American women thought that the white women were very patronizing, and that took a good while to overcome.

TS: They probably were.

AP: Which I was going to say; I think they were correct in that, of course. But some of the African American women were very outspoken, particularly Charlotte Hawkins Brown, who kept insisting that they were equals and that the white women should not direct them in what to do. But eventually, the women's division was headed by a woman named Jessie Daniel Ames, who was quite a dynamo herself. And she got involved in all kinds of interesting activities aside from the anti-lynching movement.

TS: So, you could tie women's history in with it?

AP: Yes, yes. I had gotten very interested in what the women's group was doing, so that became my entre to go on into women's history.

TS: Did you ever think about publishing that as a book?

AP: Yes, I did. And, I regret that I didn't.

TS: Well, it seems like this would be a no-brainer to find a publisher?

AP: Well, I actually worked with, surprisingly enough, Dan [T.] Carter at Emory, who offered to help me revise it. But when I submitted it to publishers, the answer I got is that it

needed a total reorganization. It had been organized into chapters about different activities. So, it was a chapter on legal activity, a chapter on education.

TS: Sounds logical.

AP: And so on. It was not very chronological. So, publishers kept insisting that it needed to be more chronological and the development of the organization needed to be clearer. And at the time I was trying to get started at Kennesaw State. By that time, I had a toddler, and I just never did it. And now I truly regret that. But anyway, I did several articles relative to the dissertation, but I never actually published the dissertation.

TS: Okay. So, you finished that in 1975, and by the way Reed wrote the history of Georgia State, didn't he? [*Educating the Urban New South: Atlanta and the Rise of Georgia State University, 1913-1969* (Mercer University Press 2009)]

AP: Oh, I believe he did.

TS: I saw him in a number of conferences.

AP: Yes, he was a wonderful fellow. One last thing about the Commission on Interracial Cooperation before I get off that: they were extremely active in the New Deal. That's probably how you know some of the people connected with it. Will Alexander went on to head the Farm Security Administration, and the CIC got very much involved in the movement against tenant farming. Raper wrote his famous books about tenant farming. But all of that came out of their work with the CIC.

TS: Okay. So, you hit the job market in 1975, and 1976 wasn't the best year in the world to hit the job market, I guess?

AP: Well, it wasn't a bad year within the university system because Kennesaw was going to the senior level.

TS: Yes, we were hiring.

AP: And Clayton State, I believe, was as well. I had been teaching part time at Clayton State and also at DeKalb College. One year I taught part time at each one. I had both together. That was challenging. But anyway, since I had taught at Clayton State, I kind of wanted to teach there full time, but I didn't get that particular job that I applied for. But I was, in the end, very glad I ended up at Kennesaw State instead.

TS: Let me ask you: when I was hired, nobody was worried about what your discipline was other than could you teach US history? I had to teach Western Civil when I first came here too. But, it's April of 1976 that we were approved for four-year status and had two years to make the transition. So, I guess my question is, were you hired for a specific discipline like Southern history or just that you could teach U.S. history?

AP: I think it was that I could teach U.S. history. But there is another component that is important; I was certified to teach in high school and could help develop an education program because we didn't have any majors, of course. We, I believe, only had one education professor, Diane Willey, who was in our division, you may recall. We had both Education and Business in our division. So, anyway, I think what really distinguished me from other people is that I had secondary education experience and could help with developing education majors, as well as teach U.S. history. My chief competitor for the job was a wonderful person that I'm sure you know. But at any rate, he was a male who had lots of military experience and taught world history. And I was just convinced he was going to get hired especially after I met [division chair] George [H.] Beggs. But in the end, he went to Southern Tech and I went Kennesaw.

TS: You dressed very professionally for your interview, I'm sure.

AP: Of course, of course; I had to go buy something to wear for my interview because I didn't have anything I thought looked professional enough. And then I got asked back for a second interview, and I thought, "Wait, I've worn my one outfit. What do I do now?" And I just scrambled around for something else to wear.

TS: How did it work in 1976? We didn't have a search committee I don't think we did? Or did we?

AP: I don't know. I'm not quite sure.

TS: So, you applied and you got invited?

AP: Yes, I applied, and I got invited to interview in the division and with Dr. Beggs, the division chair. And I already kind of knew Fred [Roach] and kind of knew J.B [Tate]. So, I talked to them and talked to Beggs, who interestingly told me the easiest way to get to Kennesaw was when the interstate ended to get off on the dirt road. And I thought, "Good heavens, where am I going to interview?" But, indeed, that was the easiest way to get here. The dirt road is now the main road down to Town Center.

TS: Barrett Lakes Blvd, which used to be part of Greers Chapel Road; it was dirt from Duncan Road and Mrs. Cassie Chastain's house.

AP: Yes.

TS: [Former academic dean Eugene R.] Gene Huck and I interviewed Cassie Chastain in April 1980.

AP: Oh, that must have been interesting.

TS: It was fabulous. She was 94 at the time and still had a wood stove.

AP: Wow.

TS: She lived on a little hill with a beautiful view, but it's totally gone now. I weep every time I go by there because all that area has been mined by Vulcan [Materials Company].

AP: Yes, Vulcan.

TS: The house is long gone, but the Chastains kept it undeveloped as long as they lived there. They did their best to make sure the county didn't pave the road through there because they didn't want anybody along there.

AP: Yes. At any rate, after I met everybody in the department, I was called back to talk to Dr. Huck and Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis [Kennesaw's first president, 1965-1980].

TS: Okay. Oh, you did meet with the division? I can't remember now.

AP: I don't remember whether I met with the entire division. There weren't many. The next year you were on leave, I think.

TS: I did take off to finish my dissertation the fall of 1977.

AP: Yes. Anyway, I must have met people in the division, but I can't remember.

TS: I don't remember Dr. Beggs asking our opinions or anything back then.

AP: I think it was more that I was introduced to various people and shown around and that kind of thing.

TS: Was anybody else hired that year? Were you the only one?

AP: I believe so.

TS: Then 1978, [E.] Howard Shealy [Jr.], and Linda Papageorge [joined the faculty].

AP: That's right.

TS: Was [Apostolos D.] Toli Ziros here?

AP: He was here when I came. [He joined the faculty in 1969]. I had known who he was at the University of Georgia when I was working on my PhD. Toli must have been a PhD student, but everybody knew him as the "wild Greek person." But I was glad to find him here.

TS: There's a story that he came over from Athens for his interview. And I guess somebody on the faculty said, "Oh, you've come a long way from Athens!" Thinking he came from Athens, Greece.

AP: Oh, goodness.

TS: So, what was your impression of Kennesaw? You're glad to have a job, and we weren't at the end of a dirt road, but it was December of 1977 before I-75 was completed by here.

AP: I really loved being here because of the opportunity to be on the ground floor in developing courses for the major. It was really, really a wonderful time to have been hired, because we were doing so many things to get ready for four-year status.

TS: Yes, I remember we had a meeting of just the historians, and we basically said, "Who wants to teach this course? Who wants to teach that course?"

AP: Exactly. I was just going to reference that meeting because we all raised our hands and said, "Oh, yes. I'd like to teach x, y, z."

TS: And we didn't have Georgia history at that time, but we had Modern New South, I think it was.

AP: Yes. It was called New South. Fred and I taught that.

TS: I taught it once, and then we had Georgia history, and I moved on to that. So, New South was what you wanted to teach, but we didn't have a women's history class. We only had seven or eight [history] classes altogether.

AP: That's right.

TS: So, women's history had to wait, I guess.

AP: I didn't get into teaching women's history until the 1980s.

TS: How did that come about? Didn't we have a women's studies program or something?

AP: Yes, we developed a women's studies program. [Carol L.] Cary Turner was initially very much involved, and there was a committee for women's studies. Cary was in the background kind of and…

TS: And she was an English professor.

AP: An English professor, right. Then we established the women's studies program, I believe, in 1984, and I was asked to head it.

TS: Was that the year you became department head?

AP: Yes. So, I was doing both things for a while. But women's studies really consisted of, at that time, having a lot of meetings to talk about what kind of courses different

departments were doing that could become eventually part of a minor. There was nothing beyond a minor program involved in it.

TS: So, when did we start actually having a women's history course?

AP: I'm going to look at my dates; in the summer of 1984, I attended a seminar to prepare. At that time there were a number of seminars sponsored by various groups in conjunction with the Bicentennial of the Constitution. This was a group called Project '87 [a joint effort of the American Historical Association and the American Political Science Association] that gave grants for summer seminars on constitutional topics. [Political Science department member and later chair] Helen [S.] Ridley and I went to a seminar at Indiana University that was taught by Joan Hoff-Wilson, who was one of the early pioneers in women's history. The idea was to equip people to teach a course in women's history or women and the constitution or something similar. It was after that seminar that Helen and I did a joint course, which proved to be very difficult because there weren't really any tandem or joint courses at that time. But we taught a course on women and the constitution, and, eventually, I began to teach regular women's history. That was kind of the origin of it. I needed to learn more about women's history in order to teach it. I knew some general outlines but not enough to really prepare me for it.

TS: I remember that was a wonderful time to be a faculty member at Kennesaw when we were basically deciding what our field for the future was going to be.

AP: It really was. I thought it was a fascinating time because we got to use all this stuff we had fairly recently had in graduate school and develop courses. It was fun. It was a good time to be here.

TS: I was just thinking that I taught Georgia history for years without ever having taken a course in Georgia history. I'm not even sure I ever took a course in Southern history, although I did a dissertation on Cobb County in the late 19th century. But you taught women's history without ever taking a course because there weren't any courses in women's history when you were coming along. And that was great, I thought, to be able to develop our fields.

AP: Right. I thought so too—a very good time to be at Kennesaw State or Kennesaw College as it was known then.

TS: I'm trying to think. I think we had a course in U.S. since World War II from the beginning [of upper level history offerings], didn't we? And everybody wanted to teach that?

AP: Yes. Then there was a course that I taught that was called U.S. between the World Wars; that had been the era of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, so I knew a lot more about that period than some other periods.

TS: You had the Great Depression in there and the New Deal and all that.

AP: Yes. That was a good course.

TS: So, exciting time at least at Kennesaw in those years being on the ground floor.

AP: Very much.

TS: I think it was a shock when you became department chair, wasn't it? Had you ever thought when you came to campus, "Well, I want to be a department chair?"

AP: That had never crossed my mind and didn't either the first year we were in a department structure, because Fred was chair.

TS: And he had been the assistant to the division chair for a year or two at least.

AP: I think we all assumed Fred would just remain chair eternally. Then when Fred decided to step down, I was extremely surprised that I was asked to become the chair because I was not the senior person in the department. Eugene Huck, at that time, was returning to teach history, and everybody, I think, assumed Huck would be asked to be chair. But I don't know whether he was asked or not. I suspect he just didn't want to do it.

TS: Well, he had been our academic dean, and he had been interim president between Sturgis and Siegel and continued to be academic dean until we went to departments, I guess. But, I guess he never became vice president for academic affairs.

AP: No, he didn't.

TS: My impression was that he didn't exactly hit it off with [President] Betty [L.] Siegel.

AP: That's my impression as well, though I don't know any details. So, I suspect he just did not want to be in administration anymore and was perfectly happy teaching history.

TS: He seemed to be happy being back in the department.

AP: Yes, but I was, again, just surprised that I was the one they asked to do it. I don't know how many others might have been asked before I was.

TS: Well, I don't know if people may have been asked, but there was nothing democratic about the decision.

AP: Yes.

TS: I mean, Dr. Beggs made the decision.

AP: Yes, I was going to say it was Beggs' decision.

TS: At that time we had the first female president in the history of the University System of Georgia, starting in 1981. And there weren't very many women at all in administrative posts. There was one person that was in the academic dean's office, Betty [J.] Youngblood [assistant academic dean, 1979-1983, and director of academic services, registrar, and professor of Political Science, 1983-1985].

AP: Oh, yes, Betty Youngblood; I had forgotten about her.

TS: But anyway, I'm sure they were looking around for women that could be in leadership positions.

AP: I suspect that was exactly it, because my recollection is that there had been almost no female academic division chairs [in the original administrative organization prior to 1983]. There were half-dozen or so female department chairs, though, including Dorothy [D.] Zinsmeister (Biology) [and Willoughby G. Jarrell, Political Science; G. Ruth Hepler, Psychology; Mildred W. Landrum, acting head of Management; [Judith A.] Judy Mitchell, Curriculum and Instruction; Julia L. Perkins, Nursing; Fay H. Rodgers, Accounting; and Mary D. Zoghby, Developmental Studies.]

TS: I don't remember anybody jumping up and down saying, "I want to be the department chair."

AP: That probably figured into it as well that everybody was saying, "Oh, no, no, not me."

TS: So, did Dr. Beggs call you up and say, "Will you come for a meeting," and you go in and see him, or what happens?

AP: My vague recollection, and this may be somewhat inaccurate, is that he wanted to know if I was interested in doing it, and I said, "Well, yes, I might want to consider it." And somewhere along the line, I believe there was a vote of the history faculty to say yes or no, I guess. I wasn't in on it.

TS: I have no memory whatsoever, but I'm sure it was a unanimous vote if we did. I don't remember any controversy about it.

AP: No, I don't think there was one, and the vote may have been after the fact, after Beggs had made known that I was going to be the choice. So, who could vote against it? Anyway, it was all a most informal process compared to what would happen today.

TS: Yes, and you had all those principals in your family tree.

AP: Well, again, as department chair, a lot of people, almost all, had been there far longer than I had.

TS: Was Fred helpful when you became chair?

AP: Oh, yes, yes. And Fred may have been the one behind the scenes saying, "Well, I think she can probably do it." Because Fred, by that time, had gotten me involved with the Georgia Association of Historians and all that. So, he was definitely a mentor. So, it's possible that Fred and Beggs discussed it and that the suggestion came from Fred, but I don't know that for sure.

TS: Did you have any training to be chair?

AP: No, no.

TS: So, all of a sudden Fred steps down, you take over, and no preparation whatsoever.

AP: Well, Fred told me what I needed to be doing. Seriously, that was about it. But Fred sat down with me and said: "Now here's what you need to do."

TS: What was your teaching schedule?

AP: Well, now, that's an interesting point. The first year when we moved into department status, Fred had no release time, as I recall. He was totally developing a new department with no release time. And this was on the quarter system so, of course, we had nine classes. I got one release time.

TS: One out of nine.

AP: One out of nine.

TS: One quarter, you got one class off.

AP: That's right, and then we still had to teach in the summer because department chairs were not on 12-month contracts yet. I was teaching two classes in the summer. So, it was a very heavy load.

TS: I remember somewhere along the way, when I was working on my dissertation, Dr. Beggs gave me a one course release. But I think we had about forty students in the classes at that time, and he decided, since I had one less course, I could have sixty in each of my classes. So, there was a one-course release but as many students as I ever had.

AP: Sounds typical. Anyway, I looked back through a lot of old records in preparation for today and discovered that it was a constant issue with department chairs in our school that we got fewer class releases than chairs in some other schools, in particular Business. And we kept thinking, "What are they doing over there that's taking much more time than we're taking, when we're teaching all the core classes?

TS: Yes, but they had the majors.

AP: Yes, they had more majors, of course, but we had a lot more students.

TS: Education also, I guess.

AP: Yes.

TS: Wait a minute. Education hadn't broken away yet, had it? Or I guess they had?

AP: Yes, they had. Anyway, it was Business in particular that was always a sore point.

TS: In our school, we had English, history, and liberal studies. What else did we have? Were the Arts still with us?

AP: Yes, the Arts were still in with us; Wayne [R.] Gibson was the chair.

TS: Okay, so, the Music department and the Visual Arts department.

AP: Yes, and Sociology with Barbara [C.] Karcher and her group, Sociology and Anthropology were together, and Political Science.

TS: So, did the department chairs get together for meetings?

AP: Yes, we did. We met with Dr. Beggs. In retrospect, I'm thinking once a week but probably not that often, but fairly often.

TS: So, your workload suddenly doubled, I guess.

AP: Well, I felt like it at the time. It was quite a shock. Selena [Davis Creasman] was the secretary, but she eventually began to do many more administrative things than she did to begin with, because at that time, she was mainly just typing stuff people would give her to type. If you remember, the department secretaries typed papers for people in the departments a lot of the time. That was a lot of their job because we didn't have computers, of course.

TS: When did you get a computer in the history department?

AP: You know, I can't remember, but it was a big deal. Of course, computers were being slowly given out around the campus, and we were about the last because, "What do historians need computers for?" And we had to go to all these special classes to learn how to use them, and, of course, they were very basic kinds of things. Computers were slowly being given out around the campus, and we were about the last.

TS: I remember Lovett [Z.] Elango was determined not to learn how to operate a computer.

AP: And Linda Papageorge was always fighting with hers. It was in the mid-1980s, I think. I don't remember the exact date. I should look that up. But it certainly helped our workloads tremendously.

TS: The department got it before the individual faculty did, I guess.

AP: Yes, I think I got one before the faculty members did. Anyway, a major change in our lives.

TS: Yes. Where was the department in 1984? What building were we in?

AP: Well, we moved around, so I'm not sure. We moved from Social Sciences to Humanities and then back to Social Sciences eventually. I can't remember which office I had when I first became chair.

TS: It wasn't a very big office anyway, I don't believe.

AP: No, no. Even in Humanities, I had an office about from there to here; you know, it was tiny, tiny. And Selena had a little office that wasn't much bigger. We were crammed up there on the second floor of Humanities. So, I felt like I had moved to a palace when we moved back to Social Sciences and I got a really big office. Well, it was a classroom that was divided up. So, Selena had part of it and I had part.

TS: How many faculty members did we have in the History Department at that time that you had to write annual reports for?

AP: When I became chair, I believe there were ten of us. There were a number of years when we didn't hire anybody new from the time that Linda and Howard were hired until Leroy Davis [Jr.] was hired. And it was fall of 1987 that Leroy was hired.

TS: So, 1984-1987, no hires?

AP: Yes, Leroy was the first one hired in eight years. Can you imagine a department with no hires, no changes?

TS: Nobody left.

AP: Nobody left, eight years.

TS: People must have been happy.

AP: Well, I must say once we started hiring new people it all got a lot more complicated than it had been, because we were all a really close knit group. We all knew each other.

TS: Well, Leroy must not have stayed too long because it seems like [A. G.] Adebayo and [Lovett] Elango came in about 1991? [Hugh Hunt, Philosophy, was transferred from Liberal Studies to the History Department in 1991; the department was renamed the Department of History and Philosophy in 1992]

AP: Fall of 1992. Leroy left and went to Emory University, and then we hired Adebayo and Elango. We only had one position open but both were such wonderful hires that amazingly Dr. Beggs somehow got permission to hire them both. And that was most astonishing to me.

TS: If I recall correctly, they were hired for both African history and African American, even though both of them are African.

AP: That's right.

TS: So it makes sense to have two, I guess.

AP: Yes, that was wonderful. But you mentioned writing yearly evaluations. When I first became chair, I don't think I wrote formal yearly evaluations. There was a period when we weren't evaluating faculty in quite the way we did later, which was with massive amounts of paperwork every year. It was more that I reported to Dr. Beggs each year how the faculty was doing. Everybody must have submitted something to me, and we did class evaluations, so those were always something we looked at. But it was not nearly as formal a process as it became later.

TS: I remember I would have to count how many speeches I had made out in the community and all that kind of stuff.

AP: Yes, I came across a number of forms on old purple mimeograph sheets, in which we were first developing this instrument for the evaluation of faculty. It was many, many pages, and you had to list how many of each thing you had done. One version had weights you were to give everything like a half point for a community speech and a full point for something else, and everybody had to add up their points. I think that was so cumbersome it didn't last long.

TS: No, we were not mathematicians.

AP: Right.

TS: But you had to go up for tenure and go up for promotion and things like that and have to have a lot of paperwork for that.

AP: Well, maybe you can help me remember this. I don't remember submitting anything really detailed when I became an associate professor. I did when I went for full professor. I've still got all that.

TS: Because the college was developing those things after Betty Siegel arrived.

AP: In fact, I was promoted the year before I was tenured, which was really rather strange. But Beggs explained privately that there were too many others being tenured, and there just wasn't room for everybody.

TS: Oh, really? You had to get tenured at a certain point.

AP: Well, I still had plenty of time to get tenured. But he said, "Now you wouldn't be promoted if you couldn't more-or-less count on being tenured." So, "Okay." I still had a year though in which I really wanted to be tenured. But it was, again, all very informal. I came across a vita, a CV, I submitted apparently for that because I listed all these details about committees and things. But I don't think I had to write a narrative and submit all the things that we did later.

TS: In some ways, that was very nice. On the other hand, if you didn't get promoted, you might feel that you had a case if there wasn't a process.

AP: Well, I was going to say that was, I believe, exactly the problem with it. There were some who were not promoted or tenured, and that was hard for those who turned someone down to justify the decision.

TS: So, lots of meetings to go to.

AP: Yes.

TS: But you were also going to other kinds of meetings developing new programs and things like that. Why don't you talk about that? You've talked about it with women's studies, but talk about the growth of the department in stature as well as numbers as time goes on, like the international things that we were doing.

AP: Yes. I think our department was extremely innovative for a history department, don't you?

TS: Yes.

AP: We really began to do two things. I'm sure they were quite unusual around the system. One was the international focus because nobody much was paying attention to internationalizing the curriculum, as we later began to call it. But especially [Thomas H.] Tom Keene, and through him others, began to get involved in this idea that we needed studies abroad. Gene Huck, of course, was very involved too. We needed not Western Civilization courses, but World Civ courses, which were not taught throughout the system by any means.

TS: We had world history [as part of the Core Curriculum] by the time you became chair.

AP: Yes, by the time I was chair.

TS: And probably about the time you joined the faculty; somewhere in the 1970s, I think, we started teaching world history.

AP: But there was, I think, not so much an emphasis on the world part as there came to be later.

TS: We called it world history but it really wasn't?

AP: It wasn't for everyone. Some people just ignored things they didn't know much about. That was my sense of it. I mean, certainly, Tom Keene didn't, but I think it was possible, especially for part-time instructors.

TS: Well, if your research has been on Italy or somewhere else in Europe, you might not know much about Africa and Asia.

AP: Yes. In fact, when I taught at Georgia State as a teaching assistant, we taught Western Civ 1 and 2. So the international focus, I think, was something just beginning in the system, and I think our department, not me personally, but Tom Keene and, of course, Adebayo and Elango, when they were hired, got interested (and Gene Huck too) in getting more students involved in studies abroad and having faculty do studies abroad. Tom Keene spent a year in China [in 1986-1987], and that was so difficult to arrange.

TS: And then a Chinese professor [Professor Yu Yixun] came here.

AP: A Chinese professor was coming here and the university system didn't know what to do with that suggestion, I think.

TS: Really?

AP: That seemed very odd. Maybe UGA and places like that were doing faculty exchanges, but we were the first ones to do it at Kennesaw. At least as far as I can recollect, I believe that's accurate. So, there were various summer studies programs that the university system began to undertake. Linda Papageorge and Willoughby Jarrell went to a summer study in India. That was in 1985, I think. Clayton State organized the program in India. Our department started the "Year of…" series [in 1984] where every year we studied [a particular country—Japan in 1984-1985], and, after the first few years anyway, we would take a group to visit that country, and then we had programs throughout the year, and they were for the community.

TS: And we're still doing that, I think.

AP: We're still doing it [Year of Senegal in 2023-2024; Yea of Canada scheduled for 2024-2025]. But, one year, Beggs and [Kinsley] Gird Romer [Jr.] and I went to Russia, which was most interesting. That was in 1987, I think [Year of the Soviet Union 1986-1987].

TS: When it's still the Soviet Union

AP: Yes. We had some students with us from Kennesaw, and we had community people, particularly, the [Cobb Superior Court] judge, Dorothy [A. S.] Robinson. So, it was a

very interesting group of people. But, again those initiatives were considered rather unusual at the time. So, I think the whole international thrust was extremely important. And the other thing was that we were taking the lead and doing things like revising the Core and teaching with primary documents; that was something that was a bit unusual and largely what you were so much involved in. So, I think the department was moving into some areas that were a bit unusual for the time maybe.

TS: Well, I found that it was a lot easier to teach students if they read the document for themselves and came to their own conclusion instead of me pontificating about what happened.

AP: Well, absolutely. But that's just not the way most institutions were teaching at that time.

TS: So that became a department-wide focus?

AP: Yes, but I think it's because you started doing it, really. It wasn't my idea.

TS: When did Howard Shealy start the Montepulciano [Italy] visits?

AP: I think in 1999. We first had the student summer study in Mexico that Dr. Huck led in San Miguel de Allende [Year of Mexico 1985-1986; student program beginning 1987]; Alan [V.] LeBaron later [1994] moved the program to Oaxaca. And somewhere along in there in the 1990s, Howard began the program in Italy though it may have started as a university system program and, because Kennesaw State was so involved, it became our program.

TS: Did you ever go to Italy on one of those visits?

AP: Yes, I did in one of the early years of the program. I went because Howard wanted the institution to become more invested in the program. Let me back up just a minute. There was a fear that the university would want to maybe take away some of these programs that to some seemed frivolous. Why should faculty go traveling around?

TS: Really? People thought it was frivolous, if you're going to teach world history, to actually visit the places you're talking about?

AP: Well, it took time and money. This was not a pervasive idea, but there were some administrators who thought this, not historians. Gene Huck had wanted to develop an actual center in San Miguel, as I recall, in which Kennesaw State would have a place students could routinely go, instead of having to stay in hotels. For whatever reason, that was deemed too expensive. So, when Howard started the program in Italy, it was a major idea for the future that this college would buy the *Fortezza*, the building—that we would actually commit to doing something in studies abroad long-term.

TS: Yes. Tell the story about going to Iraq right on the eve of the First Gulf War.

AP: Yes, that's true.

TS: And, of course, Iraq invades Kuwait and we get involved and, fortunately, the first Bush [President George H. W. Bush] stopped before invading Iraq itself. And you were there right on the eve of all of that. It had to be kind of scary, I would think.

AP: Well, no, because we didn't know what was happening. But it's probably a story worth telling. I had gotten a summer fellowship, called the Malone Fellowship through a group called the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations [NCUSAR]. They offered summer study opportunities for faculty in various parts of the Middle East. The year I got chosen to go to Egypt and Iraq, Michelle Zebich-Knos went to Tunisia, for example. But somehow, I ended up getting chosen to go to Egypt. At the time, it didn't seem all that important that, as part of the summer study in Egypt, we were to spend a week or more in Iraq, but it turned out to be a most interesting week. We studied at the American University in Cairo for part of our time but then went off to Iraq as guest of the foreign ministry of Saddam Hussein. At the time, he was not considered quite as terrible as we later knew him to be.

We had someone in the foreign ministry who became our shepherd and led us around all the time, and this was a fellow named Nizar Hamdoon, who had actually studied at Harvard and later defected to the U.S. So, that was kind of an interesting connection. But at any rate, we were taken all around Iraq having no real idea there was a crisis brewing, except that we kept seeing all these trains going south, piled high, I mean, literally piled up with equipment and ammunition, with soldiers sitting up on top. We were told they were going to maneuvers on the Kuwaiti border. We actually met with the American ambassador to Iraq whose name was April [C.] Glaspie. I wonder what's happened to her. Anyway, we had a lovely dinner with her, and she said, "Oh, don't worry. Saddam Hussein is not going to invade Kuwait because he's got more sense than to do that."

TS: You would think.

AP: So, when we finally left Iraq—and I think we were there a week, maybe a little more—and got back to Egypt, we discovered that, in fact, it was considered an international crisis. I learned, at that point, that the State Department had actually called my mother because I listed her as a contact and said, "Don't worry, your daughter is fine." My mother panicked, like, "What?" But of course, I never knew that there was anything much going on.

TS: So, you got out just in time?

AP: Yes, and we actually got home before Kuwait was invaded, because our summer program ended when we left Iraq. The invasion was right after we got home. It was very exciting. It was a wonderful summer. And, again, you wouldn't think a U.S. historian would benefit all that much from it, but we actually learned a great deal about not only US-Iraqi

relations but about diplomatic relations in Egypt and that kind of thing. A lot of people involved in the program were world historians or world geographers, people like that.

TS: I know you got some technology grants along the way too. Is this where Sarah [R.] Robbins comes into the picture?

AP: Yes, that's right. One of the big focuses of the college was on teaching with technology. This was when this was literally just beginning.

TS: What did that mean exactly?

AP: Well, it didn't mean very much to begin with. Initially, it meant we were using more overhead projectors and things showing more pictures in our classes because we didn't have any means of projecting a computer. I mean, there was no PowerPoint yet or anything like that. Again, this may seem totally astonishing. There was no way to do classes like today you would do with Zoom. There was no way to do that with another institution. So, Sarah and I got a grant to connect with another college on this system that was called GSAMS, the Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical System. Sarah and I taught a women's history class with an historian at Armstrong State. We had to go to a big room on campus that was equipped with this giant broadcasting system. It looked like a TV studio, not like computers, and we would be able to see their class, and they could see our class, and we could ask each other questions.

This was considered hugely innovative at the time. We were given a university system grant to do this. So, Sarah and I had to prepare all kinds of materials that we would use for the class. The system was first developed for medical students. Anyway, it allowed us to do distance learning, as it was called at that time. That's how we got involved in traveling around with some other grants to collect materials to use in the class. And at one point, Sarah and I were also team-teaching a class, and that was another thing that our history department and English were pioneers in, team-teaching. And, of course, you and Dede [Yow] taught your class together for a long time [Georgia history/Georgia literature]. But that was not commonly done. Helen Ridley and I had done one in Political Science, and you and Dede and Sarah and I did history and English. But now it's probably considered routine to do that.

TS: Sarah joined the faculty in 1993. So, it had to be after that that we're talking about. It must have been about 1993 or 1994 that Dede and I started teaching together.

AP: Yes, I think Sarah and I and you and Dede started close to the same time because there was a lot of conversation about how we could do this.

TS: And it worked for some faculty, and for others it didn't.

AP: Yes, yes.

TS: But you and Sarah hit it off.

AP: Yes, I thought it worked extremely well because we were teaching women's history. So, what better area to work on; you could find lots of readings in women's history and literature.

TS: Yes. We could do the same with Georgia history, Georgia literature.

AP: Yes, so it was a very good pairing of things. I see here on my list of dates, I had forgotten this, but in 1994 and 1995, Howard Shealy did the first GSAMS class, with West Georgia and Armstrong. Anyway, it was 1997 that Sarah and I got the grant to do the class with Armstrong State.

TS: How did that work? Was there a professor at Armstrong State that worked with you?

AP: Yes, Dr. Nancy White. I don't know whether you ever knew her through the GAH [Georgia Association of Historians]. So, we had two professors here at Kennesaw and then Nancy at Armstrong.

TS: We got away from the GAH. It must have started in the early eighties, I guess.

AP: The organization was founded while I was in graduate school [in 1973]. Gerry Davis was one of the main leaders in getting it organized. When I was in grad school, he kept saying, "You've got to give me your $2 and become a charter member," and I kept forgetting, so I wasn't a charter member. I joined the next year. When I came to Kennesaw, the GAH needed somebody to edit their newsletter, and Fred Roach suggested that this would be a good activity for me, as a new faculty member. So, I got involved in doing that and later was editor in chief of the *Proceedings and Papers of the Georgia Association of Historians*.

TS: I remember, the GAH would have its annual meeting the same weekend that the Georgia Historical Society would have its annual meeting, and I'd go to Savannah for the Georgia Historical Society. So, I missed out those early years. When did you become the editor? Was it before you were department chair?

AP: Yes. I became the newsletter editor not long after I went to Kennesaw. I don't remember the exact year. I believe I began to edit the *Proceedings and Papers* in 1980 or 1981, thereabouts.

TS: Weren't you also involved with a journal on teaching history?

AP: I was on the editorial board for *Teaching History: A Journal of Methods*. I ended up on lots of editorial boards because of the GAH *Proceedings*, I think. I was on the editorial board of the *Atlanta History* journal for a while.

TS: You've done a lot of professional service. I guess it was called service instead of research.

AP: Yes, but it wasn't community service, which Dr. Beggs always thought I needed to be doing more of.

TS: You're certainly doing enough of it now.

AP: Well, at the time, I didn't ever do a whole lot of community service. You, for example, would be out giving an astonishing number of speeches a year on something, and I would have, like, maybe five or six things I was doing in the community.

TS: Okay. So we were developing as an institution, growing in size. We've always been growing in size. There were only a few years in our history that we haven't grown. And, eventually, we got more faculty positions to go along with it. Before we get away from scholarship, I want you to talk about your Nellie Arnott work. But before that is there anything else that we haven't talked about, with regard to being department chair all these years that you want to mention?

AP: Well, I think that the job of being a chair grew much more complex as time passed because more and more responsibilities kept adding in. Admittedly, as chair, I was getting more release time as we went along. But it always was a large workload. There was no assistant chair at the time. I think David Parker maybe became the first assistant chair, after I retired, but [for years] there was not an assistant chair. So, as chair I was doing everything from coordinating book orders to trying to develop a schedule, which took a huge amount of time and getting involved with the registrar's office. I also handled all the student complaints, which, as you know, as the institution grew, they did too. Also, dealing with semester conversion was very time-consuming, because that involved so much advising. I had a heavy load of advisees. So, there were just many tasks that kept coming along, not to mention all the endless numbers of committees and task forces that we were involved in as part of the university. So, it always felt like an overwhelming job.

TS: Well, that may have been part of why you weren't doing all that community service.

AP: Well, exactly. There just wasn't much time left.

TS: Dr. Beggs retired, I believe, in 1994. The college went through some turbulent times after that. That must have made your job more difficult.

AP: I was just going to say, we had our year of total turmoil, which was really difficult, after Beggs left. We [the chairs] all thought Dr. Beggs was a bit too stern. But as time went on, he mellowed considerably or maybe we as chairs got to know how to approach him better. He always, I think, had faculty at the forefront. I mean, he was always concerned about what the faculty were doing. So, it was quite a change when we, for the first time, got a new dean, Lois Muir. I came across an interview with her, and one of the first things she said, when she was asked how it felt to be following a legend like George Beggs (I think legend was the word) was, "I'd rather just start over and clean house." So,

that tells you what we went through that year, and I'm paraphrasing this interview. But the gist of it was she wanted her own people. She didn't really want Beggs's people.

TS: Oh, really? That would certainly affect department chairs.

AP: This affected department chairs quite negatively, and some didn't survive.

TS: How did you survive?

AP: I think, truly, I believe it's because I had so much support from the department. This was never directly said, but in some other departments, there were a lot of divisions and conflict. I shouldn't overstate that. There were groups that had different approaches, but in history, everybody remained fairly cohesive for a long time. I mean, *quite* cohesive and not just fairly. I really think it was the fact that she, Lois Muir, knew that I had department support. Now she only was here a year. If she had been here a second year, I don't know what would have happened. But some very fine department chairs ended up stepping down during that year, which was very unfortunate. It was all just wrenching to deal with.

TS: Then, I guess, we went through several interim chairs, didn't we?

AP: Yes, and [Donald W.] Don Forrester was interim dean, and then became the full-time dean. And, of course, Don was very easy to work with.

TS: How did you get along with him?

AP: He was wonderful. He was very easy to work with; we did not have the turmoil that we had been through, in which I think department chairs were pitted against each other for resources. And in the year that Dr. Muir was here, we also had some huge budget crisis. I forget the reason now. So, we were all being told we had to cut back all these things, and it didn't matter whether we were teaching a huge number of people in Core classes or not. Anyway, when Don came in, things were much calmer in general.

TS: I'm thinking there was a little recession about 1992 or 1993. It seems like we lost enrollment one year for some reason [a 3 percent decline in enrollment from Fall Quarter 1993 to Fall Quarter 1994; 12,273 students in 1993 to 11,915 in 1994 according to the Kennesaw State College Fact Book, 1994-1995].

AP: Yes. We did briefly, and I don't remember why either. But at any rate, the solution to budget-cutting, especially during this year when Dr. Muir was here, seemed to be that we should eliminate part-time sections, but we had to cover all the students somehow, so they were just put into other classrooms. The only thing that saved us is that our classes were in the old Social Science building, and the fire codes wouldn't let us cram more than, I think, ninety people in a room. We didn't have big auditoriums that were available to our department. Anyway, it was difficult to try to figure out how to deal with all of that.

TS: Yes. So, tough year, and then Don Forrester for a while, and then was it Helen [Ridley] the next year?

AP: No, Linda [M.] Noble. And, of course, Linda was just wonderful. I was Linda's assistant dean.

TS: So Helen came after your retirement?

AP: Yes.

TS: Okay, I'm getting my years mixed up.

AP: Anyway, Linda was just an excellent person to work for when I was department chair and also when I was her assistant.

TS: Anything else you want to say about that?

AP: Well, only that the department continued to add a lot of new initiatives, including a lot of minor programs, the public history program, and the Center for Regional History and Culture, which, of course, you were very much involved in. We were all working on the carpet history project. For being historians, again, I think we were doing some surprisingly innovative stuff along the way. And we had a good group of people.

TS: Well, you obviously didn't have a lot of time to do a lot of original research while you were doing everything else in the world. Is it after you retired that you get going with Sarah on the female missionaries to Africa?

AP: We were working on that before I retired. We had a KSU Faculty Incentive Grant that allowed us to travel out to UC Berkeley to gather visual materials on different ethnic women. We went out there looking for materials on Chinese women. This was for a course we were doing on women's work in the 19th century. In fact, we did a big website for it which at one time was still available. I'll have to see if it's still up somewhere. [http://ksuweb.kennesaw.edu/~apullen/]

Anyway, while we were out there, we were looking for women's work materials, and the librarians got interested in this. One of them eventually brought us a big photo album and said, "This woman might be interesting because of the work she was doing, but we don't know much about her." It turned out to be Nellie Arnott, the mission teacher. At first, we thought that she was somebody at home that was keeping the scrapbook about a missionary. It took us a while to figure out who she was. The collection was rather small; it was several photo albums and her diaries while she was a mission teacher in Angola. But the donation had been given some years before, and the [Bancroft] library no longer had the information about who donated it.

TS: My goodness.

AP: So, we didn't know anything about her family. It took at least a year to piece together who everybody was. That was all kind of interesting. At first we wanted to publish her diaries, which we thought were quite interesting. But publishers thought just diary entries probably were boring. So, we went a different route and ended up publishing a book of her public writings because she wrote many letters to supporters at home and also published a lot in missionary journals. So, that's what ended up in the book. [*Nellie Arnott's Writings on Angola, 1905-1913: Missionary Narratives Linking Africa and America* (Parlor Press 2011)]

TS: So, the diary was a private diary that she didn't intend to publish where she says what she really thought?

AP: Yes, that's right.

TS: So, you were able to play off those two [the public writings and the private diary] in the book that you wrote?

AP: Yes, the main text was her public writings, but we did many footnotes and explanatory notes showing where she rather differed in what she was saying privately. She was very dedicated. It wasn't that she was being critical of her work necessarily. She was more frustrated that she felt she was doing so badly. And she was very depressed about…

TS: Not getting enough converts?

AP: Yes. Well, "convert" wasn't quite the best word because in this particular mission they wanted people to become Christian, of course, but they were really interested in education. She was a teacher, not preaching.

TS: And she doesn't feel that she's getting through?

AP: Right. She's not getting through to them even though the early missionaries in Angola—these were Congregational missionaries—had developed a writing system kind of like the Cherokee. It was a syllabary where there were a certain number of syllables to learn. But she felt like her students weren't picking it up quickly enough. They might pick up on what the syllables meant, but they were having trouble, in her mind, properly interpreting the Bible. Well, who wouldn't have? I mean, you can scarcely expect her students to be biblical scholars.

TS: Sure.

AP: But, nonetheless, she was frustrated by that aspect of it.

TS: So, she could speak the native language?

AP: It took her a long time to learn it. She decided she didn't have much facility with language. But at the time, their classes were taught in *Umbundu*, which was the native language. Angola at that time was under control of the Portuguese, and there were also many conflicts between the missionaries and the Portuguese government, because the Portuguese thought the missionaries, the Congregational ones anyway, were too allied with the *Umbundu* [people]. Eventually Nellie Arnott did learn the language and became much more proficient as a teacher; she became a leader of sorts in the mission. At that time missionaries got a home leave after seven years.

TS: Like a sabbatical?

AP: Like a sabbatical. She went back to California, where her family lived, and encountered her old love, Paul Darling. She had turned down a proposal from him when she went to Angola, but he was still around and waiting, so to speak. They got married, and she left the mission. She wrote in her diary many agonizing thoughts about, "How can I leave the mission? I just don't know whether I can do it." Whereas, when she went to Angola, she had written similar things in her diary about Paul: "How can I leave Paul? Did I make the right choice?" Arnott was an interesting character, though not that important in the overall history of missions. It's more that she left so much material about what it was like to be a mission teacher. She was a good example of a woman whose work wouldn't have been thought important in earlier times, but, in fact, you can learn many things about the actual working of the mission through her writings, as opposed to the males in the mission who were writing official reports.

TS: Now, you did a paper 2019, not that long ago now, "Managing Worship, Mothering Missions," in *International Bulletin of Mission Research*. [Ann W. Ellis Pullen and Sarah Ruffing Robbins, "Managing Worship, Mothering Missions: Children's Prayerful Performances Linking the United States and Angola in the Early Twentieth Century."43:2019]

AP: That's right.

TS: Tell me about that. You went to Scotland for a conference, and a paper came out of it?

AP: Yes, that's right. There's a group called the Yale-Edinburgh Mission Study Group. It involves Yale and the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. So, Sarah and I proposed to do a paper in Scotland. And it might be worth saying that, as we were introducing ourselves and telling our institutions, somebody way across the room said he was from Kennesaw State. I thought, "I don't know anybody here from Kennesaw State." It turned out to be [William Thomas] Tom Okie, whom I had never met before, from the history department. We really enjoyed talking to him.

TS: What on earth was he doing there?

AP: He was doing a paper about some kind of agricultural initiative that involved missions. I can't be more specific. It wasn't about peaches, however, which was the topic of his

book [*The Georgia Peach* (Cambridge University Press 2016)]. I kind of knew who he was because of his book, but I had never met him. At any rate, later our particular paper was published; it had to do with Nellie Arnott's writings for children and the fact that she was submitting her writings to various missionary journals for what was called children's work sections. But, sometimes, the [writings for children] were, interestingly, edited by the people who were behind the publication to change the meanings of things. So, it was interesting that not only had Nellie Arnott published these articles, but she had noted in her diary some of these things that were not exactly like she meant for them to be.

TS: Something that was fascinating to me, there's a review of your work by Liz Rohan [*Peitho Journal*, Vol, 16, No. 2, Spring-Summer 2014, 204-209]. I think she said that there was something like three million women that were doing this kind of work at one time before World War I, and that was the heyday for the women in mission work.

AP: Yes, that's probably about right if you think of not only U.S. women, but also British. I don't think there were that many millions in the U.S.

TS: It was an incredible number whatever it was.

AP: The women's mission movement was huge, and yet nobody considered women's work of really great importance because the women were usually the ones doing teaching and so on, and the men were the administrators of the missions.

TS: Did she ever comment on that? Was there anything that sounded like a budding feminist in anything she wrote?

AP: Oh, definitely, yes.

TS: I found the quote from Liz Rohan that Arnott wrote home from Angola at the peak of the American women's missionary movement, which by 1915 included the participation of over three million women.

AP: Yes.

TS: That's incredible.

AP: But I think Liz meant worldwide. I don't think she meant just in the U.S. But at any rate, Arnott did become involved with some controversy with the male heads of the mission over trying to establish a new outstation they called it, a new teaching area. She began in a very ladylike and gentle way to suggest that maybe she and another female teacher could be the only ones at this station. But was it appropriate to have two female missionaries at this outstation and no male missionary there with them? In the end, they prevailed, and they went to the outstation to teach.

TS: Did they ever suggest that maybe those people deserved independence from the Portuguese?

AP: Yes, yes. Independence came long after Nellie Arnott left. But it was certainly a major theme in what happened in the mission later. The missionaries got very much involved in the war against the Portuguese. And the Portuguese were right that the missionaries really were siding with the *Umbundu* people. Those were the Congregationalists. The Methodist missionaries were also opposing the Portuguese, but they were siding with another somewhat different ethnic group. After the Portuguese left these two groups became involved in the civil war in Angola, which was devastating. But, of course, Nellie Arnott had been long gone by then.

I will say, Sarah and I recently got involved in interviewing a lot of missionaries that are still living and their children, in particular, that grew up in Angola. Right now, there is only one actual missionary that's still living, and she was not only the youngest and last in the mission, but also the last American out of that part of Angola. That's been an ongoing project, but we haven't quite decided what to do with all these interviews yet.

TS: I was going to ask, what are you going to do with the interviews?

AP: Well, our goal was to put them on a website about the whole Angola Congregational mission, but we never have quite attracted funding for it. The faculty member that was to be the technological person to help do this was at TCU [Texas Christian University] with Sarah but left to go elsewhere. So, we haven't quite regrouped yet.

TS: I'm going to change course at this point and say that somewhere in the 1990s [William] George Pullen comes into the picture. Do, you want to talk about that?

AP: Well, we got married in 1994, and I moved from Marietta up to Rome at that point because he was on the city commission and couldn't leave Rome.

TS: And that adds an hour to your travel.

AP: Yes, I drove an hour each way back and forth to Kennesaw State, but that was all right.

TS: Well, talk about George. He was a historian too, as well as a politician, although politician may not be the right word for him.

AP: He was on the Rome City Commission. He was not a very good politician sometimes [laughs].

TS: He was a very interesting person in lots of ways.

AP: Yes, he was a charter faculty member at Floyd Junior College, as it was then [chartered in 1968, first classes in 1970]; it is now Georgia Highlands, of course. He was also an historian. He had a number of interests outside of teaching. He and his son [Clay] opened a bicycle shop in the mid 1980s [1982], and that shop continues to exist as Pullen's Ordinary Bicycles. It's still in Rome [105 Broad Street]. And so, he was

interested in the bike shop. He got elected to the Rome City Commission in 1980 and served on the commission for twenty-three years. So, he was involved in a number of different…

TS: And I believe he was chairman of the commission from 1992-1998. So, he was chairman of the commission when you got married.

AP: That's right.

TS: As well as teaching at Floyd and running a bicycle shop?

AP: Yes.

TS: So, he didn't have a whole lot of free time either?

AP: No, no, he was very busy.

TS: I was interested that he was a Methodist minister at one time.

AP: Yes, he had a very interesting career. He went to LaGrange College, and after he left LaGrange, went to Divinity School at Duke [University] with the intent of becoming a Methodist minister [Bachelor of Divinity degree 1963]. And he actually served as a Methodist minister for five years before he decided that maybe the pastoral ministry was not what he really wanted to be doing. During the time he was a minister, he was in the South Georgia Conference. He went to Florida State and got a master's in history, and then at some point decided to make the break, so to speak, and left the ministry and went to the University of Georgia to get his PhD. He finished his PhD in 1971. He had not finished his PhD when he first went to Floyd.

TS: Okay, and he was chair of the Social Sciences Division for twenty-odd years [1971-1993].

AP: That's right.

TS: You had that in common too.

AP: Yes, he was a division chair, and I was a department chair, so we could talk about administrative issues [laughs].

TS: And then about the time that you all got married, he was also running a TV station for Floyd?

AP: Yes, he still continued to teach history some, but he became head of the Division of Extended Learning [in 1994]. The division ran a TV station in which they broadcast classes out to the community. He actually taught on TV a lot. We've got many tapes. We need to get them converted to DVDs so the grandchildren can have them.

TS: Or digitize them.

AP: Digitize them, thank you. Let me update my technology. At any rate, we've got boxes and boxes of them. He taught World Civ 1 and 2 and, I think maybe U.S. History 1 and 2, all on television. I don't know whether the college has retained the tapes or not; probably not. But we have at least most of them. I hate to see them get ruined; they are old-fashioned videotapes. This took a complete reorientation for him because it's really different to teach on TV from teaching in a class. He prided himself on having interactive classes where he wouldn't just stand up and talk. But on TV, you've got to make it interesting. So, he had to rethink a lot of things and rewrite a lot of lectures, and that took a lot of his time.

TS: Yes, he was busy. Are there any accomplishments as member of the commission, especially those years that he was the chair of the commission? I know there are some international things that happened in those years.

AP: Yes. There were a lot of city things he would list, which I probably can't adequately recall. But one of the things he was particularly proud of was the exchange program with a city in Japan. It's now Kumamoto City, but at the time the exchange began, it was with a small town called Ueki that got absorbed into Kumamoto City. It was a student exchange for middle school students because there are so many exchanges for high school students but not many for middle grades. So, that began when he was chair, and it's still going on. In fact, we're planning for the 30th anniversary of the exchange. It's had its ups and downs. It was suspended after 9/11 and then suspended again during COVID, but we're about to get it going again.

TS: Good. And weren't there some redevelopment or preservation projects or whatever in downtown Rome?

AP: Yes. That was another project. He and his son had bought one building that the bicycle shop was in, but then got the chance to buy an adjacent building and latched onto the idea of developing it into apartments. So, all of us worked on building out apartments in this historic building. I learned to lay floor tile, for example. That was my role. And they replaced floors and did all kinds of things and, literally, did a lot of the work of building these apartments themselves in their, quote, spare time. I have recently moved; I lived there myself until about a year and a half ago in one of the apartments, which interestingly was never quite finished itself. We kind of ran out of steam. So, I never had cabinet doors in the kitchen and railings on the stairs and some things that would have been ideal. But, anyway, that led to being involved in historic preservation in general. So, I was on the Rome Historic Preservation Commission for a good while.

TS: I've written down 2005 to 2011.

AP: Yes, and then my terms ended. You can only serve a certain number of terms, and I went on the Downtown Development Authority after that. I served two terms on that as well [2012-2017].

TS: And even before that, you were Volunteer of the Year for the Development Authority, weren't you?

AP: Well, yes. I think that was while I was still on the Historic Preservation Commission maybe.

TS: Oh, that's what it was for?

AP: Yes, it was an award given every year to somebody who does a whole lot of downtown volunteer work that is not part of anything formal. At that time, I was also on the Rome Area Council for the Arts and had been the co-president; we decided to develop a big downtown art walk in conjunction with the downtown development people. So, that was a big initiative. And George and I (and others) developed something called the Rome-Floyd International Festival. The festival also took place downtown. The Festival was intended to take the place of the exchange after 9/11 when we thought the exchange might never be resurrected, so to speak, because people were so afraid of flying and their children flying, as you remember. So, the international festival was meant to showcase all the diverse groups in Rome and to try to make the city a little more cohesive because there was a lot of fear after 9/11 about different groups within the town.

TS: Oh, really? In Rome itself, there was fear?

AP: Well, yes, eventually. Not so much as in some other places at all, but certainly some wariness, or more a lack of knowledge about groups within the community. One of the most active groups in the international festival was a Kurdish group that had lived in Kurdish Iraq and had escaped. They were quite active to begin with. We had a Muslim group that was very involved in the beginning, somewhat before 9/11, but after 9/11 they became wary of participating. But anyway, we were doing a lot of things downtown.

TS: Are you still on the Rome Area Heritage Foundation?

AP: That's right. That is a bad name because it isn't connected with the national group called the Heritage Foundation at all. This is a local preservation group. And, yes, George and I were co-presidents for a time, but I'm still active in it.

TS: Did George run on a party label or was it nonpartisan for those races for the commission?

AP: It was nonpartisan when he was on the commission. Sorry to say, recently, though the commission supposedly remains nonpartisan, in the last election it wasn't exactly. But for years it was truly nonpartisan. I think people did not know what party people were in.

TS: I love it that way. I think the cities around here [Cobb County] are nonpartisan, but the county is different. Like in Acworth, I go up there all the time, and nobody knows whether the elected officials are Democrats or Republicans. They work together very well it seems.

AP: Well, that's the ideal way. But after George left the commission, he ran for the State Senate in 2004 and ran as a Democrat. Then, lots of people said, "Oh, I didn't know he was a Democrat." He didn't win.

TS: Yes, I saw where he got some kind of award from the Democrats.

AP: Yes, he was the Floyd County Democrat of the Year [in 2013]. He was until he died very active in the Democratic Party. But 2004 was a particularly nasty election when he was running for the State Senate because of Roy Barnes and the flag and all that was going on at that time.

TS: It was 2002 when Roy got beat [for reelection as governor].

AP: No, well, George ran in 2004, but it was still the aftermath of all that.

TS: I guess the Republicans were coming up with a new flag about that time to replace the Roy Barnes flag, which replaced the one with the Confederate battle emblem.

AP: Yes, but there was more controversy in politics than had been around for a long time.

TS: Are you still on the Downtown Development Authority Design Committee?

AP: Yes.

TS: What exactly do you do?

AP: It's a subcommittee of the DDA, and I guess our most important function is to give facade grants for improvements in historic buildings in the downtown.

TS: Do you regulate what they can do on their buildings? Facade grants, I guess, would come with regulations. But in general, if they want to change the appearance of their buildings, do they have to go before the Design Committee?

AP: Well, it's interesting. What happens is somebody who wants to make a change has to go to the Rome Historic Preservation Commission first and get permission to make the structural changes they want to make. Then, they can apply to the DDA committee for a grant to help with the expenses. But one interesting point is the Historic Preservation Commission cannot regulate color, and this is an ongoing issue: "Can you paint your building Pepto-Bismol pink?" Right now, it's permitted under preservation guidelines because color is not a structural change. You can easily change color. But if you accept a monetary grant from the Design Committee, we can specify that you must use an

historic color palette. So, at any rate we give out grants. We do a lot of things that have to do with downtown structure and design. We've been involved in numerous planning ideas for downtown, some of which have worked out and some not so much because they cost too much money.

TS: You may remember that I was the historian for the Downtown Marietta Development Authority for a number of years [in the 1980s and 1990s], and we went through all that too. I got to where I hated fights over paint colors and those kinds of things.

AP: Paint colors are very controversial. Yes, I'm still doing a lot of these things and recently got involved with a historic site called the Fairview School, which is an interesting school. It's not only an historic African American school, built a hundred years ago; it was a Rosenwald school, which the Rosenwald Fund helped build with a match from the community. Curiously, the Commission on Interracial Cooperation was involved in helping communities to get money for these Rosenwald Schools. So, it all circles back a bit. The first grade school building has been restored at the Fairview campus. The actual Rosenwald building, I think, burned down or was torn down. But there's a very ambitious plan to make an outdoor design of it, so that you can see the shape of the building and have shutters and things where they would have been; it will become an outdoor classroom for students. So, that's the next money-raising plan. And there's a garden with historic plants that's under development and all kinds of things.

TS: I guess after his experience as a Methodist minister, George decided to become an Episcopalian along the way? By the way, he was involved with civil rights down there, wasn't he?

AP: Yes.

TS: Did that have anything to do with his leaving the ministry?

AP: It did. He got involved with some of the civil rights groups in south Georgia, and some of the people in the local communities were not very thrilled with that.

TS: No kidding; I bet.

AP: So, I think he decided that maybe that wasn't the place for him.

TS: So he became an Episcopalian?

AP: Well, once he came to Rome, but I don't think that was a given. I think it was just that he knew people at Saint Peter's and started attending there.

TS: I'm intrigued you're the breakfast team captain. What's that?

AP: Yes, well, the teams cook breakfast at the church every Sunday.

TS: So, you cook breakfast?

AP: I cook breakfast. Our team cooks breakfast for forty to sixty people.

TS: Another talent!

AP: But each team cooks only once every six weeks. One of Georgia's retirement projects was to open a restaurant.

TS: I didn't know that. What was the name of it?

AP: It was called The Levee, like a river Levee. It wasn't open but about a year and a half, maybe a little more.

TS: Is the Partridge still there in Rome?

AP: No, the Partridge is closed. It's gone.

TS: [My wife] Kathy still has a Partridge T-shirt.

AP: Yes, the owner died, and the family just wasn't able to keep it up.

TS: What happened to the Levee?

AP: It was, I think, a bigger space and maybe more ambitious than it needed to be is my take on it. Eventually, George realized he would lose less money by closing it than by keeping it open [laughs]. So, that's what happened.

TS: Well, I'm about at the end of my list of questions. Is there anything that you would like to have in this interview that we haven't talked about?

AP: Well, I don't think so. You have been extremely thorough. I can't believe we have talked as long as we have. Thank you all, students, for hanging around and video folks. At any rate, I appreciate the chance to do the interview and wish I could recall some dates and facts a little more specifically than I've been able to.

INDEX

Adebayo, A. G., 8, 39, 40, 42
Agnes Scott College, 28
Alexander, Will W., 28-30
American Historical Association, 34
American Political Science Association, 34
American University in Cairo, Egypt, 44
Ames, Jessie Daniel, 29
Angola, 10, 20, 49-53
Armstrong State College, Armstrong Campus of Georgia Southern University, 9, 45-46
Arnott, Nellie, 10, 20, 47, 49-53
Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, 28-29
Atlanta History Journal, 46
Atlanta University, 27, 29

Barnes, Roy E. (Governor), 57
Barrett Lakes Parkway, Kennesaw, Georgia, 31
Beggs, George H., 6-8, 31-32, 35-38, 40, 42, 47-48
Bicentennial of the Constitution, 3, 34
Bohn, Carl, 4
Boney, F. Nash, 23
Brown, Charlotte Hawkins, 29
Buddie, Amy M., 15
Bush, George H. W. (President), 44

Carter, Dan T., 29
Chastain, Cassie W., 31-32
Clayton State University, 2-4, 30, 42
Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 3, 27-30, 34, 58
Creasman, Selena Davis, 38, 39
Crimmins, Timothy J., 27

Darling, Paul, 51
Davis, Gerald H. (Gerry), 26, 46
Davis, Leroy Jr., 7, 8, 39, 40
DeKalb College, 2-3, 30
Duke University Divinity School, 54

East Point, Georgia
    Russell High School, 26
    Headland High School, 26
    Tri-Cities High School, 26
Elango, Lovett Z., 8, 38, 39, 40, 42
Elkins, Mary Wells, 22-23

Ellis, James, 26
Emory University, 8, 27, 29, 40
Evans, Ellen Lovell, 27

First Gulf War, 43-44
Fisk University, 29
Florida State University, 54
Floyd Junior College (Georgia Highlands College), 53-55
Forrester, Donald W. (Don), 48-49

Gatewood, Willard B. Jr., 24
Georgia Association of Historians, 5, 20, 37, 46
Georgia Historical Society, 46
Georgia Southern University, 13
Georgia State University, 2, 3, 4, 19, 20, 25-27, 30, 42
Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical System (GSAMS), 9, 45-46
Gibson, Wayne R., 38
Glaspie, April C. (Ambassador), 44
Grady Hospital, Atlanta, 28
    Hughes Spalding Pavilion, 28

Hamdoon, Nizzar, 44
Hapeville, Georgia, 1, 22
    North Avenue School, 23
    Josephine Wells School, 23
    Hapeville High School, 26
Harrold, Frances, 27
Henke, Mary Beth Elkins, 23
Hepler, G. Ruth, 36
Hoff-Wilson, Joan, 34
Hope, John, 29
Huck, Eugene R., 8, 11, 12, 31-32, 35, 41-43
Hunt, Hugh, 10, 39
Hussein, Saddam, 44

Indiana University, 34

Jarrell, Willoughby G., 36, 42
Johnson, Charles S., 29

Karcher, Barbara C., 38
Keene, Thomas H., 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, 19, 41-42
Kennesaw State University
    Development of women’s studies program, 3, 10, 15-16, 33-34
    Junior college years and transition to senior college, 4-5, 8, 13, 18-19, 22-23, 30-33

Computerization of the campus and teaching with technology, 6, 38-39, 45-46
Internationalization of the curriculum, 8-13, 19-21, 41-45
Changes in Siegel era, 10, 13, 19, 36, 40
Intellectual environment and growing public recognition, 13-14
Team teaching, 16, 45-46
West Parking Deck, 19
Kent State University, 5
Know-Nothing (American) Party in Georgia, 24-25
Kuhn, Clifford M. (Cliff), 27

LaGrange College, 54
Landrum, Mildred W., 36
LeBaron, Alan V., 11, 43

Mitchell, Judith A. (Judy), 36
Morehouse College, 29
Moton, Robert R., 29
Muir, Lois, 47-48

National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations (NCUSAR), 44
Newnan, Georgia, 1, 22
Noble, Linda M., 15, 49

Okie, William Thomas (Tom), 51-52

Papageorge, Linda, 8, 9, 15, 32, 38, 39, 42
Parker, David B., 47
Parks, Joseph H. 2, 23, 24
Perkins, Julia L., 36
Pullen, Ann W. Ellis
Wells family background, 1, 22-23, 44
Undergraduate math major at UGA, 1, 23
MA in history from UGA, 1-2, 23-25
Thesis on "The Know-Nothing Party in Georgia," 24-25
Service as high school teacher, 1, 2, 9, 24-26
PhD in history from Georgia State, 1, 2, 3, 25-30, 42, 47
Dissertation on the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 3, 27-30
Part-time college teaching, 2-3, 30, 42
Initial interest in women's history and head of women's studies, 3, 10, 27-29, 33-34
Courses taught, 3, 9-10, 33-35, 45-46
Job interview and employment at Kennesaw College, 4, 30-33
Impressions of Kennesaw and its non-traditional students, 4-5, 13-14, 18, 20, 33-35
Involvement in the Georgia Association of Historians, 5, 37, 46
Selection as chair of the history department, 6-7, 34-37
Service as department chair
History department's role in internationalizing the curriculum, 8-9, 11-13, 41-44

Growing complexity of job as department chair, 8, 10, 47-49
Trip to Iraq on eve of the First Gulf War, 9, 43-45
Technology grants and distance learning, 9-10, 45-46
Team teaching and teaching with primary sources, 9-10, 16, 20, 43, 45-46
Development of women's studies program, 9-10, 15-16, 33-34
Social science education program, 9-10
Development of clearer rules for promotion and tenure, 10, 40-41
Inclusion of philosophy faculty in the history department, 10
History department's role in teaching with primary sources, 17-18, 43
Reputation of history department, 20
Public history program, 20-21
Computerization of the history department, 38-39
History department's role in revising the Core, 43
New programs, initiatives, and centers, 49
Nellie Arnott scholarship, 10, 47, 49-53
Start of research on Nellie Arnott, 10, 47, 49-50
Publication of *Nellie Arnott's Writings on Angola*, 50-51
Paper on "Managing Worship, Mothering Missions," 51-53
Interviews of missionaries and their children, 53
Service as assistant dean and retirement, 14-15, 49
Promotion and tenure, 40-41
Professional and community service, 46-47
Marriage to George Pullen, 53
Work with George on renovating a historic building in Rome, 55
Community service in Rome, Georgia
Rome Historic Preservation Commission, 55-57
Downtown Development Authority and DDA Design Committee, 56-58
Volunteer of the Year for the DDA, 56
Co-president of Rome Area Council for the Arts, 56
Involvement with Rome-Floyd International Festival, 56
Co-president of Rome Area Heritage Foundation, 56
Involvement with the Fairview School, 58
Breakfast team captain at St. Peter's, 58-59
Pullen, Clay, 53
Pullen, William George
Career as historian and division chair, 53-55
Service on Rome City Commission, 53-55
Business owner, 53-54, 59
Former Methodist clergyman, 54, 58
Head of Division of Extended Learning at Floyd, 54-55
Preservation projects, 55-56
Involvement with Rome-Floyd International Festival, 56
Candidate for State Senate, 57
Floyd County Democrat of the Year, 57
Involvement in civil rights activities in south Georgia, 58

Raper, Arthur F., 28, 30
Reed, Merl E., 27, 30
Reeve, Kay A., 20
Ridley, Helen S., 9, 34, 45, 49
Roach, S. Frederick Jr., 4-8, 22, 31, 33, 35-37, 46
Robbins, Sarah R., 9-10, 16, 20, 45-46, 49-53
Robinson, Dorothy A. S. (Judge), 42
Rodgers, Fay H., 36
Rohan, Liz, 52
Rome, Georgia
    Rome City Commission, 53-56
    Pullen's Ordinary Bicycles, 53
    Rome Area Council for the Arts, 56
    Rome-Floyd International Festival, 56
    Rome Area Heritage Foundation, 56
    Fairview School, 58
    St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 58
    The Levee restaurant, 59
    The Partridge restaurant, 59
Romer, Kinsley Gird Jr., 8, 12, 42
Roosevelt High School, Fulton County, Georgia, 22
Rosenwald fund, 58

Scott, Thomas A., 6, 7, 8, 14, 16, 18, 21
Shealy, Howard Jr., 8, 11, 15, 32, 39, 43, 46
Siegel, Betty L., 10, 13, 19, 35-36, 40
Somers, Dale, 27
Southern Polytechnic State University, 31
Sturgis, Horace W., 4, 10, 18, 32, 35
Swain, Mary Hall, 22

Tate, J. B., 8, 23, 31
Teaching History: A Journal of Methods, 46
Texas Christian University, 53
Turner, Carol L. (Cary), 33
Tuskegee University, 29

Umbundu people and language, 51, 53
United States Farm Security Administration, 30
University of California, Berkeley, Bancroft Library, 49
University of Edinburgh, 51
University of Georgia, 1-2, 4, 18, 20, 22-25, 32, 42, 54
University of West Georgia, 46
University System of Georgia, 2, 9, 15, 16, 19, 30, 36, 42, 43, 45

Wells, Josephine, 23

White, Nancy, 46
Whitlock, R. Ugena, 15
Willey, Diane, 31

Yale-Edinburgh Mission Study Group, 51
Yale University, 51
Youngblood, Betty J., 36
Yow, Dede, 16, 45
Yu Yixun, Professor, 42

Zebich-Knos, Michelle, 44
Zinsmeister, Dorothy D. 36
Ziros, Apostolos D. (Toli), 8, 32
Zoghby, Mary D., 15, 36