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Interview with Katie McGready

Katie McGready

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TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER
WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

Mary Catherine Bussey Boice (Katie) McGready

First medical librarian in the Texas Medical Center

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Houston, Texas

Mary Catherine Bussey Boice “Katie” McGready became the first medical librarian in the Texas Medical Center when Dr. Ernst W. Bertner asked to her to begin the medical library at what was then the fledgling MD Anderson Cancer Center. She was among the first employees at the Cancer Center, then located at “The Oaks,” the estate of the late Colonel James A. Baker at 2310 Baldwin Street in Houston.

Born in rural Timpson, Texas, she was the only daughter with four brothers – two older and one younger. Her journey from running the soda fountain in her father’s drugstore to several jobs in the nascent Texas Medical Center reflects not only the early days there but also the lives of young women in Texas in the early 20th century.

She married twice – first to Dr. Edward Henry “Ned” Boice, whom she met when she was learning medical librarian duties at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. They had five children – Betsy McPhaden of Seattle, Bill Boice of Atlanta, Peggy Boice of Houston, Cathy Bacon of Houston and Jim Boice of Austin. Later, as a widow, she married Frances Cornelius “Mac” McGready, which whom she lived many happy years before his death in 2009.

Interviewed by Natalie Garza, PhD, June 26, 2015 at Mrs. McGready’s home, with the assistance of Peggy Boice, Mrs. McGready’s daughter.

Transcribed by Ruth SoRelle, who served as editor.

Natalie Garcia (NG): So today is Friday June 26, 2015. And this is Natalie Garza. I am interviewing Katie McCready. So, you can begin by telling me your full name.

KM: Mary Bussey McGrady.

NG: And. What name were you born with? What name did they give you when you were born?

KM: Mary Catherine Bussey.

NG: OK. Where were you born?

KM: In Timpson, Texas Shelby County in East Texas.

NG: And when were you born?

KM: February 7th, 1921.

NG: OK. Can you tell me about your upbringing?

KM: I thought it was a wonderful time. It was a small town. And that area is in the news a great deal right now. Central Texas. And that was the county seat of our county. But it was a small town of about 1,500. My father was a pharmacist and had a drug store. All of his family -- his father had been a doctor and his uncles were doctors. (ED note: correction from interviewee. Three of my brothers were doctors.) But my daddy stayed in pharmacology. When my mother came to Timpson to teach high school, she came from Temple Texas, where her father was a pharmacist. And the other brother stayed in Army and retired as a full colonel. And he was with Patton's Third (Army) when it went into Berlin.

NG: OK. Can you tell me your parents' names?

KM: Yes. Maude Willis Bussey. My father was Frank Rather Bussey.

NG: And so you had four brothers. Is that correct? Yes. Any sisters?

KM: No.

NG: OK. So how was that being the only girl in the family.

KM: Well it was interesting because my mother really didn't know what to do with me.

NG: Were you the youngest?

KM: No. I was the next to youngest. But I never had any household duties except on Saturday. I was supposed to dust the piano. But all the rest they just treated me like they had the boys. Mother didn't know the difference. So, at age of 12, I started working on this in the summers in the drugstore with Daddy. And I would be at the soda fountain, and this is during the heat of the summer and tomatoes had first come in as the first cash crop that Texas ever had. It had always depended upon cotton. So, when the tomatoes came, in because Timpson had a railroad right there and a place for your cars to leave – refrigerated cars. It was a wonderful thing and a real boost for this city. And that's about the time that I went to work in the drugstore with Daddy.

M: I also love your story about when the black children would come to the back door.

KM: My father and mother were very, very advanced as far as segregation. He was on the school board. Mother and Daddy were at every school function at the black church school. He was on the board, and he was just loved and respected very much. And Daddy taught that to us. And at that time, blacks only came in the back door and stood at the back entrance inside the drugstore. Daddy told me always watch the back door and served them in their turn. And I would be serving people at the fountain and I'd would say to someone that they were next, and the customers would say, "I was here first." "No," she would say. "They were there first". When I said that, Daddy said, and they didn't say anything else. From childhood, I was taught that everyone is equal.

NG: Also, I was thinking about, you know, you were fairly young still when the (Great) Depression hit in 1929. Do you remember any of those things?

KM: Absolutely. Sure. Mother did have help. She had to. And the help was paid, I think, it was a dollar a half a day and it could have been two and a half. I'm not quite sure about that. But Mother would give them a note, and they would take it to the drugstore and he (Ed.note: her father) would pay it. And he said sometimes he wondered if he had it. But he knew that Mother had to have some help. And they managed that.

NG: I was talking about the Depression.

KM: Well. I was in school in high school. Well, the Depression by the time I finished high

school, it was improving by then because I did get to go to Baylor for my freshman year. But Daddy really couldn't afford the tuition. So, the chairman of the trustees knew I had a style of writing, and I had had very poor handwriting. I had had a high school who made me print the alphabet on every piece of paper I turned in. So, I developed a printing-type style (like calligraphy). So, the President of the University called the drugstore and asked, "Is Mary Catherine was working? Could you spare her and let and let her come down here and fill out the diplomas? All of us have horrible handwriting. And so, I did. And there was one left over, and I said, "What do you want me to do with that? And they said, "Oh, award it to yourself." And I said good. And I filled it in to Mary Catherine Bussey for being the best all-around girl. (In parentheses it said I was further around than any other girl.) And I got a scholarship to Baylor that first year.

NG: That's wonderful. Good self-promotion. A good way to go to college in the Depression. Now was it unusual for mothers to be working at time? You said, your mother was a teacher.

KM: Oh my, that was before she married. No, she did not work afterward. And none of my friends' mothers worked.

NG: And were you expected to go to college growing up? Did they...did your parents..

KM: All my brothers had been at The University of Texas. I had three older and one younger. And they all went. And then, Frank the oldest one, first got his diploma and then he got a degree in pharmacology. And that way he worked his way through Medical School. And I was living in Galveston at that time when I was in the medical library training.

NG: You entered Baylor in 1938. Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like being a student at Baylor?

KM: What I was telling you was Daddy had three brothers (Ed. Note: sons) at the University and he just couldn't afford...They were working their way through school but (he said) I was still buying white shirts. And at that time, they all wore white shirts every day. So, he still helped them all he could.

NG: Had they all gone to UT (at Austin)?

KM: No, Frank went to Baylor too.... just one year.

NG: Since you said that, I don't have the names of all your brothers.

KM: Frank was the oldest brother, and William would be the second (Bill, he was my champion) and Dan became a doctor and my youngest brother Joe, who also became a doctor. Frank was a doctor too.

NG: What do you mean Bill was your champion?

KM: He was the one who taught me to drive when I was 14-years-old. He was teaching school at that time, and I'd help him grade papers. He was just my champion.

NG: And I don't know if that was why you were at Baylor. During the summer, you went to visit an aunt in Temple?

KM: It was next year, when I went to the state school, and that was in Arlington. Isn't there a state college in Arlington? (Ed. note: It was North Texas State Teacher's College in Denton, where she studied library science.)

I was visiting an aunt, and her daughter worked in a hospital in a record room. She was a librarian. And I thought that sounds good. I don't want to be a doctor and I don't want to be a nurse, but I would like to be in the medical profession. So that's how I wanted to learn terminology.

That's what got me to Galveston. And then when my brother was in school there, he told Miss (Elizabeth) Runge (then director of the UTMB library) that I wanted to be a librarian. And she was the librarian at that time. She had an assistant...just two people in the library at the University of Texas. Campus in Galveston. But that's where I met Peggy's father. And that you don't want to hear about social life. That's the best part.

NG: I do want to hear about the social life.

KM: Well there were six fraternities at the university and I assume there still are. On every Saturday night, there was a formal dance and you got a flower to wear and you had a dance card, and people signed and then they would find you for that dance. Well, I worked in the library so someone real cute like David Dawson (would come in), and I would say, "Sign right here." Oh, he said, "OK."

NG: For him to sign your dance card?

KM: So finally, he came dragging this friend of his in. And he said. David wants to sign your card, don't you, David? But that's how I'd fill on my dance card. When I got it the way I wanted, I'd put it back in the drawer.

PB: So then tell them about that day at the beach when you met Bobie. Bobie was our Dad. (Dr. Edward Henry "Ned" Boice.)

KM: Oh. I was with another boy named ...Joe Donaldson. So, we went to the beach... Everybody did it on Saturday. I'm sitting there in the sun, baking the skin. And Donaldson put zinc oxide on his nose. Well, he was a big boy anyway and had a big nose. And it looked like a clown. But I wasn't real proud of him, but Beau interfered. He did not speak to us, but he put his towel down next to us and if we went swimming, he went swimming. Never spoke. He came back and if we sat down, he sat down. He made eye contact and never spoke to me. So that night, we went to the formal. Every Saturday night, we had a formal and you had corsages and dance cards. And he didn't sign my dance card, but he danced beside us. Every dance I danced, (he danced) by himself. He wasn't speaking to us, but he was doing all of the movements and finally, Joe Donaldson said, "Take her, take her. I don't have more to say. I'm fed up with you. If you want her that much, you take her." Joe Donaldson ended up living in Pampa, Texas, and I just missed seeing him there. He died just before I went.

NG: So when you were at UT in Galveston, you were not a student there.

KM: No, I was just ...my brother got me this summer job with Miss Runge in the library. And I loved it. And she only had one assistant and that was a cousin of hers. And so, she said, "Well, I'll see if I can get a salary for it." Well she got a salary of \$50. And Daddy said, "That's fine, and we can do with that." So, I had lived in a boarding house. I finally hooked

up with three other girls and we got an apartment, but none of us knew how to cook. The apartment was above a grocery store. We would get up in the morning and go downstairs to the grocery store that had a soda fountain to get our cereal and coffee. We had no idea how to make either.

PB: That was \$50 a month?

KM: Yes. That breakfast was probably 30 cents or 50. And tipping ...we didn't know there was such a thing as tipping. In fact, there's a funny story too. I was in the drugstore working for a day. We had curbside service. And I had taken the tray out, and it was hot in the summer. And they put the money on the tray. And I said, "Oh, you left this" and they said, "That was for you. I went back in the store and I said, Daddy, I don't want to take that card (from the customers in the car, and I don't want that money. And you have to go get that card. I just say I'm not going near it." He said, "I'll go and do it. And he did.

PB: Because you were insulted?

KM: No, I was not insulted...furious. He never criticized me for it. He never said a word. He said, "That's OK, sister. They didn't know." Oh, my Daddy was a fine, fine man.

NG: You said from UT Galveston was when you got information about MD Anderson?
So how did you get from UT in Galveston to M.D. Anderson?

KM: Dr. (Ernst William) Bertner was there on the board and he came in talking to Miss Runge. And he said there was going to be a new building here. It's M.D. Anderson Cancer Hospital. And I said to Miss Runge, will they need a librarian? And she said, "Yes, they will." I said maybe. And she said that you're getting married in August. I said, "Yeah but I can work for six months. And so, she told Dr. Bertner and he said, "That's fine. Let her start it." To get that building started, I knew all the major companies we bought all the books from and the journals were subscriptions and they handled the subscriptions. You didn't go order *Cancer* or even *JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association*, but you went through a broker who handled all for me at that time.

NG: So, can you tell me more about, you know, what it was like to be in the medical center at that time. I know that physically, it was not anywhere compared to where it became...

KM: (Talking about her time as library in the Texas Medical Center library.) “So. It was a nice building. And on the floor above it (the library). We were on the first floor, but it was a very long because our stacks, some of them went up. But at the top of this building was the first. Doctors’ Social Club. And that was the Harris County Medical Society Doctors Club. And the elevator to the Doctors Club was right by the back door of the library. And so I would go on the elevator and I said, What do you all have leftover today. And they would tell me, “Mary Catherine, we have so and so.” “I would say, let’s take some down. So, I would get treats when I come back down. Ms. Runge was such a friend. I named my first child for her. She had never married. I said I loved her.

PB: Did she go to the medical center with you?

KM: No, no, no. She was still in Galveston. So, she wasn't there at that time.” Her family was a Galveston family and their family home is still standing on Market Street. And I was there a couple of years ago and a man from Dallas bought it and restored it to its former beauty. They were of German descent and it was a very sparse equipped house, but it had an elevator to get food up and as they got older and couldn’t climb, the elevator, they called it a lift.”

PB: She asked you what it was like in the Texas Medical Center in the early days, but wasn’t MD Anderson in a house? Could you tell her about that?

KM; It is at 2310 Baldwin and that’s where I started. At that time, the man who was donating it was (Colonel Baker).

That was fun. There was a business manager, and he had a secretary. And there was one nurse. Dr. Coogle was the research doctor and me. (There was an interim director, Dr. Bertner, and some clinical staff.) We didn’t have any facilities. The people who left the house to the organization left their gardener and houseman so that everything was cleaned in the house every day and the gardener kept the grounds beautifully. During the War, they got jobs waitering, but they still kept jobs at MD Anderson because they had to protect that property because it had been in their family for care for so long.

PB: So, Mom, were you working there or at the Texas Medical Center when you took a car

or a bus and got the journals?

KM: So, to start the first library at MD Anderson, we had only one car at MD Anderson. It was an old Woody, a station wagon with wood sides. That was Mr. Musgrove's car and he used it. Occasionally, I could use it to go to Galveston to get journals to fill out our library. Other times, when it was busy, I'd go on a bus. They'd load me up in Galveston with all the journals with what we had to send to the binder in Houston.

PB: And the bus driver would help you get them off.

KM: And he would see me coming and he would say, "Oh no. Not you again." He hated to see me coming but that was the way we got the first library.

PB: And was there something about the Cotton Exchange Building and a young man from Timpson and he would let you double park or something?

KM: No. The parking is when I would go downtown to get Dr. Bertner's signature on stuff. He was in the First National Bank in downtown Houston. The man who was traffic director was from my hometown, and at that time, there was a break in the middle of the street, and I would wave to him and I'd say, "I've got to go up to Dr. Bertner's." He would say, "OK, Mary Catherine. I'll watch it for you. I could park in the no parking zone and he took care of it. That was the value of being from a little town.

Daughter: Tell her the story about your getting your driver's license.

KM: Oh. They said that if you're going to drive this car, you're going to have to have your license. I said I've been driving since I was 14. They say no, I know. But you now need a license. So, I went to the license place (someone took me over there) and I got in the car with a man and I did fine until it came to parking. (parallel parking) And so there were these stubs. So, I knocked down the one in the back and I pulled forward and I knocked down the one in the front. He said, "Go around the block. Let's try that again." I did the same thing a second time. He said, "OK. One more time.

I said, "Where I came from, you just needed one post to hitch to. If I knocked it down, I don't need it." And he said, "You pass."

NG: So and MD Anderson. The building that you were in on Baldwin street. Was everything there at the time? The library.

KM: It was just this beautiful home. And I made the library out of the dining room, which was a paneled room and a beautiful room. And as I said, there were just four or five employees. And. they left the houseboy or a gardener.

NG: So, there was it was just the library out. There was no nothing medical related or anything. There weren't patients.

KM: No no no no.

NG: It was just a research venue? And at that time, it was already affiliated with UT?

KM: Yes. Then Dr. Coogle was the doctor and he was a research doctor. And he was doing something with fertile eggs. And he had to get eggs from way out on Harrisburg Boulevard.

And I'd say I'll go. And I had made lots of trips to get the fertile eggs just to get a ride.

NG: So, when did you get married?

PB: Do you want to tell the story that you turned down the job in order... because you were about to get married. The phone call where Jesse Jones called Dr. Bertner and called you in to hear? You got it? So, one day, Dr. Bertner got a phone call from Jesse Jones (Ed.: known as Mr. Houston)

So, one day, Dr. Bertner got a phone call from Jesse Jones and called you in so that he could have Jesse Jones repeat what he just said.

KM: Oh, so Jesse Jones told Dr. Bertner, "They'll give you a million dollars for the new building." That was lots of money. So, I was in Dr. Bertner's office getting some signatures, and so he wanted me to hear him say it. So, he said, "That's wonderful. I just want to hear you say it one more time. So, he pushes the phone over to me and I heard Jesse Jones say, "That's what I said, Bill. I give you a million dollars for the library. So, I got to hear him

say that.”

PB: And then afterwards, what did Bertner ask you? He asked if you wanted to be the first librarian?

KM: Oh, yeah. You know I told him, “No. I was getting married.” Aren’t you glad I did?

PB: Yes, ma’am.

NG: So, then you got married then that year in 1943?

KM: Peggy's father was already in the service. As soon as he finished medical school, he was deferred until he got his MD. And then he was in Jefferson, Missouri. So, on his way to Jefferson barracks in St. Louis, he was going to come by Timpson to the wedding. Well, he couldn't get leave and he couldn't get a plane. Finally, he called and said I've gotten as far as Dallas, but I can't get any further. Well, Daddy didn't have enough gasoline points to get go and get him, but he had a friend, Miss Fanny Booth, had a farm and he knew Miss Fanny had points, but she couldn't give them to Daddy. She had to drive her car and take Daddy to the airport wherever it was in Dallas to pick him up. All this time, Jimmy McBride, his best friend, was in Corpus, stationed there. I think he was in in the Navy. He came to be his best man. So, we sat in the swing and he kept saying, “Well, it's your last chance. He didn't make it and I'm here. And I said, 'I'll think I'll wait.'” He said, OK. It's your choice. I named a boy for him.”

PB: I didn't know Jimmy was named after Jimmy McBride. Whatever happened to him? Want me to google him for you?

KM: No. Oh honey. He was Beau's age. He's gone.

PB: You're not.

KM: I don't have the decency to die.

NG: What do you mean points? You said not enough points to get gas.

KM: During the World War II, you had a coupon for butter, a book.

I wish I'd saved mine. They'd take something, and you had your butter. And, we had to have one for gasoline too. And so, the friend that had a farm had extra ones for the farm, but she couldn't give them to Daddy. They could go in her car to Dallas to pick up. Well the wedding was supposed to have been at high noon. Well, at high noon, I was sitting in the swing with Jimmy McBride and no groom. He said, "Well, it's my last chance. And I said I think I'll wait." He was stationed at Corpus and he had gotten someone that needed air miles flying (for training) to fly him up there to Nacogdoches, the closest airport (to Timpson). So, he said that they were coming. So, we got in the car to go to

PB: So, they are driving (her father) back from Dallas and you are in this swing.

KM: It must have been Nacogdoches. There was a pilot who needed miles. And so, they landed there.

Daughter: So, it was supposed to be at 12 noon. And what time did the wedding finally happen?

KM: Well my mother was all set for this high noon. And so, when people came, Mother said, "Sorry. It's been delayed. The groom's not here. And people said, "How will we know?" And Mother said, "I'll just turn in the fire alarm."

And they said well that's a good idea. And that day they were four grass fires. And every time, there was the sound of a siren, Jimmy and I would be sitting in the swing and say, "No, go back. False alarm."

PB: I've never heard that story.

KM: Really. Grass fires were bad things because they'd wipe out a town in no time.

NG: That's funny.

KM: How could anyone make up a story like that? The wedding was at 6 o'clock. And then we went to Shreveport and we missed the flight to St. Louis to the Jefferson Barracks. We missed that connection. They didn't fly frequently at that time. If you lost your chance,

there might one or two other flights. Not every 30 minutes like it is now.

NG: So, you all moved to St. Louis.

KM: I had never cooked a meal in my life. This is all personal stuff. Can you sort all this out later? My brother Dan was in the service and he was coming through St. Louis and I wanted to impress him, and I was going to cook dinner. And I did. It was fried chicken. He came said it smelled wonderful. When he bit into it, blood ran. It was raw. I said, "It was brown." He said, "Sister, it's not cooked." By this time, I was pregnant and nauseated and sick as a dog. I couldn't get out of that kitchen fast enough. I was lucky we got an apartment. Ms. Boris, a friend of hers, helped get an apartment. Apartments were impossible, but it was on the 10th floor of a building at 5330 Pershing Avenue in St. Louis. And the train ran right under it, and the doors and windows were open. Where does a train's smoke go? Up. And there was no bed. It was a Murphy bed. Do you know what a Murphy bed is?

NG: The ones that fold up into the wall.

KM: So, we walked in and I said, "Well you know there's no bed. They said this is the bedroom. I said. OK and they showed that.and I thought that was the cleverest thing I ever saw because you didn't have to make up your bed.

KM: But as I said I had never cooked a meal and I don't think I'd ever made up a bed either.

NG: Did you ever have to go to Europe during the War or were you always in the U.S.?

PB: Bobie didn't get shipped out. (Ed. Note: Bobie was the family's name for their father.)

KM: But we didn't get shipped out. He had to sign all kinds of places to even be accepted. When he was a child of five, his bathrobe caught on fire from the open little heater. And he was badly burned on his legs and torso. And so they turned him down in the service. And he had to sign all kinds of waivers to be accepted. He just demanded, but he did sign a lot of waivers.

NG: So, you have been here that you came back to Houston in 1955. Did you work at all

while you were away?

PB: We were in the Valley before 1955.

KM: I didn't work then.

NG: You were busy having children.

PB: You helped him in his office in the Valley. I think he had a doctor's office and he got paid in chickens.

KM: No, eggs... And then the chicken got in the back seat of the car and laid an egg.

NG: This is in the Valley in Texas.

KM: San Benito. That's a little different time.

PB: Well, no. I'm just saying she said what happened when you came to Houston in 1955. She was asking if you worked in the Valley or worked in Houston. And so, then when we moved to Houston. You wanted to get to the good schools because you know, San Benito didn't necessarily have good opportunities school wise. So, we moved to Houston and then you did work initially.

NG: So, let me ask first what kind of doctor was your husband.

KM: OB-Gyn.

NG: OK.

PB: But he was a general practitioner before we moved to Houston. And then he specialized and went back there (Ed.: to a residency at Baylor College of Medicine).

KM: That's right.

NG: And where did he work here in Houston?

KM: McGregor. McGregor (Clinic).

NG: And then you started working for Baylor College of Medicine?

KM: I had a friend who worked for Baylor and she knew that I was at home and not doing anything. And her name was. Lydia Wheeler. Her children had nicknamed her Pink because of Lydia Pinkham (syrup or tonic). You never heard of it? It was a medicine, a patent medicine for women, I think for cramps and stuff. And so, she went by the name of Pink.

PB: And she called you.

KM: And said they need help and that was when I went over to Jeff Davis Hospital.

PB: Not Baylor. Baylor was later. This is interesting because there's a book called *The Hospital* that I actually have a copy of it and you do too.

KM: I knew the man (Jan de Hartog who wrote *The Hospital*, an expose of Jefferson Davis Hospital, Houston and Harris County's publicly funded hospital at the time.)

PB: I can't call his name at the moment. He wrote about Jeff Davis Hospital when it first started and terrible conditions. And it was at that time that my Mom and Dad were both there.

KM: After I was at home with you all and they called and said they needed someone. And Pink called and said they needed someone. And I said I'd go over there temporarily.

PB: In a research department.

KM: No. To take care of the residents.

NG: What do you mean take care of the residents?

KM: Well, there was a room at Jeff Davis. It had been a TB hospital and it was a solarium

with windows and no air condition, but lots of ventilation and air flow. And that's where my office was. And just around the corner from that, was the ...who made the subs? The sandwiches.

PB: Oh, Antone's poor boys.

KM: This is really digressing now. The residents would bring me their money. It would be 50 cents for a coke and their sandwich. And I had an assistant by that time named Kathy Hebert Green, who is still very much a part of our lives. And or I or both of us would go over and buy them and they would all come down and pick them up. I said, "Don't get any one on credit. Get that 50 cents, because they would say, "Oh, I'll just pay it again tomorrow." I would say, "No, you pay it today." And they would borrow from each other – 50 cents. One doctor was a little snobbish and ...scratch that one.

PB: You want to tell story about Dr. Wells and his nap?

KM: Oh yes. That's a sweet story. He was the chairman and he had retired from practice. He was a very prominent ob-gyn doctor in Houston. And so, he came back just as a mentor to the residents. I don't even think he was on salary. I had no idea back then. But I had a big black leather couch in my office and after lunch, Dr. Wells would come down there and take an hour's nap. And I'd call Catherine at the switchboard and say, "Catherine. Hold all calls. Dr. Wells is taking his nap. I'll call you when he is up." And one hour later he was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. I would say, "OK, Catherine. Put them through now." It was all so close. Everybody that worked there.

The residents had free lunches. And they said I could go down there and have a free lunch too. I went a time or two and I said, "I'll bring my peanut butter and jelly sandwich. It was very bad."

NG: Currently, were your kids all in school? Was everybody in school?

KM: Because there were five of them close together.

PB: I was in third grade when we moved there, which means Jim was still at home.

KM: Oh yes. Because I had a wonderful black woman. What was her name?

PB: Cecilia.

KM: No, no, no.

PB: No. I can't call her name right now. I remember you used to go pick her up. Her car would break down.

KM: I remember. She called one day and said, "Mrs. Boice, Jim and I just played the game and we don't know who won. I said, "Willie, what is the game?" She said, "Wait a minute. I'll go get it." She spelled out Monopoly.

And I said, "You won." "OK. I'll tell Jim." She couldn't even read, but sweet as she could be.

NG: I want to clarify something. I asked where your husband worked when you came to Houston and you said, McGregor, but then you said at the same hospital.

PB: He was at Jeff Davis during his residency and when he graduated, he went to work for McGregor Medical Clinic as the first over ob-gyn doctor at McGregor Medical Clinic.

NG: So, do you remember how long you were at Jeff Davis Hospital?

KM: Couple of years because Kathy Green.

PB: You worked there and then you came home to be a stay-at-home mom when Bobie started at McGregor Medical Clinic and then you went to Baylor to work.

KM: Mrs. Wheeler called, and she said they had hired someone in the solarium to take care of the residents, she had been there two weeks and she went to lunch and never came back. I went over just to fill in until they got someone.

PB: Was that at Baylor or Jeff Davis?

KM: Jeff Davis. I was a Baylor employee.

PB: At Jeff Davis. OK.

KM: Now Kathy Green was a city employee that worked for me.

PB: Because they had a project going on their project going on there, a funded research study or something.

KM: That was just where the interns and residents trained was at Jeff Davis.

PB: Yeah. That's right. So, she was a Baylor employee the whole time.

NG: And you said you retired from Baylor. When you retired, what position did you have?

KM: Well. Whatever it was, I'm still getting the same retirement \$125 a month.

PB: You were a researcher with Dr.... the one who lives over near here. You became good friends with him and his wife.

KM: Bill Butrum. No, no, that's completely different. I had retired and left Baylor and one of the residents was going as the chief resident. MD Anderson had called and offered me a job back with them. OK. And so, I told Dr. Butrum about the offer, and it would have been a very sensible thing to take. But he that he said, "Well, Katie, look at it this way. You can work for love or you could work for money. What do you want to do? And I said I'll take the love. And so that's how I stayed for 30 years. But Anderson did in fact made a comeback."

PB: What was your job with Dr. Butrum?

KM: Oh no. He was just a senior resident.

PB: OK. Still at Baylor. So, he was encouraging you to stay.

KM: Oh, he wanted me to because he knew I could run it right.

PB: But she she's asking what your final job was before you married Mack and retired. You arranged. I know you arranged the Great Debates and the trips.

KM: That was, yeah. That's when I was working for Bill (Veasy) Butrum. They had an interesting thing at that time on television. There was a show called the Great Debates, and they took subjects of interest and then they'd have a panel taking pros and cons.

[00:53:33] And so Bill Butrum

PB: The great debates. So, he asked you to set it up.

KM: Well, he had the idea that he would have a panel and he would give one doctor one side -- the pro and con of the case and they would argue it. And then a judge would decide who had the best case.

PB: You need some water?

KM: No. it's a vicious cycle.

PB: That's OK though you need a little because you're getting a little rough and gravelly. And you also arrange the trips for the doctors.

KM: Breathe in. Breathe out. Then I couldn't afford to travel. And so, I decided if we had a travel club for the alumni. And so, I talked to the man who arranged all the doctors' travel stuff. His name started with an M, but it's not Murphy ...And he was a bachelor. And I said we are going to start a travel club. So, I was supposed to show the business to him, which I would have done but it suddenly happened that it was May. He didn't have any animosity about it because on one of the trips, he came back took his mother and his aunt. It didn't make any difference to him at all.

NG: So, what was the purpose of the travel club?

KM: They made a business session out of it, so it would be tax deductible, and they would have speakers. And that was the same thing because we had a very prominent man from someplace in the east, and when he came, he brought his girlfriend instead of his wife. And she just materialized on the beach or strange places, but never in public with him. But I was at the beach one day when they were, and it was not a platonic relationship.

NG: So, you got the opportunity to travel with them.

KM: Yeah. Travel people. After you sell 10 tickets, you get a freebie. And so, I would call the residents and say listen, this is where they are going say, going to Chicago, going to San Francisco. We went to really neat places. Hawaii. I went to Hawaii three, no, two times on them and once to see Jim. Instead of him (the business manager) taking his cut, I got the freebie. But then when he wanted to go, he just came too and brought his brother or his sister,

NG: So, then your work the whole time with Baylor was working with residents and doing programs and helping them out.

PB: Were you like a den mother?

KM: I was kind of like a mother.

NG: And how did...how have you seen all of that change over time? There was a great deal of change. You said you were there 20 years or 30?

KM: Twenty years. When change comes, it's gradual. So, you don't know. This is a big step. This was a big step. It's a gradual improvement. So, you don't every really classify it that way.

PB: Tell the story about how you went when MD Anderson was honoring you for the library and you wanted to see your name in one of the journals that you had put together and that experience and when we went to the medical center library and saw that it was all computerized. You want to talk about that?

KM: Honey you are doing better than I could I really can't do it.

PB: Ok. That's enough of it.

NG: Is there anything else that you that you want to talk about? About your work or things that you've that you've seen introduced in in the medical center or through your work at Baylor.

KM: No. I was. very proud to be associated with the people I was. As I told you three of my older brothers were doctors and all my family, my cousins and all... And it was just sort of a family tradition. My grandfather was a doctor. And my mother's father was a pharmacist. And Temple Texas and two young men used to come and visit in his office and talk about the hospital they were going to have some day. And it was Dr. Scott and Dr. White. Do you know that those names? Scott and White Hospital.in Temple.

PB: That's when granddaddy's father owned the drugstore in Temple.

KM: Mrs. Scott and Mrs. White gave mother and daddy's wedding shower. That's why we got so much cut glass.

PB: I don't know if you know Scott and White but it's a major (medical institution in Texas).

KM: The Mayo brothers sent their sons to Scott and White to train and Scott and White sent theirs to Mayo to train. Because they wanted to have that. But my cousin went to Mayo.

NG: One thing that I always ask everybody that I'm interviewing for this project is how you were able to work and have a family. Did you find that difficult at all?

KM: No, because I had good children. Everybody had a job, and they did it. And they said they scurried fast for their lives that last 15 minutes before I got home. I wasn't there to witness it. But. I think you all grew up fast. But I did do the cooking.

PB: You did. We had a meal every breakfast, every dinner, always around the table. That isn't happening anymore.

KM: And my son in Austin has that big old oak table that expands. It will seat 10 people easy.

PB: We used to put the chores that had to be done in a hat. We had to draw out...there were five of us and we draw out the chores and we were very competitive, so we would race to see who could finish first.

KM: Jim didn't have to draw.

PB: I don't know. We probably put him to work. But we would race to do the, you know, the chores that had to be done and then we would play Monopoly in the middle of the living room floor.

KM: But we had the ping pong table and it stayed up permanently. And one Christmas at the dining room table, we served Christmas dinner over the net. They wouldn't take it down. They said, "We are going to play after dinner. Whatever...."