

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
WITH  
MARIE KIRK

4 AUGUST 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FORSYTHE  
FOR THE Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW #QMS.051

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Gore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

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MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT



**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH  
MARIE KIRK**

Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW #QMS.051

FORSYTHE: This tape is part of the Q.M. Smith collection designated as QMS.1995.51. This is Regina Forsythe and I am interviewing Marie Smith. Today is August 4, 1995. The interview is being conducted in the Gore Research Center, Room 111 of the Ned McWherter Learning Resource Center. The tape of this interview along with a transcription of the interview will become part of the Quintin Miller Smith Collection and will be available to the public. Future researchers may include portions of this interview in their publications. Is that okay with you, Marie?

SMITH: Yes.

FORSYTHE: What's your full name?

SMITH: Anna Marie Smith, but have always been called Marie.

FORSYTHE: And, your birth date?

SMITH: January 20, 1934.

FORSYTHE: And, your birthplace?

SMITH: South Pittsburg, Tennessee

FORSYTHE: Your father's name?

SMITH: Cecil Smith.

FORSYTHE: His occupation?

SMITH: My father was primarily a farmer. I was born on a farm six miles out from South Pittsburg. My father worked for a wholesale grocery firm in Chattanooga and some other jobs as well. He came from the farm and I've always related back to the farm. My mother lives on that same farm. My mother's name is Fannie Ewton Smith.

FORSYTHE: And her occupation?

SMITH: My mother has always been a housewife.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

SMITH: I'm an only child.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any children?

SMITH: No children.

FORSYTHE: Did anyone else in your family come to MTSU?

SMITH: Yes, I've had a number of cousins who have come here. My dad was one of eight children, so, I have a total of eighteen first cousins, and several of them are MTSU graduates. Some of my father's first cousins came here. They were all in education. They all taught, and this very old postcard showing the administration building in the early years was during the period of time when this was Middle Tennessee State Normal School. It was written by one of my father's first cousin who was here in school to another one of his first cousins.

FORSYTHE: What degrees do you have?

SMITH: My degree is a BS degree in home economics. When I left here after I graduated in June 1955, I worked as a home economist for the electric utility in Chattanooga for over twenty-five years. Then, I resigned my job there and moved to Murfreesboro. I have been here at MTSU in alumni relations for nearly ten years now.

FORSYTHE: Why did you choose to come to school here?

SMITH: Well, I knew about what was then Middle Tennessee State College. I regarded it as a quality college that I would enjoy coming to, and I felt I would get a quality education here. Also, a little bit of peer influence contributed to my decision. Several of my classmates from my high school graduating class came here. I think it was a combination of the two. Coming away from home as a seventeen year old only child, I felt I was in a comfortable environment, but I primarily was attracted to MTSU because of the quality reputation it had.

FORSYTHE: Why did you choose to study home economics?

SMITH: I had three years of home economics in high school, and I enjoyed home economics. I had a good teacher, but I never thought that I wanted to teach home economics. I always felt that I would like to work in the business field with an appliance company, food company, a fashion or textile company or a utility company. One week out of MTSU, I started to work as home economist for the electric utility in Chattanooga. For a lot of years, home economists were customer relations representatives. We worked in the marketing division, and it

was company relations. public relations and customer relations we did, and we assisted our residential customers with anything that related to the use of electricity in their home whether it be appliance usage, lighting or anything electric related.

FORSYTHE: Did you live on campus.

SMITH: Yes, I did. Jones Hall was built as the first men's dormitory on campus and had always been a men's dorm, but that particular year in the fall of 1951, it had been converted to a freshmen girl's dorm because Smith Hall was new as a men's dormitory that year. I lived there for part of the year, but all of my friends from my hometown and from my high school class were over in Rutledge Hall. So, after Christmas, I moved to Rutledge Hall and was there for a year and a half. My junior year, I lived in Lyon Hall, and my senior year was the first year that Monohan Hall was open, and I lived there. Those are the four dorms I was in. Speaking of living on campus, to me, living on campus was a very special part of my college experience. I can't imagine having not lived on campus. It was an experience that connected me with this institution for all of my life.

FORSYTHE: Did you have a job?

SMITH: Yes, I did. I worked in the home economics department a few hours a week. I worked for the chair of the department. She was Mrs. Virginia Muncie, and in those days, I typed exams for her on a manual typewriter in her office. The home economics department in those days was on the second floor of the science building. Biology was on the third floor and physics and chemistry was first floor. With all the biology, physics, chemistry requirements for a home economics degree, I practically lived in that building plus I worked for Mrs. Muncie. The sorts of things that I did, I would type exams for her on mimeograph then copies were run off over in what is now Kirksey Old Main. I always felt that I had a very special mission to get over to the copy machine and get those copies made and get them back to her or put them in a safe place until she used them in her class. I did other things, but that's the main memory I have, typing for her and walking from the science building to Kirksey Old Main and having all of her exams duplicated and getting them back to her.

FORSYTHE: Can you describe the layout of the home economics department on the second floor?

SMITH: The main outside steps go up in a design onto the landing which opened into a drawing room. As I remember, it was marble floor with rather formally appointed furnishings. Beyond that was a drawing room. That was where all of the special events on campus occurred in those days. Currently we have a lot of receptions and special events on campus scheduled at the Alumni Center. Back in those days, a lot of those things were held in the drawing room in the home economics department. That was the main entry area. To the left and right were classrooms

and as I recall, to the left and toward the north end of the building was the area of textiles and clothing and tailoring, fashion design, household economics. Down the hall to the right, the department chair's office was the first door on the right. Beyond that were food and nutrition laboratories and the dining room where meal planning and meal service were scheduled. Basically, those are the memories I have of that floor.

FORSYTHE: How big was the drawing room?

SMITH: It was a generous drawing room that was probably as large as one half of the Alumni center. I'm guessing something like thirty feet by sixty feet. Very generous and very formally appointed, but not so formal that it was not inviting. Of course, the home economics department used it for functions within the department.

FORSYTHE: Do you want to tell me about this annual?

SMITH: This is the 1955 *Midlander*, the yearbook from my senior year. I can remember very vividly that when the yearbooks arrived sometime in the spring semester. I asked President Q.M. Smith to autograph my yearbook, and he autographed just above the group photograph of his family. I assume this was made over in the President's home, the president, his wife, his son and daughter were in a rather formal group photograph, and he autographed that page. On the facing page is Frank Clement, governor of the state of Tennessee during that time. His photograph appears along with the board of education. In those days, Middle Tennessee State College operated under the supervision of the state board of education. The governor and the commissioner of education were members. This group photograph is of the commissioners of education. Governor Clement was on the campus sometimes during the period when we had just gotten our yearbooks and we were excited about having them and getting all of our classmates and friends and faculty and administrators autographs. I remember that President Smith suggested to some of the students that they might get Governor Clement to autograph their *Midlanders* while he was on campus for probably a luncheon in what was then, the brand new James Union. It was built and opened as the Student Union Building. I can remember being on the steps. The governor came out and autographed my yearbook.

FORSYTHE: Was he surprised?

SMITH: No, we were lined up there with yearbooks in hand and pens available and I guess he was just accustomed to doing that sort of thing.

FORSYTHE: What did students do on the weekends?

SMITH: Well, we had a social every Saturday evening that was in those days called fun night. We had fun night one night during the week usually on Tuesday evening.

We didn't have a live band; we had a phonograph and played records. As I recall, fun night during the week was held in the original gym on campus which is now connected to the back of Kirksey Old Main, and is part of the college of business, the Midget building. Before the back of Kirksey Old Main and the Midget building were connected, they were two separate buildings and the north part of what is now the business building wing to Kirksey Old Main was the old gym, the original gym on campus. There was a phonograph, records were played, and a lot of people attended. On weekends, and I guess this was to help attract students to stay on campus and have it to be something special, fun night was in the Tennessee room of the James Union Building. I remember fun nights because my senior year, I was vice-president of student government, and one my responsibilities was the responsibility of conducting fun night, being there, playing records. I can remember a place just off the square downtown where you could buy used phonograph records, old 78 RPM, the breakable kind. The phonographs that were available down there were used phonographs that had been taken off of jukeboxes. This was a company that had jukeboxes in restaurants and other places. When they took the phonographs off their jukeboxes, they put them out for sale for almost nothing. I can remember going down there and looking through their records and buying records to play at fun night. That was one of my responsibilities as vice president of the student government twice a week to conduct fun night. Fun night was well attended. But, just like the custom throughout the history of this university, a lot of students did go off campus on the weekend. But, in those days, fun night was something students enjoyed, and I feel it attracted them to being here on weekends. There were other events, too, but that was a standard event every Saturday night.

FORSYTHE: What other duties did you have in student government?

SMITH: The student government structure was different from that in current day. There was a president, vice-president, student congress and what would be considered the judicial arm of student government. As vice president of student government, I was chairman of the student congress which was made up of two representatives from each class and we addressed the concerns of students and put forth requests or resolutions in behalf of students and their welfare on campus and in the classroom a lot like student government today.

FORSYTHE: You were elected to that position?

SMITH: Yes

FORSYTHE: How were the elections held?

SMITH: In those days, we went to assembly on a regular basis held in Kirksey Old Main. We had assigned seats. Your seats were checked, and you didn't want to be absent too often. Nominations for student government president and vice president were made in assembly. Actually, I didn't anticipate running for any student office on

campus. I was nominated without making myself available or expressing any desire for running for student government. There were three of us who ran for vice-president, and there was a run-off, and I was the winner.

FORSYTHE: What year was this?

SMITH: 1954 during spring semester. That was the election for student government officers for the school year 1954-55.

FORSYTHE: Where was the auditorium located in Old Main?

SMITH: If you came up the main flight of steps to the front of the building where the white columns are, you went in that door on what is now designated the second floor level. You went straight across the hall and into the auditorium. It was an auditorium with elevated floors and a theatre style stage. Occasionally concerts were there. The student theatre group performances were there. Actually, the facilities on campus in those days were quite limited. That one auditorium was used for many things.

FORSYTHE: How big was that auditorium?

SMITH: It seemed very big in those days. I suppose the seating capacity was comparable to the Tucker Theatre Seating. That's just a guess, I could be way off base.

FORSYTHE: Could you tell me more about the gym in the back?

SMITH: The old gym dates from the very beginning of the school, and I think it was probably built at about the same time as the original administration building, Kirksey Old Main. It was a free standing building on the back side of Kirksey Old Main. If you look at Kirksey Old Main in profile from front to back, you can see the architecture of the old gym on the north side, with a lot of windows. The corridors that lead from that part of the building up to the original back side of the old administration building. If you look at the building in profile from either the east or the west side, you can pretty much tell where the connecting section is.

FORSYTHE: Can you tell me about the library?

SMITH: Yes, the library of my student years was the Murfree Library on the site of where Peck Hall is now. It was a very handsome building. It was a red brick, limited in size, but a very classic building architecturally. I would imagine that the back side of the library stood about where the south side of Peck Hall is. I recall a sidewalk of considerable distance between the front of Kirksey Old Main down to the Library. I think that Peck Hall is built on the site, but because of the much larger building that Peck Hall, it extends closer to Kirksey Old Main. I can remember the library. It was one main floor and then I guess what was called the basement which was about half basement. I recall that level had windows but low

on the ground and high on the wall. There were water problems sometimes in the basement just as we have water problems in the basement of the alumni center sometimes, seepage through those walls. That was not the original site of the library on campus because as I understand, the Murfree library was built in the twenties. Prior to that, I believe that the library was on the fourth floor of the original administration building. One of our 1930 graduates, Mr. Baxter Hobgood, has related to me how he recalls that when the Murfree library was built , a brigade of students carried books from the fourth floor of the old administration building, down the steps, across the sidewalk and over into the new library.

FORSYTHE: Vet Village, was that there?

SMITH: Yes, it was. My visual memory of the Vet Village was from the back windows of the Wiser-Patton building. I recall the vision of all of those pre-fab buildings that were trucked onto site from Oak Ridge from the original Oak Ridge project. I had classmates, people I knew who were married who lived in that village. I think this yearbook has a photograph of one of my classmates made in either her apartment or her house with her baby in a crib. There were numerous buildings over there.

FORSYTHE: What about the community store that was there?

SMITH: I don't remember the community store. I don't know that I was ever at the community store, and I guess if I became aware of it, I thought it was just for the people who lived in Vet Village.

FORSYTHE: Was there an airport still here?

SMITH: Yes. The back section of Forrest Hall was a hanger, and I assume that the runway was to the east of that building.

FORSYTHE: What about the infirmary?

SMITH: I remember the infirmary being in the close proximity of where Saunders Fine Arts Building is now, on the east side and toward the back of Kirksey Old Main in the vicinity of Jones Hall. It was also a wooden structure and perhaps also a pre-fab building.

FORSYTHE: This is a continuation of the interview with Marie Kirk with Regina Forsythe on Friday, August 4, 1995.

FORSYTHE: What about the cafeteria?

SMITH: Well, you've hit upon one of my favorite subjects. When I came in 1951 as a freshman, the cafeteria was still in the original food service buildings on campus, one of the original buildings, what is now the Alumni Center. The student union

building, now the James Union Building, was not yet completed, and the cafeteria was in the old original dining hall building dating from 1911 until sometime in 1952. The Student Union Building was completed, the cafeteria was relocated on the ground floor of the student union building where ARA still has a cafeteria. That was it. That was the place on campus to eat. When the cafeteria lines were closed between breakfast and lunch and lunch and dinner, there was a snack shop on the second floor of the James Union Building on the north end of the building where the June Anderson Women's Center is now. That was the place to go between the cafeteria hours. It was also the student hangout. You went there even when you weren't hungry to socialize. On campus, we were limited to those facilities.

FORSYTHE: Was the cafeteria open on weekends?

SMITH: Yes.

FORSYTHE: How did you pay for your food?

SMITH: It must have just been with money. I don't recall having any coupon books or anything.

FORSYTHE: How about the Moffitt House?

SMITH: For some reason, I don't have student memories about the Moffitt House. I'm not sure what the Moffitt house was being used for during those years. I'm aware that in the early history of this university it was lodging for male students. I'm assuming that the University owned it from the beginning, but I never related to the Moffitt House.

FORSYTHE: What about Old Main? You talked a little bit about that.

SMITH: Well, one memory I have of Old Main fourth floor is that Dr. Edwin Baldwin taught history and geography up there, and I had history class with him. The stairs squeaked terribly. There was no way to slip late into Dr. Baldwin's class, because about one step up from the third floor and you were announced whether you wanted to be or not. Some other memories I have of the original administration building as an incoming freshmen are that when the James Union Building opened in 1952, not only was the cafeteria relocated there, but also the bookstore and the post office were relocated from Kirksey Old Main. The James Union post office was right inside the north door that faced out towards Rutledge Hall. The bookstore was next to it. That space is currently occupied by faculty senate. Prior to that, the post office and the bookstore were both on the ground floor of the Kirksey Old Main. There was an entrance to that ground floor from the front side, under the front steps. The steps that lead up to the main floor on the second floor of Kirksey Old Main had an opening underneath them and from either the left or the right side, you could go through this passageway down some

steps and into the entrance to the ground floor into the post office and the bookstore area. That's been closed in since then. I remember tripping and falling up those steps once on my way to class somewhere and having books go all directions. That was an easy access to the post office and bookstore from the outside.

FORSYTHE: I want to ask you about some of the faculty and staff that were here. I want to start with Dean Beasley.

SMITH: Yes, I can remember Dean Beasley. As I recall, Dean Beasley was usually the person who conducted the assemblies. He was the person who made the announcements, introduced speakers and programs, and he was constantly in contact with students in those days. His signature seemed to be on everything. I can see his signature on official documents. My memory of him is very vivid.

FORSYTHE: Dean James?

SMITH: Yes, Dr. Clayton James. As a student government officer, I had close contact with Dean James who was Dean of Students in those days. In my memory book, I have a letter he wrote my mother and father after the student govt. election in the spring of 1954. He said some complimentary things about me which I appreciated.

FORSYTHE: Mr. W.B. Judd

SMITH: I didn't really have that much contact with Mr. Judd. Our paths didn't cross that frequently.

FORSYTHE: Mr. T.B. Woodmore?

SMITH: I recall Mr. Woodmore but not vividly. He was not a person that I had very close contact with.

FORSYTHE: Virginia Muncie?

SMITH: I was her student worker. Mrs. Muncie was the person who knew everything that was going on about faculty, and I would hear faculty tidbits, but I was pretty much sworn to secrecy. I felt very privileged to know, for example, when Dr. Gerald Parchment was still a bachelor, that he was dating Ms. Elaine Stepp, who became his wife. I had insider information about that through Mrs. Muncie. I learned a lot from Mrs.. Muncie not only in her classes, but working for her as a student. I came to have great regard and respect for her.

FORSYTHE: Roscoe Strickland?

SMITH: I was aware of who he was, but did not have close contact with him.

FORSYTHE: Robert Corlew?

SMITH: Ditto. Of course, later when I came back to MTSU and Dr. Corlew was vice-president of academic affairs, I had close contact with him and a close working relationship, but not as a student.

FORSYTHE: Norman Parks?

SMITH: Same.

FORSYTHE: Robert Martin?

SMITH: I didn't have contact with him either.

FORSYTHE: Edward Baldwin?

SMITH: Yes, he was my history teacher up on the fourth floor up the squeaky steps.

FORSYTHE: Eugene Sloan?

SMITH: Yes, fond memories of Mr. Sloan. Mr. Sloan's office was in the north-east corner of the ground floor of Kirksey Old Main. That was his office, and that was also headquarters for the Sidelines newspaper and the Midlander yearbook staff. I worked at one time or another on both the yearbook and newspaper staff, and everything was done out of Mr. Sloan's office. He had no privacy. He was always overwhelmed with student publications groups. Sometimes when I go to the third floor of the JUB and see the suite of space that both the yearbook and the newspaper occupied, I think about when it was all in Mr. Eugene Sloan's office?

FORSYTHE: Miss Ollie Green?

SMITH: I never had Miss Ollie, but my impression through my friends and classmates was that Miss Ollie was not easy, but when you got out of her class, you had learned what she had to offer.

FORSYTHE: Dr. Simms?

SMITH: I don't remember Dr. Simms other than just knowing he was on faculty.

FORSYTHE: Ruby Taylor Sanders?

SMITH: She was on the music faculty, and I knew who she was. That was about all.

FORSYTHE: Robert Abernathy?

SMITH: Oh yes, Mr. Abernathy. Everybody knew Mr. Abernathy. He was that special person that was what I considered to be the primary ambassador for this school for so many years. He was the University speaker representative for so long and in so many areas, and especially during the spring. I was in a conversation with his grandson the other evening at a young alumni council reception. I was relating to his grandson how Mr. Abernathy used to say when he went out to speak usually at a lot of high school commencements that he was beginning his mashed potato and green pea circuit. He was certainly the ambassador, the spokesperson, the placement officer and on and on for this University, I continued to have contact with him for a lot of years when I was over in Chattanooga. I have a letter that Homer Pittard, who was then director of alumni relations wrote me in June 1972 when Mr. Abernathy was retiring and Dr. Pittard was soliciting letters that would go into a memory book. I had close contact with Mr. Abernathy during the years because I would see him over in Chattanooga frequently at a high school "Career Days" and we always had a little visit. Sometimes he stopped by my office to see me and always followed it with a letter. I have very fond memories of Mr. Abernathy.

FORSYTHE: Dr. Voorhies?

SMITH: Yes, Dr. Voorhies was chair of what is now the industrial studies department. It was industrial arts in those days. I remember him as head of that department and, I had classmates who were industrial arts majors in those days who had such complimentary things to say about Dr. Voorhies. I use Dr. Voorhies currently as a source of information. If I have a question about something, a lot of times I can call Dr. Voorhies and he can give me the information that I need.

FORSYTHE: Bonnie McHenry?

SMITH: I can remember Mrs. McHenry as being the president's secretary. She was a very pleasant, very efficient, very attractive lady.

FORSYTHE: Miss Mary Hall?

SMITH: Miss Mary.. I knew Miss Mary first as a student through my classmates who were education majors. Not being an education major, I never had Miss Mary's class. My first impression through my classmates was that Miss Mary lived out in Cannon County in her family home. Her father was a doctor, and I would see Miss Mary in those days.. .she was always so color coordinated. If she had on a purple dress, she had on purple suede shoes to match.

FORSYTHE: Howard Kirksey?

SMITH: Yes, I recall Dr. Kirksey from my student days mostly from classes that I took that were education classes. It was all but impossible to receive a degree from

this school in those days without having at least a minor in education. I graduated with a minor in secondary education. I did student teaching at what's now Central Middle school. It was Central High School in those days, and I did student teaching with high school sophomores. That was a wonderful experience, but that reconfirmed my feeling that I probably was not cut out for the classroom. But, in conjunction with my student teaching, I had Dr. Kirksey for a class, "Principles of Secondary Education." That was a companion class to the student teaching experience.

FORSYTHE: Who was your teacher that you were under while student teaching?

SMITH: Mrs. Charlotte Smotherman. Later, Mrs. Smotherman taught in the home economics department here for a number of years. Her husband, now deceased was Dr. Bealer Smotherman who was also here on the staff for a number of years.

FORSYTHE: What did she teach?

SMITH: I think some of the basics of the home economics curriculum for high school sophomores. I think probably some nutrition and some meal planning, probably some sewing of some sort like simple clothing construction. It was a balanced curriculum and sampling of all the specialized areas of home economics.

FORSYTHE: Bealer Smotherman?

SMITH: I never had him for a class. Dr. Smotherman in those days taught classes that some of my education major classmates took audio visual and the use of visual equipment and application of audio visual equipment for the classroom. He also was very involved in what is now the aerospace program, and he conducted summer workshops that were well received and well attended aviation classes, workshops for teachers. Those are my memories of him.

FORSYTHE: Joseph Howard?

SMITH: I don't recall. I didn't have him.

FORSYTHE: Will Bowdoin?

SMITH: I didn't have Dr. Bowdoin. I knew who he was, and of course, he has died within the last few years and his widow is Mrs. Ruth Bowdoin who was one of the three former educators inducted into the Tennessee Teachers Hall of Fame during this past year. She initiated what has become the Classroom on Wheels here in either the city school system or the Rutherford county system, but I did not have him, I just knew he was.

FORSYTHE: Roy Simpson?

SMITH: I just knew of Dr. Simpson.

FORSYTHE: Dr. Keathley?

SMITH: Yes, Dr. Belt Keathley. My contact with Dr. Keathley, in those days was through student government. In the spring of 1954, Clayton James was Dean of Students and there was a transition from that year to the following year. Dr. Keathley became Dean of Students. During my senior year, I had frequent contact with him and worked under his direction very closely as far as student government activities were concerned. This is a copy of the letter to me from him at the point of my graduation. I had great respect for Dr. Keathley.

FORSYTHE: James Martin?

SMITH: I knew Dr. Martin, but I didn't have his class. I understand that he was a very colorful professor and his classes were very lively.

FORSYTHE: Elizabeth Schardt? Foreign language.

SMITH: I didn't have foreign language, but knew of Ms. Schardt. My only association with her was that she was the faculty advisor or sponsor for Tau Omicron women's honor society. Ms. Schardt was the sponsor. In those days, Tau Omicron was an honor society for women students in their junior or senior year who maintained a certain academic grade point average and were involved in a lot of things on campus.

FORSYTHE: What would you do in this society?

SMITH: Well, actually Tau Omicron's purpose primarily was to recognize outstanding junior and senior women students. We made recommendation of other women students to be considered for membership. I don't ever remember that we met all that often or had a lot of programs. Mostly, it was an organization to recognize outstanding women students. Sigma Club was the male counterpart to that. Dr. Clayton James was the sponsor for Sigma Club.

FORSYTHE: Richard Peck?

SMITH: Yes. Dr. Richard Peck was chairman of the English department. His wife, Dr. Virginia Peck was also on faculty. I had only one class under Dr. Peck and struggled through all of the Shakespeare tragedies and got an average grade which was fine for me for Shakespeare tragedies. If I could digress just a little to Dr. Virginia Peck, I never had her for an English class and I did not realize until I came back within the last decade to the staff here, that Dr. Virginia Peck was internationally acclaimed for hybridizing day lilies. We had an opportunity to buy some of her day lily stock two years ago. We have a wonderful day lily bed in front of the alumni center building of some of the early blooming varieties and

the mid-season varieties and here on Friday, August 4, I think we probably have the last two or three blooms of some of her late bloomers. We are very pleased to have that addition to the grounds around the alumni center.

FORSYTHE: Lane Boutwell?

SMITH: Yes, Lane Boutwell taught speech. He was also director of the Buchanan Players, the student theatre group in those days. I never set foot on stage when the foot lights were up but was a member of the Buchanan Players Group. If you accumulated enough hours as a Buchanan Players member either onstage or backstage all of my accumulated hours were backstage, you were inducted into Alpha Psi Omega. You got a little pin that was similar to a sorority or fraternity pin. I worked backstage with props, costumes and that sort of thing with the Buchanan Players directed by Lane Boutwell. I see him occasionally. He lives within walking distance of the campus.

FORSYTHE: Horace Jones?

SMITH: I do not recall. I was not in mathematics.

FORSYTHE: Tommie Reynolds?

SMITH: I did not have Miss Tommie, but knew who she was, and I am aware of the fact that she came here about the time the school opened. She really dated back through the years. I never had her for a class.

FORSYTHE: Agnes Nelson?

SMITH: Yes, Ms. Nelson was on the home economics faculty. Ms. Nelson was a little woman from Texas. She drove a vintage automobile, and I think she retired back to Texas and died several years there after. She might have even taught at an institution out in Texas after she retired here. Ms. Nelson was strict, but very fair and was a good instructor. One thing that I thought was most out of character, she used this as an example to some point she was making about if you have a product or piece of equipment or a vehicle in this case that serves you well, you should continue to use it until you use it up. She said, "Take my car, for example. Some of these college boys want to buy my car and make a hot rod out of it." She was indignant at the thought of that.

FORSYTHE: Wink Midget?

SMITH: He was head of the business administration department. I had a short hand class in that department. Ms. Stepp, who later became Dr. Gerald Parchment's wife taught shorthand. I didn't really ever use it. It was just crazy little curly Q's on a piece of paper, but I really worked hard to learn shorthand. That was the only class I ever had in that department.