

Buckhead Heritage Society & Atlanta History Center

Oral History Project

Interview with Alana Jeanette Smith Shepherd

In the offices of the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia

December, 16, 2024

Interviewer: James Ottley

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SUE VERHOEF |

We are on camera.

JAMES OTTLEY | 00:01

Great. Well, today is Monday, December 16th, 2024. My name is James Ottley and I'm a volunteer with Buckhead Heritage and with me is Judith Vanderver, a volunteer with Buckhead Heritage and Sue Verhoef, director of Oral History and Genealogy at the Atlanta History Center. We're here today to record the oral history of Ms. Alana Shepherd, who is among other things, the founder and chairman of the board of the Shepherd Center. We're honored to have you with us here, Ms. Shepherd, and we thank you for your participation in this project. To begin with, would you please state your full name and year of birth?

ALANA SHEPHERD | 00:36

Alana Jeanette Smith Shepherd, and I was born June 4th, 1930. Right in the middle of the Depression when it started.

OTTLEY | 00:45

You mentioned that you were born in Sioux City, Iowa. What took your family to Iowa?

SHEPHERD | 00:52

We had no relatives there, but my father was a veterinarian and he and two other vets were in the Hog Cholera<sup>1</sup> serum manufacturing business. And so he came to Georgia when I was 13 to distribute the serum to people in Georgia who had herds and they really eradicated that in the hog population.

OTTLEY | 01:14

That right? What was the name of the company again?

SHEPHERD | 01:15

American Serum.

OTTLEY | 01:17

American Serum.

SHEPHERD | 01:17

It was later sold to Abbott Laboratories. Okay.

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<sup>1</sup> Hog Cholera is a common disease in pigs. It commonly goes by Classical Swine Fever and it was eradicated in the United States in 1978 through much effort by companies such as the one Ms. Shepherds father worked with.

OTTLEY | 01:21

Okay, does that mean you spent, so the first 13 years of your life in Iowa?

SHEPHERD | 01:26

I did, in Sioux City, which was wonderful because you could ride your bicycle to the library. You could walk to school. You came home for lunch and grammar school. Unbelievable.

OTTLEY | 01:37

Was it tough to move at that age or were you all ready to move?

SHEPHERD | 01:40

Well, yeah, it was at 13, just the beginning of the seventh grade and, you know, oh, well, yeah, that's the way it was. So we came here.

OTTLEY | 01:50

What part of Atlanta did you move to when you came?

SHEPHERD | 01:52

I lived on East Pelham and Morningside, and it was interesting. I had neighbors who became lifelong friends. Jimmy Caswell was one of my first friends, and the rest of his sisters. We were in and out of each other's homes as much as anything. But he always said I was his oldest friend and that made me mad because I said, you're supposed to say "my long time friend." But anyway, he developed Piedmont Center, as you know, and he was on our board and very active and meant a lot to the Shepherd Center.

OTTLEY | 02:22

What were some of your memories moving here at age 13?

SHEPHERD | 02:27

Well, I went to O'Keefe High School for a year and Julian Lacrolle was in my class. That was interesting. So we were friends forever. And then I went to North Avenue Presbyterian School, or Napsonian,<sup>2</sup> whichever you wanna call it, which became Westminster.

OTTLEY | 02:44

And where was that located?

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<sup>2</sup> The North Avenue Presbyterian School, NAPS for short, or otherwise known as the Napsonian, was a private school founded in 1909 by the North Avenue Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia. After moving to Ponce de Leon in 1921, it became a co-ed school until the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, at which point it became a girls only junior high and high school. Eventually it developed into a college preparatory school. In 1951, NAPS merged with Washington Seminary to form The Westminster Schools, which is also a private institution.

SHEPHERD | 02:46

It was located on Ponce de Leon, which is now the AIDS Center Hospital. We had to walk up to Piedmont to take the bus to go home, and we had to pass the original Krispy Kreme donut shop, and they knew we were getting out of school at 3:30 or whatever time it was, so they would immediately make sure that the hot flashing sign was on, and everybody stopped to get hot donuts. And it spoiled me forever having Krispy Kreme that aren't hot right out of the shop.

OTTLEY | 03:14

Understandable, understandable. Tell us about a typical day at NAPS, going to school there.

SHEPHERD | 03:21

Oh my goodness. We had chapel every day, and I usually was talkative, and so Ms. Askew would sit up there and she would go "yes Alana?" And I was usually on the back row, and so I had to be quiet at that. So it went on, and on. And then after I got to in my early married life we were at Druid Hills Presbyterian, and Miss Askew was in my Sunday school class and I had to do the devotional one day or the whole program, and I was about to come apart because she had been our Bible teacher in the senior year. You took Bible as a history. The New Testament was in your senior year, and the Old Testament was in your junior year as a complete history course all year long. Oh, man we had to memorize chapters, some of which I can still repeat.

OTTLEY | 04:20

Now did she make noise during your, devotional, like you did? [laugh] Did she pay it back?

SHEPHERD | 04:25

[Laugh] Well, I was not her favorite person, but that didn't matter.

OTTLEY | 04:29

How many people about --

SHEPHERD | 04:30

There was 33 in my class. And only about three of them are still alive, I think. Most of them have gone by the wayside, but 33 was a pretty small class. And then after school, the boys would line up outside on the street, down on Ponce de Leon, waiting for everybody to come down, or they, if they dared, they would come up on the campus. She didn't like that at all. Ms. Askew was not a fan of the boys coming up there, and occasionally one of them would come up the drive and make a circle. She would come running out [laugh], "no, no, no, you can't do that!" [laugh]. It's funny, we had senior hall, which was a little, hut almost, and only the seniors could go in it..

OTTLEY | 05:10

I think once it became Westminster, they called it the Hut. I think they still have a hut.

SHEPHERD | 05:13

Yes, that's right. They had the Hut at Westminster.

OTTLEY | 05:16

So is that perhaps the origin of the name you think?

SHEPHERD | 05:18

I think so, yeah. Yeah. But at Westminster, only the seniors could go in it too. Isn't that true? Do you remember?

OTTLEY | 05:25

I'm trying to remember myself. I think I remember something about that.

SHEPHERD | 05:28

Yeah. I think it's only for the seniors. Yeah. So it became Westminster two of the three years after I left. And I graduated at 16, and I hadn't even looked at colleges. It wasn't something that anybody said you needed to do. And so, my family just said we want you to go to Stephens<sup>3</sup> and I said, okay, fine. I certainly didn't need at 16 to be in a university setting, so I went to yet another girl's school, [laugh] in Columbia, Missouri.

OTTLEY | 06:00

So the campus, you know, in Southwest Paces, that was three years after you. I mean, was there any, relationship with, Fritz Orr<sup>4</sup> with you know, students going from NAPS over there for the afternoon or anything like that?

SHEPHERD | 06:18

I don't think Fritz Orr was -- Well, yeah, I guess they were going, but it was only for boys. It might have been co-ed later, but I'm not sure it was. And my boys actually went there. Tommy went there, my youngest son every summer for every session. I mean, he loved it. And that's where he learned to shoot. And then the English teacher actually taught James and Jamie at Westminster. My children went there and grandchildren.

OTTLEY | 06:48

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<sup>3</sup> Stephens College, located in Columbia, Missouri, is a women's college founded in 1833. It's the second-oldest women's college in the United States and the first institution of higher education in Columbia.

<sup>4</sup> Referencing the Fritz Orr Summer Camp. Fritz Orr Summer Camp was a day camp located in Atlanta, Georgia, adjacent to The Westminster Schools, its close proximity to NAPS is why Mr. Ottley is asking if there was any connection. It was owned and directed by Fritz Orr, Jr. and his family for many years, and later, it became the site of Westminster's summer programs. The camp was known for its focus on outdoor activities and canoeing, with Mr. Orr himself being an avid canoeist.

Gotcha. What, where were some of the places as a teenager, that you'd hang out or that you'd go to on a date or hang out with friends where were --

SHEPHERD | 06:56

The Pig and Whistle on Peachtree.

OTTLEY | 06:57

Tell us about that.

SHEPHERD | 06:58

We always had Cokes and maybe sometimes hamburgers or something like that. But there was a system of fraternities and sororities in Atlanta. And there were five sororities and I think 12 fraternities. And so they all had two parties a year. A very casual one, and a very formal one. And so there was a dance every Friday and Saturday night, and you either raided the dance or not. You got an invitation, and if you were really big stuff or thought you were, or some, or somebody thought you were [laugh], you got to go to all of them. And I did. It was fun. It was just a dreamland. And at intermission when the band stopped playing, there was a live band, usually it was at the Biltmore, but occasionally Druid Hills Country Club also was another site. And at the intermission for the band, everybody ran out, piled in the cars and went to the Varsity and had a PC and a chili dog or whatever they were gonna have. And there was a rule that girls could not put their foot down on the ground in the parking lot, or you were a bad girl [laugh]. I mean, come on, insane. But you could, if the car was parked close enough, you could step over into the car without touching the ground and that was allowed. It was hilarious as you look back on it,

OTTLEY | 08:20

I've heard about the, the fraternity and sororities for high schools and even saw some painting, you know, some stuff painted in, in this cabin that my grandmother had that the girls used for whatnot.

SHEPHERD | 08:35

Their meetings every Sunday afternoon, and the boys would show up for all the meetings of the girls' sororities.

OTTLEY | 8:42

Is that right? Okay.

SHEPHERD | 8:43

You didn't go to their meetings, but they came to yours.

OTTLEY | 08:45

I gotcha. And so how big would one of these sororities be if, was it Atlanta-wide or kind of Buckhead-wide?

SHEPHERD | 08:50

No, it was snobbish, unfortunately, and there were no Jewish girls in them and that was sad. But you know, they had their own groups and they managed in spite of all of us. It wasn't a conscious thing, it just, just wasn't right. And it was kind of different. But the boys with so many, they were just [laugh], they were just hilarious. And, and if they pinned you with their fraternity pen, it was a big deal. You were supposed to be going steady. And they had no break cards for the dances. And so they had three or four no breaks, and somebody would say, I want second no break, third no break. Otherwise in between, they broke on you constantly and you could hardly dance without somebody cutting in. And then they'd be lined up and the next person would cut in. It was fun [laugh]

OTTLEY | 09:43

When did that kind of phase out?

SHEPHERD | 09:45

When they did away with Boys High. And NAPS left, and Washington Seminary became Westminster no more.

OTTLEY | 09:52

Was that, did it phase out or was it kind of a rule of the schools?

SHEPHERD | 09:56

It was just all of a sudden. The schools had 'em-- it was over. But by that time, I was gone, so it didn't matter [laugh].

OTTLEY | 10:03

Were there any other, places that you'd hang out as a teenager? Like Fred? We hear about Fred's Fruit Emporium.

SHEPHERD | 10:10

Oh, yeah, I know. I didn't hang out there. North Fulton crew did. More than, more than the rest of the people.

OTTLEY | 10:17

I gotcha. Okay. So you said you went to Stephens, and where is that?

SHEPHERD | 10:23

In Columbia Missouri, right next to University of Missouri. There's about a block in between us. But I'd already kind of committed to be going steady, so to speak, with Harold. So I didn't really date very much. A couple of times, maybe three or four, but I was into sports up there. I would sometimes get up early and go out to the golf course and play a quick nine holes before class. And, I don't know why I did that, but I also played basketball in college and right back then, no girls I knew played basketball in college. They played in high school, but never in college. And that was fun. We played the University of Missouri and Christian College and other things around, not any big thing like they have now, that's more organized with all of the colleges. I enjoyed that. I played every sport from hockey to tennis, golf, basketball. Anyway, I was into sports a lot and student government. So I got elected secretary of the Student Body. And when they published the annual, Stephens has the 10 ideals of girls they select, I don't know who selects them, maybe the faculty, I'm not sure. Never did know [laughs]. And I was the ideal of health. How prophetic. I mean, I had no idea why they picked that. I thought, what are they talking about? Why did they do that? [laughs].

OTTLEY | 11:52

Absolutely. That is prophetic.

SHEPHERD | 11:54

It is. Yeah. I mean, I can't believe that.

OTTLEY | 11:57

Tell us again how you, how you chose-- you said your parents chose it for you. Or how did they, how did they know about it or how did that--?

SHEPHERD | 12:03

I no have idea. My mother knew about it, I guess, so that was it.

OTTLEY | 12:07

And you met Harold. Tell us about that.

SHEPHERD | 12:10

Well, I knew him in high school. That was the thing, the fraternities were in all the schools. North Fulton, a few from Decatur High, a few from Girls High, NAPS, Washington Seminary, Marist and North Fulton. Those were the schools. And so you knew a whole bunch of people from all of those, through all those activities every weekend. And I'd just always known him, you know, big deal. I didn't think much about it for a long time. Then suddenly it clicked [laugh].

OTTLEY | 12:41

Where did you have your first official date?



SHEPHERD | 12:43

I don't remember.

OTTLEY | 12:47

And again, going back to high school, you must have played sports in high school as well or?

SHEPHERD | 12:52

I played a little basketball, played volleyball, and I was playing golf a lot and some tennis. Okay. And I spent summers at East Lake because my parents were running the business here downtown. And they would take me downtown in the morning, and I would get on the trolley and go out to East Lake. My brother and I, he was at Marist. My brother and I, we would spend the day at the country club at East Lake. They had a lake and a beach made out of sand, and a boathouse.

OTTLEY | 13:26

I've seen some of those old pictures.

SHEPHERD | 13:27

Yes. And it was just wonderful. And then we could go to the Saturday night dances and have a Gin Ricky, it was something with lemonade and gin, and nobody questioned how old we were or anything else. It was kind of, and the same thing with Robinson's Tropical Gardens. You could go there for parties and nobody, there was no such thing as carding anyone. They just let anybody do what they wanted to do.

OTTLEY | 13:51

Right. And what years would that have been talking about Harold's Tropical?

SHEPHERD | 13:55

46, '47, 45, 46, 47, and I graduated in 47 from high school.

OTTLEY | 14:02

I think I've seen a picture of the Tropical Garden restaurant, they had a boat there that looked maybe it was a replica of a Steamboat or something like that?

SHEPHERD | 14:14

I don't remember that. I guess I only went at night. But that was way out to cross the river and go to Robinson's Tropical Garden. And that's canoe now. And one of the brick walls is still there. And when we were there one New Year's Eve, and it got smoky, and I certainly didn't smoke, and I said, "oh, my eyes are watering. I can't see." So Harold put his fist through the window and

broke it and cut his hand or his arm on his, one of his father's white shirts, [laugh]. And Jimmy Caswell was there that night with Carolyn.

OTTLEY | 14:48

Is that right?

SHEPHERD | 14:49

And my brother had dated Carolyn [laugh] but Jimmy was more interesting to her.

OTTLEY | 14:58

I gotcha. What did you study, and you might have touched on this. What did you study at Stephens? Actually, just what did you major in?

SHEPHERD | 15:04

You didn't have to major at that point, and you could just do whatever you wanted. And I had applied for Georgia. I was gonna go on to Georgia. After that, and then we decided I would get married that summer. So we did.

OTTLEY | 15:16

And where did you get --

SHEPHERD | 15:17

Oh fall, excuse me, at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church.

OTTLEY | 15:20

Okay, fantastic.

SHEPHERD | 15:22

Reception at East Lake.

OTTLEY | 15:23

Fantastic. So you moved back in, about what year would that have been?

SHEPHERD | 15:27

43', [when I was] 13.

OTTLEY | 15:29

Well, I'm sorry. Moved back from college to Atlanta.

SHEPHERD | 15:33

Oh! I graduated in 49'. It was only a junior college at that point.

OTTLEY | 15:36

Okay, gotcha. And then did you go on to Georgia at that point? Or said you got married?

SHEPHERD | 15:40

We got married.

OTTLEY | 15:41

So what was life -- tell us about social life or living in Atlanta in 49', 50', 51'.

SHEPHERD | 15:48

Well, actually we kind of traveled where Harold was building roads in North Carolina and so forth. And then after I had twins we went once more to Laurinburg North Carolina. He moved asphalt plants here and there and paved roads. And he worked about 14 or 16 hours a day and I was exhausted. And he was exhausted. But anyway, we survived and came back to Atlanta. Actually, we came back when Shepherd Construction Company had a contract to build Wheelers Field in Tripoli. And Harold and I were supposed to go, and I said, I'm not going and taking two babies. That's it. I'm not, I'm not, and so about that time, his dad went broke and he said, alright, then you go down and, the herdsman quit at Clybel Farms, which is now the Charlie Elliot Center, and so he said, you go down and look after the farm. So we had to go live at the farm for about nine months until I rebelled [laugh]. Stoker only went to about three in the morning, and Harold had to get up and go put more stuff coal in the stoker. We didn't have a telephone in that little, in that house that's still standing. There's very historic house actually. Have you ever seen a picture of it?

OTTLEY | 17:02

I've seen, I have.

SHEPHERD | 17:04

The steps go up like that in the front, but everybody goes in the side door and up. And that was interesting. We had one car and he worked all the time that of course, the next grocery store was in Mansfield and it was pretty limited. Right. If they had three potatoes in the bin, that was about -- oh gosh. Interesting times. And we also had two children in diapers, cloth diapers, and no washing machine.

OTTLEY | 17:32

Oh man.

SHEPHERD | 17:34

[laugh] I felt like a pioneer lady. But anyway, that all worked out. We came back to Atlanta and we built a house on Pine Stream. Were there seven years, and when Roby and Louise Robinson were killed in the Paris crash. The Kates bought the property to develop it and we were at the dead end, and Harold said, let's get outta here, go find a piece of property. So we looked on River Forest and found that, and built a house there. Bought the property from Morton Rollston. And I will tell a little more about him in a minute [laugh]. He was a character. And he had a clause in there that if we ever sold to anybody on other than a non-Caucasian, we'd have to pay him a million dollars. Well, of course it wouldn't have stood up in court, but it wouldn't have cost him anything to go to court as a lawyer. It cost us 1% on our mortgage all those years.

OTTLEY | 18:28

Mm-hmm

SHEPHERD | 18:29

But my mortgage was \$407 a month [laugh]. On that great big house. So we lived there 34 years, and then when the city bought Sears Roebuck building. Harold said, "it's time to get out of Atlanta." Hmm. So we moved, he said, "go find a lot". And I found one right across the river. Was within about 108 hundred feet of the river. And, but we were in Cobb County. And my grandchildren had grown up there, and I'd called it Corn Cobb County [laugh]. Now, now I'm living there. And we've been there almost 30 years.

OTTLEY | 19:06

Do you want to tell us a little bit -- just a brief history of the Shepherd Construction Company?

SHEPHERD | 19:11

Well it had a lot of contracts in Brazil, for instance. They built blimp bases. They built the base in the Azores. They built the do line in Greenland. They worked for the World Bank, which was doing all that at that time. Anyway, then they hit an underground river in Columbus that the Corps of Engineers didn't even know was there, and so there was a big lawsuit and it took his dad into bankruptcy. And it took about seven years to settle the case. In the United States government. So that was sad. But anyway, Harold and his brother restarted the business in construction and it was very successful. For sure.

OTTLEY | 19:54

Well you know that I'm gonna ask about the Shepherd Center<sup>5</sup> and I mean--

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<sup>5</sup> The Shepherd Center is a nationally and internationally famous not-for-profit hospital which specializes in medical treatment, research, and rehabilitation for people with complex conditions, including spinal cord injury, acquired brain injury, multi-trauma, traumatic amputations, stroke, multiple sclerosis, chronic pain, and other neuromuscular conditions. Founded in 1975 by Mrs. Alana Shepherd, her husband Harold and her son James, and

The Brazil contact was an important one. So Harold's brother Clyde was down there, and he made a friend out of Adolfo Gentil who had been in the Congress there and was from a very prominent family. So when James was injured, he had, I'll start his story. He had been backpacking all through Europe, I mean, and then to Africa and Dana, his twin sister joined him there in Cairo. She got there one day and they didn't find her for two or three days, although they knew she was at the Hilton. They just didn't find her [laugh]. So then they traveled on down to Ethiopia and, um, Haile Selassie<sup>6</sup> was standing, was outside of theater one night where they were watching the crowd. He was going in for some performance, and he liked Americans. He saw them standing there in their blue jeans and dirty t-shirts, [laugh] and he said, please come and be my guest. So they sat right behind him, and then there was an overthrow of the government. And first they'd been in Cairo, and they got a call in the middle of the night, the sixth day, six day war had started. And the people said, get out, get to the airport and leave right now. So they did. And then that's when they got to Ethiopia. They went on down the east coast of Africa and finally walked into the Mount Kenya Safari Club one night. And who was the travel agent? Do you remember his name? Thomas Cook? No. Oh, I'll think of it. It doesn't matter. Anyway, he had made their, when they took short airplane trips instead of hitchhiking, he made their tickets available. And he was there that night. When they walked into the camp, he said, "I don't believe this, you, you can't do this!" And then they went on to Madagascar, and that was overthrown also. And the currency was no good. Then they went into the Seychelle islands and were body surfing and James lost his graduation watch in the water. Should have been a message to him. Stop this trip right now. They were on to South Africa then, and then to Rio, and then the second day there, he was on the beach and had his accident. So we arrived the next morning, and that was six weeks in a 20 bed clinic with no screens on the windows, and the doctors did the care, the nursing care was unbelievably bad, and so he went from bad to worst. He had 22 units of blood, and that gave him hepatitis. He was too too tall for the bed, so they put his feet through the slats. It was an iron bed, you know, like [gestures], and made slings out of gauze, and actually that was good 'cause he didn't lose his, his heels to pressure sores. And the bed was elevated like this [gestures]. And he was in traction and the orthopedist would not let anybody move. So he got pseudomonas and pneumonia because he couldn't move at all. And it, it just went like this [gestures downward], downhill. And so Delta wouldn't take him because they didn't take people on ventilators and there was no air ambulance at that time. So the family connected with Herman Talmage and got the air Force to come down. We paid for the flight out of McGuire to bring him back on a medevac plane, and the nurse on in charge said, well, I want this plane at ground level. He said, "what?" And this was during the crisis of the fuel [laugh], you gotta have pressure at ground level all the way back. So they were running out of fuel and

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located in Atlanta, the center was one of the first of its kind in the city and region, as Mrs. Shepherd will go on to describe.

<sup>6</sup> The former Emperor of Ethiopia

we had to stop at Rosie Roads in Puerto Rico and refuel [laugh] for that big C-141. And then we got up in the air and they said, "there's a front, we're not gonna be able to go to Atlanta. Where do you wanna go?" And we said, "how do we know where we wanna go? We have no idea." So they finally decided Brook Army base in Texas they could get to. So we were going to Brook Army base. Well, then the pilot came back to the charge nurse on the flight, and he said, "if I can go up for just five minutes, I think I see a hole, will you let me do that?" She said, okay, "only five minutes." 'cause he was still on a ventilator. And he saw the hole and he said, I got through it. So we landed at Dobbins exactly when we were supposed to land, and there was a whole bunch of people waiting for us, a lot of family and stuff. And they took him to Piedmont, and by that time, he was coming off all of the drugs that they'd given him to sedate him. And he said that the tubes coming down for his IVs were fluorescing, and the nurses' faces were black velvet. And that Newton Turk took him out in the parking lot by a chain length fence to saw the cast off that they'd put on him for the halo, because the, the dumb doctor from thought you only got these things from England, and he ordered the wrong size, so he had a bake shift cast instead of the usual apparatus. It was a nightmare. And so the very first night in ICU I was sitting there and he blew the chest tube off, or the trach tube from the ventilator. And just this fountain of blood came up and went everywhere. Big old clots. It was unbelievable. Which meant his lungs had filled up. So Carter Smith, who was his doctor, said, -- he was panicking. I mean, 'cause he didn't know what to do with him. And he admitted that [laugh], he said, "I want an x-ray every 15 minutes! I want an x-ray every 15 minutes!" Well, you know, he did survive it. I mean, God was really in charge of all this, because he should never have survived. We should never have been able to start Shepherd Center. Never. But anyway, so then we were in Piedmont for three months and he went downhill because they did keep him alive, but he had respiratory arrests and everything else just going. So by the time Harold went out to Craig to see it, came back and one day and said, "we're leaving." That's, that's where we need to be. They said, "oh no, you can't possibly leave." It'll be six or seven months. We need to build him up with blood transfusion. We said, "no, we're going." And then they started coming around one by one and saying, they were really relieved, we're leaving. And they said, you're merely making the right decision. So then he was at Craig for five and a half months, and he was an incomplete injury with his broken neck. He walked out with a leg brace and a crutch. Very much under his own power. But it's interesting too, we couldn't get him on the stretcher to make the turn on our plane to get to Colorado. So Harold called Rankin Smith and he said, "Rankin, can I borrow your plane?" He said, "what do you want it for?" And he said, "well, you know, I wanna get Harold out, our plane isn't big enough to turn with the stretcher and all the equipment." And he said, "yeah." And Harold said, "well, I'll at least pay for the fuel." He said, no. And he said, "yeah, I'm gonna pay for the fuel." He said, "ask me again and you won't get the plane." And Rankin's children did not even know he did that till years later when we told them. Wow. He was just a great guy. And people thought he was so gruff, which he was, but he was a nice guy too [laugh]. So then after the five and a half months, he walked out with that leg brace and a crutch. So he and two or three other people who'd been out there said, well, somebody ought to start something like that in Atlanta. Why don't we have

something and that went around a while, and then somehow it became us. So, we found Dr. Apple and he said, "oh, I know it'll go 'cause it's so needed." So he found the space in the old Paces Ferry Hospital for us to lease. They were gonna put a nursing unit in there -- nursing facility.

OTTLEY | 27:52

And this would've been 1974, 75'?

SHEPHERD | 27:53

75' yeah. He came back in 73' and in 75, we started we got six beds to lease. And we were a not-for-profit in a for-profit institution. So, as Dave Apple said, we had a seven year war with them. They were, they were not all the way [laugh] up front with what they were doing to us. But we did survive in spite of some checks being cashed that were not supposed to be cashed by them, and I caught 'em and went storming down to the controller's office and I said, "what kind of a thank you did you write to this man in Oklahoma? He was one of our partners who had never been in your hospital and never had a patient there and he hasn't gotten a thank you or an acknowledgement?" And they admitted it and paid us the money and the interest because they knew I could have put him in jail. I should have, should have [laugh], but I didn't know [laugh] we were too busy. And anyway, we just didn't, didn't get sidetracked on stuff like that. We were focused to open a six a 40 bed hospital and hope to go to 80 beds. And so seven years later we got there.

OTTLEY | 29:09

Can I? Where what was the biggest challenge of starting the hospital?

SHEPHERD | 29:13

Raising the money. Raising

OTTLEY | 29:15

Raising the money. Okay.

SHEPHERD | 29:15

Yes. So Harold went to Scott Hudgens, who owned the property on Peachtree and he said, "Scott, I need to buy that property from you. Would you sell it?" He said, "well, what do you want it for?" And he said, "well, not for me. I want it for the hospital." And he said, "well, that's, that's different. Jackie and I have always wanted it to be used for a higher purpose." And so he said, "I've priced it a million and a half, but I'll sell it to you for a million and I'll give you 200,000 at the closing." So we got that five acres on Peachtree Road for \$800,000.

OTTLEY | 29:48

Wow, that's amazing. That's amazing.

SHEPHERD | 29:50

And we moved in with 40 beds open, and it was just wonderful and we had the goal of going to 80 because we had the third floor shelled in, we thought six or seven years, we'll do it. 18 months later, we had finished it and we had 80 beds because there was such a need, it just built. And the same thing happened at the Paces Ferry Hospital. We had, after the first week, we had two more, in the next week we had four more. We got up to 15 patients. We finally ended up with about 30 because there was no place that was doing anything like that anywhere around in this area or in the whole Southeast. So it just grew and grew and grew. Mostly people in the highway industry were the people who gave the money. Harold put it on all of them. Why don't you join us? And I had some friends and we had some people in bank foundations who had known a quadriplegic, and they would give us money from their foundation that they oversaw. So that was helpful too. But when we started, we didn't have the money. So, James talked to Boisfeuillet Jones, who was head of the Woodruff Foundation, and he said, "no, go ahead and start, once the bricks and mortar come up, you'll get the money." Well, I don't know whether we thought that he was gonna give it or what, but anyway, that did happen. That's very true. Once we started out of the ground, the money came in. But again, it had to be God because we weren't that good at raising money. We were novices and nobody was helping us. Nobody was advising us. I didn't have a mentor. I mean, people were distant, themselves, and they, the joke went around, don't let Atlanta near you because she'll get your wallet [laugh]. Well, not true. I did not act like that [laugh]. I'm very soft, and if somebody wants to support us, I hope they do. But you know, it's okay. Let's see what you do [laugh], how you feel, and if you come over and see it, you'll probably want to give, but it's up to you. So I try to do a very soft -- that's just my style, but we made it.

OTTLEY | 31:58

Indeed, indeed. Can we talk about the Paralympic games at one point?

SHEPHERD | 32:03

Yeah.

OTTLEY | 32:04

Could you tell, tell us about that.

SHEPHERD | 32:06

Well, the Paralympics, were not gonna be coming to Atlanta. We've heard that, and the powers to be, I'll put it that way, I won't go into names, the powers to be did not want anything to do with them. I don't know why, but we were gonna do the work. So we thought, well, we're gonna go for it anyway. And so we did. And there was an article in the paper where I called six corporations, which were nationwide usually, the Sinful Six, because they refused to release their



category, and so we could go to them for money. So we just found other categories and we did it. We raised the money, we put on the games and they were successful. And we had money left over for Blaze Sports.<sup>7</sup> So we gathered a wonderful board of people who were just thrilled to be part of it, and we were excited that we put on the largest attended games that had ever happened. So that was very exciting and rewarding. And in, in the meantime, James had served on the advisory board for Hartsfield and for many other things in the city, the bus system and so forth to get the city more accessible. So Atlanta is accessible to a large degree because the Paralympics were here, and when I was in Barcelona for the games before that, I was sitting there watching basketball or volleyball, and Samaranch<sup>8</sup> came in. I was in the middle of a row and there were all these seats. Well, we'd been to visit him twice because we had to report to him. So he did know who I was. But he came over and sat down beside me. And Corina Miller, Jim Miller's wife was with me. And she went [nudges], "ask him" [laugh].

OTTLEY | 33:58

[laugh]

SHEPHERD | 34:00

So I turned around and I said, "you know, there should be one committee to do the games, the Paralympics and the Olympics. Then you would have one committee to be in charge of everything and with, and it would be more smooth." He looked at me and he said, "I'll make it happen."

OTTLEY | 34:18

Wow.

SHEPHERD | 34:19

And so I didn't say anything else to him [laugh]. We just let it go, and we watched the game. And sure enough, he did. So from now on, there's one committee that does both sets of games. And we were not treated with welcome arms in Atlanta. I'll put it that way, by the other committee. But we didn't pay any attention. We just went ahead with our own business and did it anyway.

OTTLEY | 34:44

That's fantastic.

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<sup>7</sup> BlazeSports America is a national nonprofit organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, that provides sport and physical activity opportunities for youth and adults with physical disabilities. It was founded in 1993 and is considered the legacy of the 1996 Atlanta Paralympic Games. Blaze Sports works with people with disabilities to enhance their quality of life, either in sports or, indirectly, in other areas such as education or the work place.

<sup>8</sup> Mr. Juan Samaranch served as the International Olympic Committee's president from 1980 to 2001, lending him considerable influence in determining how the games were structured and deciding which committee had the responsibility over certain issues.

SHEPHERD | 34:44

And the AD Frazier and Charlie Battle<sup>9</sup> have both apologized, time after time to me, have sent me flowers. We're so sorry about the way things went. But anyway, we were thrilled, and it meant something. It was a job well done in the end.

OTTLEY | 35:06

Indeed. Indeed. Can I jump around to, just, 'cause I've got personal interest here. My uncle Spencer, could you? Do you have any kind of fun stories or memories of doing stuff with him in Atlanta and things like that?

SHEPHERD | 35:20

The funniest story about him, my brother Spencer ended up being a colonel in the Marines in the Marine Reserve. So he was the ranking Marine retiree in Atlanta for a while till he died, I guess. So he loved going to summer camp and dressing up, and so he put on his, his uniform and he'd hurt his back the day before, and he didn't even think he was gonna be able to go. He could hardly move, and he couldn't sit down. Well, but he put on his uniform anyway, he had a convertible. And so they put the top down and he stood up and held onto the windshield with his sunglasses on to ride to the airport. Like he was Eisenhower [laugh]

OTTLEY | 35:58

[laugh]

SHEPHERD | 36:00

[laugh] He was nuts. But he really loved the Marines, and he worked for Johnny Isaacson in the real estate business, and they had a very successful run at it, and Johnny was a lifelong friend, and then was very good to Shepherd as a contact. And then we treated him with his physical problems, and he would get up in a meeting or in a fundraiser and say, "I'm standing here because of Shepherd Center!" What a nice thing to say. He was a great guy.

OTTLEY | 36:31

Indeed. Any childhood memories of palling around with Spencer and --

SHEPHERD | 36:36

Oh, there was a military school for boys only and had their parade ground down there next to the church, and then Sacred Heart had for the girls was on the edge of the campus. So he was educated by the priest. They didn't have very many lay people teaching back then. And then he

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<sup>9</sup> Both Mr. Frazier and Mr. Battle were key figures involved in the planning and hosting of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic and Paralympic Games.

went on to Georgia Tech and was SAE and President of SAE, loved it. Goved Georgia Tech. So that was, that was his life.

OTTLEY | 37:06

Indeed, Indeed. Well, we've certainly covered a lot. I'm trying to think. You know, do you have any, you know, memories or, kind of funny stories? You know, again, just kind of living in Buckhead at any point, you know, during or or being around any point

SHEPHERD | 37:26

When we were on Pine Stream and the Robinsons were still alive, they had a big German Shepherd. There at the Pink Castle, and it was usually in a fenced in pen. Well, James and some of his friends on the street figured out they'd let the dog out, and then they'd take it to the front door and say, "we found your dog down the street, he got out somehow." "Well come in and have some lemonade and cookies!" And that went on about two times, and finally they caught on [laugh].

OTTLEY | 37:51

Figured it out.

SHEPHERD | 37:53

That was fun to see all the different growing up. The kids in Fritz Orr Camp and it was just a great city to go in. Although even then you didn't ride your bike far, but they did go down to Wender and Roberts. "Big" as they called it, if you remember any of that [laugh].

OTTLEY | 38:12

No certainly no Wender Roberts, for sure.

SHEPHERD | 38:13

And North Side was the side, and Lovett had started, I don't think Pace--. I can't remember if Pace had started when my kids were in school or not. And then Jamie and Julie, James children went to Westminster and then, and then on to Georgia.

OTTLEY | 38:32

So you mentioned the Fritz Orr Camp, we talked about the Fritz Orr Camp a little bit. Do you have any memories of your kids picking them up there or stories they told?

SHEPHERD | 38:41

Oh, yes. Yeah. And Tommy was the only one. I think maybe James went there. James went off to camp I know, but Tommy never did. He loved Fritz Orr. It certainly was a great school. Oh, I know what I need to talk about is the Buckhead Coalition.<sup>10</sup>

OTTLEY | 38:59

Perfect. Let's, let's talk about it.

SHEPHERD | 39:00

[laugh] All right. I was the first woman to be in the Buckhead Coalition, and the first woman to be the president. So Sam and I got along really pretty well but he ran the place, there was no doubt about it. And he would talk about us in the meeting, say "all you guys." And I'd look at him "oh, sorry." I said, "it's okay." I got used to it. So he finally stopped and it was, I was just one of the guys. For a while before there was -- it was quite a while before there was another woman mm-hmm. And then when I was elected chair, Charlie Loudermilk called up Sam and he said, um, she's gonna ruin, make your life miserable. She's gonna ruin your life. Well, it didn't happen [laugh]. It worked out fine. Sam didn't feel that way, but Sam immediately came and told me what he said. I mean, typical [laugh]. That was funny.

OTTLEY | 39:47

When did the Buckhead Coalition kind of get started?

SHEPHERD | 39:50

Probably in, gee, early eighties maybe.

OTTLEY | 39:55

Okay gotcha. Were you, and you might have provided this to us, a member of a rotary club or?

SHEPHERD | 40:00

Downtown Atlanta Rotary. Yeah and then I was the first woman, this is fun to break a glass ceiling, I was the first woman elected an elder in Trinity Church. And then I was the first woman to be a member of the board of First Atlanta, which became Wachovia.<sup>11</sup> Okay. And that was a

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<sup>10</sup> The Buckhead Coalition is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1988 by former Atlanta Mayor Sam Massell. The organizations main goal is to support the wellbeing of Buckhead and its residents. It does through numerous ways, such as advocating on behalf of the community within the city of Atlanta and metropolitan region, convening public and private sector leaders and partner organizations, and connecting Buckhead to other areas of Atlanta.

<sup>11</sup> Referencing Walchovia Bank which was incorporated into Wells Fargo in 2011.

very interesting time. Michael Carlos<sup>12</sup> and Bernie Marcus<sup>13</sup> were also on the board with me. And I'd already known Michael. I mean, I'd already known Bernie, because my next door neighbor on River Forest, Max Riten Baum, who'd been chairman of the Bonds for Israel, brought Bernie over to the hospital. He told me, he said, "I'm gonna bring him over." And I said, he said, "I can't give you a lot of money personally, but he's gonna be somebody who can, he's just moved to town." And so he dragged Bernie over there, and it was a fabulous experience. And he talked to people, talked to the patients, came back a year later and gave us several thousand dollars, quite a few thousand dollars. And he called some of the people by name and asked about 'em that had been there a year before. And Harold said, "if he's that smart, I'm gonna start buying his stock" and so he did, and certainly that's one reason I never had to draw a salary at Shepherd [laugh]. I could just do my thing and not be a drain on the, on their finances. So I've been a volunteer ever since. And then Genuine Parts, Wilton Looney tapped me to be chairman of the board. Larry Prince<sup>14</sup> came over to my office to see me and he asked if I wanted to go on the board. And I said, "oh, I'd love to!" And he said, "I can't believe that" he said, "well, I have to ask my board." And I said, "I don't have to ask anybody" [laugh], but I would love -- so I was the first woman on Genuine Parts, but in every case, the sea, the sky didn't fall and I paved the way for a lot of other women who have been board members and have been part of things that used to be they wouldn't have been. So that was fun. That is fun. I loved it.

OTTLEY | 42:07

Thanks for sharing that. When you bought the property on Peachtree, about what year was that and, and can you describe--?

SHEPHERD | 42:17

It was about 80' or 79' maybe. Okay. Because we moved in in 82'.

OTTLEY | 42:22

Okay. And was that Villa Clare?<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Michael is a famous Atlanta philanthropist born in 1927 and is most well known for his work in making Emory's Carlos Museum into one of Atlanta's top art institutions. Since 1981, Mr. Carlos has donated over 20 million dollars to the Carlos Museum, cementing him as one of Atlanta's most generous and impactful philanthropists.

<sup>13</sup> Bernard Marcus was the co-founder of Home Depot and a philanthropist on a national level. From serving on the Board of Directors and volunteering for the Shepard Center, he was also recognized as one of the Top 10 individuals who gave or pledged the most to charity in the United States.

<sup>14</sup> Larry Prince is Chairman and CEO of Genuine Parts Company in Atlanta, Georgia. Genuine Parts is the parent company of NAPA, the largest automotive replacement parts company in North America. The company also distributes industrial parts, office products, and electrical/electronic materials.

<sup>15</sup> Villa Clare was a house in Atlanta, Georgia located on 2020 Peachtree Road, built in 1916. The homeowner, Mr. J.J. Haverty, named it after County Clare, Ireland, where his wife and father were from. Haverty closed up the house in 1918 when his wife died, but later reopened it after he became interested in art collecting. Haverty collected many paintings in Villa Clare before his death in 1939. The former location of Villa Clare is now the site of the Shepherd Spinal Center, which is why Mr. Ottley is referencing it in this question.

SHEPHERD | 42:25

Yes. And so Rosson Haverty gave me the history book he'd written of his. And we have framed in the front hall pictures of the interior and exterior of the house. That's nice. And that was nice. And the books in the library that he had written about the Villa Clare.

OTTLEY | 42:42

Was the house structure still there at that time?

SHEPHERD | 42:45

No, it had become a parking lot

OTTLEY | 42:46

At that time. Okay. Gotcha.

SHEPHERD | 42:47

Yeah, it was a parking lot when the speech school occupied the house after the family moved out.

OTTLEY | 42:52

Is that right?

SHEPHERD | 42:53

And only for a short period of time.

OTTLEY | 42:57

Can you describe, I mean, just kind of thinking back, what did what did that area of Peachtree or Buckhead look like when you were there?

SHEPHERD | 43:05

Well, to go on about the other properties north of us, there was the car wash. And James really wanted all that property to the railroad. He knew we were gonna need it mm-hmm and so the car wash people had a daughter who was our patient, so they, when they decided to move, they said, you can have this at a very, very fair, less than fair price. It was really super, and then the next was Pearl's Restaurant. And a friend of James in YPO from Tennessee owned the property, he said, called him up and said, "James, I'm selling, I'm gonna sell that property. You have first refusal, and I'll make sure it's a good price." We got that, and then the hotel fell into disrepair and was repossessed by the lender, and we got that for almost nothing. So acquiring that, and then the property south of Collier that we've just built the apartments on. That was owned mainly by an investor in Germany and real elderly man who had dementia. We'd made offers before and he wouldn't sell, and we decided to try again. We did, we caught him on the only clear day he had in the year, and he said, yes, I will sell. We got to buy that [laugh].

OTTLEY | 44:22

I mean, one blessing after another right?

SHEPHERD | 44:23

Everything that's ever happened to Shepherd has been just like that. It's just amazing. I mean, Bernie's big gifts have come at a critical time each time. And he named the second building, the Marcus building in honor of her birthday. And Jane Woodruff, who was my neighbor and friend. And I was very careful not to, I mean, I didn't pay any attention to how much wealth she had behind her. I didn't even know, I guess. But she was just a friend and I always treated her that way, and so we remained friends until she died. And there were only about three of us left at that point. So I saw our boys grow up on River Forest there, and then Bill Parker's children were there. Charlie Nunley, Bill Hatcher was behind us. He was a board member. Talbut Nunley's a board member. Virginia Crawford was across the street. She was of course, so, so helpful. And we'll never forget her. When James was in the hospital, he was in this circle, electric bed, and you had to turn him face down for a while, pancake between two stretchers [gestures] and she got down on her back on the floor at Piedmont to read him a book. And she of course gave the money for our first kitchen and cafeteria, and then for the Virginia Carol Crawford Research which is still going on. She gave all the seed money there. So it was our neighbors around on River Forest that were board members and supported us. It was really something.

OTTLEY | 45:56

Tell us a little bit about -- you mentioned the apartments. Are these specially designed?

SHEPHERD | 46:01

Oh my goodness. Yes. They are, they're fabulous.

OTTLEY | 46:03

Where you said South of Collier, tell us where they're located.

SHEPHERD | 46:05

This is just behind the Shell Station. I guess it's a shell station, whatever the gas station is on the corner of Petree and Collier. Okay. We have the rest of the block to 28th Street, so you enter on 28th, and we have a hundred two bedroom apartments, 63, one bedroom, and we now have two Atlanta policemen who are living rent free in those apartments. They're completely furnished. The kitchen is furnished. They have a washer dryer and even cookbooks, the Brookwood Hills ladies have put cookbooks together that they didn't need -- real basic ones put in each unit, and they've written a message of, of encouragement in there for the families. So the families who are more than 40 minutes away can stay in there until the whole time their patients are there for no money at all.

OTTLEY | 46:55

That's fantastic.

SHEPHERD | 46:56

It only costs us \$17 a day to operate 'em, because we don't clean 'em every day. The people who, who live there clean them. It has a health club, it has a big recreation room. And on the 15th floor we have a sky deck with an outdoor deck, which you can see from Peachtree as you drive down and it's just beautiful. There's a catering kitchen, so if the people wanna put together a Christmas Eve party or whatever, dinner together, some of the families they can and two weeks ago, which would've been mid-December, we had already had about a hundred families in there from 13 states. Our patients come from every state in the United States and from about 70 foreign countries. So we always have people from other countries. A lot of families moved to Atlanta because of Shepherd. We had a young man from Austria who the State Department flew directly to us. His parents were diplomats with the embassy there, and he had lost an arm and been paralyzed in a terrible accident. And they flew him right in, and they have now moved to Atlanta and live here because of Shepherd. So we see that a lot. People in other communities who can, with their own business, whatever they happened to, whatever state it is happens to be or whatever kind of business they have, they're able to move. They do because they want their family member to be able to take part in the recreation therapy, which they can do with the rest of their lives, come in and play on our teams and so forth. So there's a lot of that. And for the care, especially with people who are higher level quadriplegics.

OTTLEY | 48:31

Got it. You mentioned the Orly crash<sup>16</sup> at one point.

SHEPHERD | 48:37

Oh my goodness. Well, one of our doctors, Dr. McDonald, his brother Paul was in James class at Westminster, and he was one of our main orthopedists, and his parents were both in that crash. But I knew so many that, I think I went to 14 different houses with my children after that crash to say we're so sorry. It shattered so many families that our kids were close to and that we were as adults.

OTTLEY | 49:11

Were there any possibility or plans that you would've been on that flight or, or visiting?

SHEPHERD | 49:18

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<sup>16</sup> Referencing the the Air France Flight which crashed on 3 June 1962 while on take-off from Orly Airport. The only survivors of the disaster were two flight attendants; the other eight crew members, and all 122 passengers on board were killed. The crash was at the time the worst single-aircraft disaster and the deadliest crash involving a Boeing 707.



No. We traveled a lot but I didn't go in groups, well, we did go on some Georgia Tech trips [laugh]. Oh, I don't know. But that was great. But I've gone every place I want to go, so that's fine.

OTTLEY | 49:35

Again since I love Buckhead so much and how Peachtree has changed. What was -- give us some of your memories, if you would, of like how Peachtree has changed?

SHEPHERD | 49:46

Well, we look at the Darlington and when they reached a 1 million mark on their they gave a lemonade and ice cream Sunday party for our patients and gave everybody a license tag, which I still have on the front of my car over, it's in the workshop now, but it says 1 million population or something like that.

OTTLEY | 50:04

And you remember when that--

SHEPHERD | 50:05

So I remember when that happened. We were across the street at that point, and now of course you see all the different buildings that were one story are coming down on Peachtree. That's just not a wise use of the real estate. So everything's gonna be three or four stories at least, that's built along there from now on. Probably seven or eight or high high rise.

OTTLEY | 50:23

Do you remember any of the fun landmarks like the the Ferris wheel at where, at the corner of--

SHEPHERD | 50:34

Oh yes. Corner Road.

OTTLEY | 50:35

Did you ever go there?

SHEPHERD | 50:35

Far Road. No, but I looked at it, and of course I know the guy that owned the property, he's really hung with that once it's quit running, and that building has been a lot of things since. But, someday it's gonna get repurposed. There are a lot of real estate people who hold onto their property thinking it's gonna be even better. And it's going to be, I mean, look what's happened in Buckhead. All those high rises, it's amazing. And some of the McMansions that have been built, not as many as further out probably, but a lot of properties have increased in size, and it's fun to see. And I still ride around whenever I'm driving in Buckhead, well, that house is so-and-so's

house, that's so and so, you know, they're the people that live there that I knew. And that's a lot of fun.

OTTLEY | 51:28

What, was at the Benihana? What was on that property before? It was Benihana

SHEPHERD | 51:36

That was the Pig and Whistle.

OTTLEY | 51:37

That was the Pig and Whistle? Okay.

SHEPHERD | 51:38

Yeah, I think so. I think so. Wait a minute. Let me think a minute. Yeah. And sometimes at intermission during, the dances, the boys would go there to fight. Somebody had a grudge, and so they would fight and everybody would go to watch. Okay.

OTTLEY | 51:55

Okay [laugh].

SHEPHERD | 51:56

Huh! Can't believe it. Kids don't do that now, that I'm aware of, that changed. But that was something, and people would have some -- there were a couple of wrecks at intermission, one from Druid Hills Country Club one time, and the kids, two boys hit a tree and were both killed and that was terrible.

OTTLEY | 52:19

It sounds like it –

SHEPHERD | 52:22

Speeding.

OTTLEY | 52:23

You know, intermission would happen. They'd need to speed to The Varsity and speed back, it sounds like.

SHEPHERD | 52:26

I guess, I guess. They liked to speed anyway. There was a lot of racing, 'cause the streets weren't crowded. And I know that when 285 opened, the same thing went on it. There was nobody on it for a while, and a lot of kids raced and raced. Unfortunately, I think James was one of them, and

he also went to the Speedway, the drag race place over there in Douglasville or some place. And he had all these trophies in his closet, and his dad went up one day and opened the door and he saw those. He said, "what are these?" He said, "I've won those drag racing." And he wondered why the transmission had come out of the car three different times. That was exclusive. He said, "I wish you'd taken me with you" [laugh]. Oh dear.

OTTLEY | 53:07

And so you live in Cobb County now, or Vining's area. Have you seen any changes that have been notable over the years?

SHEPHERD | 53:18

Well, of course that area's changed a lot. When I come out of Woodland Brook, I never turn left to go back up, up into Cobb County. I always turn right and come in back into Buckhead. So, I can't say I'm really a citizen of that area.

OTTLEY | 53:33

Do you remember when the bridge was just the one lane?

SHEPHERD | 53:35

Oh yeah, one lane. And then when Hermie Alexander was killed and he put her sign, and it's still hanging I noticed it the other day, it needs painting again. He actually married an distant in-law like you [laugh].

OTTLEY | 53:53

Yeah, okay. Right on.

SHEPHERD | 53:54

For his second wife, Helen, was my niece's stepmother.

SHEPHERD | 54:01

So I knew him and loved their house up there on that hill, that very modern house on Randall Mill. On, excuse me, the beginning of Mount Paran, up on the right. I don't know who lives there now. And the little church, there where Mount Paran dead ends into Paces Ferry. It's still there. It nearly went under and was gonna be something else, or torn down, but there's a congregation now, and I think they meet every Sunday instead of every other Sunday. Or one Sunday a month they used to.

OTTLEY | 54:34

Yeah, well, at least it was saved.

SHEPHERD | 54:36

Yes and Beverly DuBose was a friend, and he would let Tommy come to his house and just take his friends and go down and show them. Beverly didn't even go down with him and neither did Doofy. They said, "you just go down, you know what to do." And they trusted them to go look at the collection,<sup>17</sup> which is now up in the History Center, [laugh]. So that was very interesting, and now I talked to Bo in his days of when they paid construction crews to let them know if they were hitting a bunch of munitions or artifacts, and so in the heart of Atlanta Motel, that was a big one. Well, Beverly DuBose got there before the police got there and he took it all [laugh]

OTTLEY | 55:19

Is that right?

SHEPHERD | 55:19

Yeah. They took everything.. And the property that I'm on, which I said now is within 800 feet of the river, but on the Cobb County side, supposedly there's something buried around there, gold or something, supposedly. And so when Dolph Orland sold the property, he said, "well, maybe you'll find it one day." [laugh] "When you excavate for your basement, be sure and look," well, I have no idea, but there still are the ramparts there for the trenches from the Civil War, and on our street on Polo.

OTTLEY | 55:55

Gotcha. Well, are there any other topics or stories that you would like to tell us about your experience in Atlanta and Buckhead and the Shepherd Center, or--

SHEPHERD | 56:05

I'm thinking of Herbert Elis. We had a Pace Ferry Civic Association, and Charlie West<sup>18</sup> and Dennis Love, I mean, no, what's his name? Erskine Love. Beverly DuBose, all the big important men, [laugh] that were in the area, and me! I was the only woman, and we were meeting at, I'm Herbert's house and Morton Wilson came in and he was always suing someone. He was always suing someone. And so he came in and he caused a big ruckus, and Herbert got up, and he was the most gentleman person that ever lived. And he said, "Morton, I want you to leave the house" in front of all these people. And everybody went like this [stiffens]. And Morton wouldn't leave. And he asked him three times and he finally got him to leave. It was mortifying for all of us to sit there, both for both of them, but Herbert was such a gentleman. He was just one of the nicest people you could ever know, and I was part of that that evening. That was amazing, and he finally left, but he was more, he was angry. Very angry. Oh my goodness. He would come drive

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<sup>17</sup> The collection contains the personal and professional papers of the DuBose family and the historical Civil War items they collected. It was the largest private Civil War collection in the nation. The DuBose family later donated their collection to the Atlanta History Center.

<sup>18</sup> Mr. West was an Atlanta philanthropist and business leader. One of Mr. West's greatest contributions was being the founding force behind Skyland Trail in Atlanta, today one of the nation's leading institutions providing treatment, hope and rehabilitation for the mentally ill.

through the neighborhoods and look up and, and if you'd cut a tree that was dead, he thought it was still his tree and he had something to say about it. Different sort of a guy.

OTTLEY | 57:34

You know, some other things like Lenox square opening, was that a big deal? Do you have any memories of going to that?

SHEPHERD | 57:40

Oh yes, absolutely. Ed Noble<sup>19</sup> was one of our good friends. In fact, there's a whole big area in the new innovation building that's gonna be named in his memory, and that's very precious to me because he was a good friend, a dear friend. And so when he started Lennox Square and Yogi Yohannan built the restaurant out there, which was a very fine restaurant with a white tablecloth. And so my friend, my college suitemate was a full-blooded American Indian, and she came to visit him 'cause she was from Ardmore, Oklahoma, like Ed was and she came to visit here with her boys. He had to call Yogi Yohannan's restaurant and say, I'm bringing these American Indians in, and I don't want any problem about it. Segregation was still going here in Atlanta for sure. But he had to make sure that they wouldn't cause a scene and tell 'em they couldn't come in the door or something. That was unbelievable. So we all had lunch out there together. Huh. Some of the things that, you know, you can't believe we endured, or I guess we just, some of it we just didn't think about. I certainly didn't have any strong feelings about it. Oh, I remember when I first came to Atlanta, this is interesting. Went down to Davis and Paxton and there were these beautiful marble water fountains and one said white and one said colored. Well, coming out of Sioux City, Iowa, the only black person I'd ever seen was an a little orphan at the Methodist orphanage who was in the city. We saw Indians, but we didn't see any African Americans. And he was the only one I'd ever seen. So I didn't know what this meant. And I kept sampling the both of these water fountains and I couldn't figure out, well, what's the difference? This isn't colored, it's white. I didn't have any idea what it meant. Hmm. And it was just part of Davison Paxton and the city of Atlanta at that time.

OTTLEY | 59:41

At that time. Yeah.

SHEPHERD | 59:43

I'll never forget it. Unbelievable. We've come a long way, and I'm glad.

OTTLEY | 59:50

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<sup>19</sup> Ed Noble was the person who spearheaded the development of Lenox Mall during the 1950's, and is often considered as one of the main driving forces which led Buckhead to become one of Atlanta's most know and used shopping centers. After completing Lenox Square in 1959, Noble's attention shifted to the retail industry and eventually politics. Noble's business success caught the attention of then President Ronald Reagan for the U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation, and Noble lead the corporation as chairman from 1981-1986.

Any other like, memories that you want to talk about or stories? We've definitely -- I feel like we've covered a good [laugh] -- jumped around. I apologize a little bit, but I mean, you know, just gonna ask the opportunity, do you remember when Okay Cafe was, I guess it was a garage at one point, wasn't it? Or a service station?

SHEPHERD | 01:00:16

Yeah. The service stations were on three corners there. Yeah, it was one. And Richard and Richard Lewis and Susan DeRose, who operate it now are great personal friends. They grew up with my kids and were in our house a lot and so forth. So we're great friends. And I'm glad to see it being the powerhouse it is. I mean, Richard and I had lunch the other day and he said that's where half the deals in Atlanta are cut [laugh]. Over the tables at the Okay Café, and that's true. And then Bones also, and Bones has been a staple. A lot of restaurants have come and go. I remember when they built what is now—What is Tony Conway's place across the street? Across Piedmont?

OTTLEY | 01:01:01

I don't know.

SHEPHERD | 01:01:02

Anyway, it was Anthony's, wasn't it?

OTTLEY | 1:01:04

That's right.

SHEPHERD | 1:01:05

And when they built that, the people were from Memphis and he had all old pine floors and all old pieces of things that he used to construct it. And I remember it took him a long time to build it, and he operated it for a while, and then it just kind of faded. But now it got a new life. And then Flourishes, now, what was the Chrysler dealership on Piedmont. That's certainly a change. And that's such a beautiful venue with a lot of parking. Which is important in Atlanta for sure. And then the fish market, when the Big Fish<sup>20</sup> went up, I remember it was gleaming copper and now it's weathered. So it's completely different from the first few years when he put it up.

OTTLEY | 01:01:54

And the Ida Williams library.<sup>21</sup> You probably have memories of that, the original one.

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<sup>20</sup> Refers to the large, copper fish sculpture located outside the Atlanta Fish Market restaurant in Buckhead.

<sup>21</sup> Refers to Buckhead's first library, which was founded in 1929 by Ida Williams and located in R.L. Hope School on Piedmont Road, just behind what is now the Grand Hyatt Buckhead hotel. Later it moved to the McDuffie building on Roswell Road across from what is now Buckhead Triangle Park and was officially named the Ida

SHEPHERD | 01:01:59

Yeah, the original. I hate what there's now [laugh]. Oh my. And the same thing with the library on Northside Parkway. When they first built that, I thought, this is some architect who's decided to just ruin Buckhead, I mean it was a shock to see that place. It was two different, three different colors or something. Still is, of course. But it's blended in now. And the shrubbery's grown and the trees have grown, so it's not the same. I fear for all the trees in Atlanta. They're so old. You look on Peachtree Battle and there are about five more that are gonna come down, and they are, you know, this big round. And they're gonna come down. I hope nobody's in the way when they do, and they'll probably fall in the street 'cause most of the houses are up a little hill. Except down on the very left. And then of course, Bobby Jones golf course fell into disrepair, and now it's perfect. And they're building the clubhouse, and then the opera's gonna build a house right there, or a facility, and I was talking to one of their neighbors the other day, and they were thrilled that it was coming.

OTTLEY | 01:03:03

They'll save the front part of the building too, which --

SHEPHERD | 01:03:06

I was kind of surprised at his attitude. I thought that everybody on that street would be against it, but no, he was thrilled. But Bobby Jones has catered to our patients. They have a golf program that they have just for our patients and other people with a disability. So that's a good use, extra use of it. And I played tennis at Bitsy Grant for many year and watched those guys on court one you know, Bobby Dodd and all the hot shots tennis players. That was fun.

OTTLEY | 01:03:39

Alan Elis in his interview said that either he or one of his family men, maybe his brother organized a pretty competitive tennis league there. Can't remember the name of it. This doesn't have to be the last question, but when in 1950 or so, how long would it take to get from down on Peachtree to get from downtown out to the Lennox Square area? How, how quickly could you do that before--?

SHEPHERD | 01:04:08

Probably 15 minutes [laugh], if you were clipping along, they didn't have as many stoplights of course then, and they weren't synchronized anyway, but you certainly could whip it out. Traffic is completely different now. But I don't really mind it. That's when I do my best thinking is, sitting in traffic. There is nothing, nobody to talk to me, no distraction.

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Williams Library. After Williams death in 1936, it moved locations again before a different library building replaced it in 1990.

OTTLEY | 01:04:28

That's the most positive thing I think I've heard about Atlanta traffic.

SHEPHERD | 01:04:32

[laugh] I don't really mind it. I mean, you've gotta plan ahead and you've gotta take a lot more time to get somewhere, but that's the way it is. So you might as well, but I do sit there and do my thinking.

OTTLEY | 01:04:42

[laugh] That's great. 15 minutes from downtown to Lenox

SHEPHERD | 01:04:45

Probably. That was quick, and then the bus service, of course there was no Marta when I was growing up in Atlanta and you rode the Atlanta buses. I don't remember what they even called them. They were just buses.

OTTLEY | 01:04:58

And Trolleys too probably right?

SHEPHERD | 01:04:59

For sure. Up Piedmont Road. Jimmy Caswell certainly made a big impact on the north end of Piedmont. With all of his buildings there. Ofcourse he had investors, but still, that was a big change for that area. I think there's one more house still left.

OTTLEY | 01:05:17

Is that right?

SHEPHERD | 01:05:17

Just as you come off Lenox where it joins Piedmont up on the hill. I think there's one more, or there was the last time I looked [laugh] maybe gone.

OTTLEY | 01:05:28

Good. Thank you so much for sitting with us today

SHEPHERD | 1:05:34

Oh, you're welcome.

OTTLEY | 1:05:35

And telling us your stories and your memories, and memories, and we thank you for everything you've done for the city.



SHEPHERD | 01:05:39

Well it just kind of happened. I didn't set out to do things. It just evolved one thing after another, and I've enjoyed every minute of it. I love living in Atlanta. I love being here. I like all my friends are still here. My young friends [laugh]. Oh and the retirement homes are something new in Atlanta for sure. You ride out Peachtree or any of them in Peachtree Hills, then even of Corso, which is where the old Paces Ferry hospital was, and then the one across the street from Shepherd. Those are all, that's amazing. Something that needed to be there. I don't wanna be in one, but [laugh] nobody does! That's different. Well, thank you for this though. I enjoyed it

OTTLEY | 01:06:27

Thank you for your time today.

SHEPHERD | 01:06:28

It was an a interesting venture.