

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

10/7/09

Peggy Van Scoyoc (PV): This is Peggy Van Scoyoc. Today is Wednesday, October 7, 2009. I am in the home of Wayne and Jean Mitchell, and they are going to tell us today about their lives in Cary and about Mitchell's Pharmacy that they ran for many, many years in downtown Cary. First of all, can you tell me, were you born here, or where were you born?

Wayne Mitchell (WM): I was born in Franklin County near Zebulon, not far from here. Jean was born in Haywood County, North Carolina, Waynesville.

Jean Mitchell (JM): So we are both North Carolinians, born and bred. Not many of us around.

PV: That's for sure. So what brought you to Cary?

WM: We were in partnership with another pharmacist in LaGrange, North Carolina, in a drugstore. It was sort of tough to make it profitable for two families, so one of us needed to go somewhere else. So we split up, and this store that we bought in Cary became available because the owner, Kenneth Franklin, died about six months before we purchased it. His wife ran it with the help of a part-time time pharmacist running the store for about six months. So on September 1, 1956, we purchased it and ran it until July 1, 1993, in the same location.

PV: So when you arrived here, Henry Adams was running the other drugstore, is that right?

WM: That's right, Henry Adams was running Adams Drugstore, which is now Ashworth's. That was about six months after we purchased this store. The name of it was Franklin's Carolina Pharmacy, the one we purchased, owned by Kenneth Franklin who died and his wife ran it for six months. We purchased it from her on September 1, 1956. Ashworth purchased Adams Drugstore in the spring of 1957, about six months later after we did. We were close in the length of time that we were here.

JM: They were both North Carolina graduates, from Chapel Hill in the pharmacy department.

PV: So you came out of the same school. So now was Cary big enough for two pharmacies?

WM: Yes, I'd say barely because we didn't get rich. But we were able to survive, and at the end of 37 years we were able to retire and we've been getting by, with the help of saving a little bit during that time.

JM: There were 2,500 people in Cary when we moved here. And everybody knew everybody. And that little section downtown from, just those two blocks almost, were Cary. We had the grocery store and, who had the appliance?

WM: Adams had the appliances.

JM: Adams and also Hobby, Glen Hobby had been here a long time, he and Pete Murdock. Had they gone into business together yet? I think they had. They had the hardware there on the corner.

WM: They had an appliance store and hardware down there.

JM: And there was a little Piggly Wiggly up there, wasn't it, or some small store in that building where the clock is now, where they have the bath. But it was a wonderful community, and we moved into Russell Hills, which was like MacGregor Downs. It was the only new development that they had ever had in Cary. When we moved, we had three children. We had twins and Tom, Tom as not quite two and the twins were not quite one. Was Tom almost three, Wayne?

WM: Well, he was born in '53 and we came here in '56, so three, he was three years old. Almost three.

JM: He was born in October, and we moved here in September, so...

PV: And then you had one-year-old twins as well?

JM: We had our hands full. We found the house on Adams Street, with three bedrooms two little beds on a nice, sweet block.

PV: And is that this same house?

JM: No. We built this house in '63, because we had more children. We had two more children after we moved to Cary. When we had the fourth child, we had this port-a-crib in the bedroom and we

had to move it into the living room. One morning I went in to get him and a package of cigarettes had fallen out of Wayne's pocket, and he had chewed them up. And I said, this baby's going to have his own bedroom. So then we bought this land out here and built this house in '63. And then when we came here we had another baby. Our youngest who lives in Cary now, who is an electrical engineer, has two grand-daughters. Can you see my wonderful picture over there.

PV: Oh look at that. Oh, that's beautiful.

JM: Those two on the right side are two of his children, and then Tom the oldest one's.

PV: They're beautiful, three beautiful little girls.

JM: We had lots of children, but this is a beautiful spot back here to raise children because, see, nothing was back there. We had to ride out through tobacco fields and it sat out in the country, if you can believe that.

PV: So here we are right behind Barnes and Noble with the mall, and you were out in the middle of nowhere.

JM: And all that land up on Walnut Street's commercial, I'm sure.

PV: So you saw it grow from 2,500 people being out in the country basically to what it is today.

WM: 140,000.

PV: Hard to imagine, isn't it.

WM: It is unbelievable. No one would believe that it could happen. And in my opinion, it's been done very very properly. The people that ran the town, the mayor and council had foresight, so they planned a lot of this in advance, so I give them a lot of credit for what happened here, because...

JM: Fred Bond was one of the ones.

WM: Fred Bond was definitely instrumental with foresight. They had things like the Cary Parkway on the map about, I'd say, forty years before it was developed.

JM: And Maynard Road too.

WM: Oh, Maynard Road was developed early, about 1959 or '60.

PV: So shortly after you got here they started building Maynard Road. They started...

WM: About half of it. And Cary Parkway, I'm not sure when it started, but they did it incrementally. They'd go a mile or two and then another mile or two until they finally got it over here across U.S. 1. But all that was on the map, the part that hadn't been built. I'm sure it was when we came here in 1963, and it probably was in the '80s when it was completed down here by Holly Springs Road.

PV: That's a long time in advance, isn't it. Wow, maybe up to twenty years ahead of time that they were planning it.

WM: Yes, at least, or more.

JM: There was one school, one first through the twelfth grade. I guess they did have those, they had built those elementary buildings, the first and third along there, but the main part was in the, I guess they had the seventh through the twelfth in, because our children went to the seventh grade there.

WM: Cary Elementary.

JM: The oldest ones. I guess now how many schools do we have? Our drugstore grew as Cary grew. We first started, there were three stores in that building. Tell her about that, Wayne.

PV: Now where exactly was it?

WM: The building was divided into three different compartments. One was the drugstore, one was a laundromat, and...

JM: and one was an office.

PV: So it's on Chatham Street, East Chatham.

WM: Yes, 128 East Chatham Street.

JM: Where that Indian store is now. And they say that people still come in there and ask where we are. Are we still in business there? Of course we're not, but they want to find out about us.

PV: So now, when you left the pharmacy, did you close it down or did you sell it?

WM: Sold it, to brothers who were both pharmacists, the Dove's, Doug and Delon Dove. They bought it in 1993 and ran it under the name Mitchell's Pharmacy until 1998, I would guess, about five years. And it moved from there out to Prestonwood and opened where they had bigger quarters.

JM: The pharmacy, the prescriptions moved out there.

PV: Did they change the name when they moved it to Preston?

WM: They did. About that time when they moved to Prestonwood, maybe a little before, they changed it to Carolina Pharmacy, isn't that correct?

JM: They also had a pharmacy behind the hospital. So they had three. I think they started too many pharmacies too fast.

PV: Are they all still in operation?

WM: No, none of them. The one in Prestonwood survived. They sold it to Kerr Drug, the chain. And that's where it ended up.

PV: So it still lives on, even though with many generations.

WM: In some manner. Some of the same customers that traded with us go to Kerr now, go to that store because they worked there for several years after they sold it to them. So a lot of our customers followed them over there. They have since left there and work at other places. Some of them still trade there. So that's the reason they followed, all of the people who started with us. They were a local, independent pharmacy.

PV: So did you see families stick with you from generation to generation over all the years that you were running the pharmacy?

WM: Yes, we had about three generations because we were here 37 years, and so we did have the older generation, our age. We had their children, and then started to have those children.

JM: We had some great grandchildren in there too. And we knew all their names, all the family members, and some of them we would always catch up on how everybody was doing when they would come in the store, so it was like old home week. All of our customers still say, "We never found a drugstore that we liked like we did yours and we haven't found anybody we can ask questions and can fill our prescriptions like you could."

PV: That personal service.

JM: We had them spoiled, but it was good. I was the P.R. person. I would greet the people and talk to them. Because we had that arrangement that he would fill the prescription because you've got to concentrate when you're filling a prescription, and I would do the talking.

PV: So you were the counter, the up-front person and waiting on the customers?

JM: So that worked out well.

PV: And you both worked there the whole 37 years?

JM: I worked when the children got older. I'm a school teacher so I did some substitute teaching and I soon found that I didn't want to be called at 7:00 in the morning to go teach, substitute. So I said, I'm going to go work in the drugstore. So I was general plug-in there, anything that needed done I could do it, but fill prescriptions.

WM: She did a good job of it too.

JM: Later on, I had my antiques in part of the drugstore. I sold antiques there, antiques in the drugstore. I had a lot of traffic with that and enjoyed it. In fact, everybody accused me that I had taken over the whole store and just left Wayne his prescription department back there, which was about the truth.

PV: When did you get interested in antiques? Because I'm sitting in your beautiful home and it is absolutely full of the most beautiful antiques.

JM: Thanks. I did when the children were small. When they got older, actually we have lost three children. We had five children, and we've lost three children. When the first son died, I needed something to keep me busy and occupied and so I got interested in antiques, and didn't know what, bought more than I could use in my house, so Wayne said, "Well, you could put some of them in the drugstore, and try to sell some of them." So that's what, and then I really did go wild buying antiques. But it worked out very well. It gave me something to do and satisfied me. And then we lost two children in their twenties. One child from cancer, this was how many years ago?

WM: In 2001.

JM: You know, you're not supposed to lose your children, but we've managed to stay busy. Then when I retired, I got into gardening. Wayne loves to garden too.

PV: You have an absolutely beautiful garden surrounding your house. It's just beautiful. It's a little paradise out there. You must love walking out your front door in the morning.

JM: We do. We love it outside. We don't care much for inside. So when we moved the post office out, [the Mitchells donated a historic Cary post office sorting table to the Friends of the Page-Walker a few months ago] and I went downstairs in the basement and brought some of my artwork up. I used to do oil paintings. Those on that wall, that's a pastel over by the window. And this is our barn at our mountain house.

PV: So these are you own paintings? Oh, those are beautiful. These are your own paintings.

JM: Those two, the cheese and the still-life over there. I had those left. I just had them in the basement, and I said well why don't I bring these upstairs.

PV: They are beautiful. You are very talented.

JM: Thank you. I would like to get back to my oil painting, when I get my house done. I'm getting rid of my antiques now. I'm taking them to an antique auction gallery and that's working out very well.

PV: It is hard to part with them?

JM: No, because that's my way of downsizing. I'd like to stay in this house, so I need to get rid of clutter and just get rid of things. So it makes it easier when I have a place to take them to get rid of them, and to sell them. Antiques are still selling well for me. So that's good.

PV: Are you still buying, or no?

JM: I buy things for myself, which I don't really want or need much, but every once in awhile I'll see something that I have to have. You know how it is when you buy antiques, you like them too. I have to have something out of it myself.

PV: Really beautiful things. So you've seen a lot of changes obviously. And one of the things that changed over those years, I'm sure, is drugs. When you started out there probably weren't that many drugs, were there?

WM: No, and what is really amazing is the price of prescriptions. Then when we came here the average price of a prescription was about \$1.00. That was the average price in about 1956. Now, when we left the average price was about \$30 to \$40 per prescription. Now I'm sure it's over \$50 or \$60. I don't know since I'm not in it now, but it's somewhere between \$50 and \$100, the average cost. But, there have been a lot of advancements in drugs.

PV: So what were the, what was available drug-wise when you started? Not much?

WM: Not much. Well, we had a lot of doctor's drug mixtures where you would mix about three or four different ingredients in a bottle, shake it up and take it three times a day.

PV: So they were custom-made.

WM: About three or four different drugs in the same prescription. That's what I was used to.

PV: So did we have penicillin yet in '56?

WM: Penicillin came out a long time ago, during the war. After the war it became commercially available. And then the other antibiotics, reomycin, acromycin and all of these newer antibiotics came out after penicillin.

PV: So when did they start, in the early sixties or was it before that?

WM: Reomycin came out about 1949. And acromycin came out probably five years later. So those two and they were new antibiotics. Based on the structure of those chemicals, they have come along with hundreds of antibiotics since. And of course, other things () and all that kind of stuff came out, everything is different.

PV: So what did they have for heart disease back then, very much?

WM: Digitalis.

JM: Bed rest.

WM: Digitalis and bed rest, that was the worst thing they could do. People used to, when you had a heart attack, you didn't move for two weeks in the hospital. And then you'd go home and you would move very little for the next two weeks. Then after that, you didn't get out and walk for a mile or two miles or anything like that. You still took it easy. So people with heart attacks died when they were young, a lot of times. Now they get you out there walking two miles a day in thirty minutes and this kind of stuff. And they found out that it would extend your life for years, many years. So that was a big thing, along with a lot of other things that have extended your lifespan. Exercise, I think, and drugs are in there too, because they came along.

JM: Tagamet came out too, that was a big drug, wasn't it. Tagamet, for the stomach.

WM: Well, that was in the sixties, '65 to '70, around there. It was innovative, something new.

JM: Then the cholesterol medicines started coming out right before we stopped, didn't it.

WM: Yes, in the eighties and nineties.

JM: The first one was sand, or what was that prescription?

WM: They tried everything to lower the cholesterol.

JM: But what did they, I remember some of those drugs were in sand.

WM: They thought that this sand-like product would absorb some of the cholesterol when it was ingested into the body, into the stomach. Maybe it did, I don't know exactly, but that was the theory.

PV: So was this sand substance in a pill form or...?

WM: In a capsule. Some of it was in just take a spoonful and mix it with water and drink it.

JM: I remember stirring it in a tin of stuff, about that high and that round. () I remember thinking oh those poor people, having to take that. ()

PV: How long was that on the market?

WM: Oh, that wasn't used that long, two or three years, three or four years, maybe five. It wasn't used that much.

JM: Then valium came out, I remember when valium came out. When was that?

WM: Oh, that was about 19..., late sixties.

PV: That was over-used for many years, I think.

WM: And birth control pills came out about the same time.

PV: Mid sixties, changed a whole lot of things.

WM: Yes, that revolutionized things.

PV: And they were so strong in the beginning, the birth control pills.

JM: And prophylactics, I know you're not going to put this in an article. But we used to keep those in the back, and people would never ask me for them. Wayne would put them in a little bag and always put merchandise with them. We had a big charge service that a lot of the young people liked,

especially when they had a lot of sick children. It was nice to be able to charge. Wayne would open accounts for people and they appreciated that.

PV: So you were carrying your own credit? So this wasn't their own credit card, this was a credit account that you carried?

WM: No. This was before credit cards. Well, I would think they were out there maybe, but were very seldom used.

JM: We just mailed them a statement once a month.

PV: Wow, how long did you do that?

JM: Until we closed. People were still charging. We had a lot, that was a big thing to get out, one week, get all those bills out, add them up and get them out.

PV: A lot of paperwork for you.

JM: And we did a lot of insurance. Insurance became a big thing, when?

WM: Oh, I guess in the seventies and eighties it started. Before then nobody had, not many people had insurance. State employees were first, school teachers and so forth. They had a state plan. We filled out the forms for them so they could collect, a long time ago, back in the sixties.

PV: So it wasn't until the seventies or so that insurance became more readily available for people?

WM: Yes, it became, it started in about the seventies, insurance. And it kept getting bigger and bigger, and more complicated. Now everybody has insurance that pays for the drugs, and that kind of stuff. Mostly, not everybody.

JM: Actually it was bad for an independent, because the other stores would get their medicines cheaper. Plus the insurance companies would tell us what we had to sell it for. They set the price, didn't they Wayne, how much?

WM: Well, they'd give you, accept a co-pay which determined how much profit we made.

Well, it wasn't too... ()

PV: Hopefully you never lost money on a prescription because of the insurance company.

JM: We probably did.

WM: But it was not often, anyhow. It was still good to have because it was for people would keep coming back to you.

JM: We lost some of our good customers if their insurance would change. They would have to change with that, go to the store that offered it because every store didn't offer everything. It got so you almost had to, to stay in business. Insurance really started becoming very important and I think it's become more important.

PV: I'm sure that was very time-consuming and labor intensive to keep up with the insurance.

JM: Well, we did it for our customers too. We would fill in their forms with the prescriptions they've gotten for the month, and that was a nice personal service too.

PV: I can see why your customers were loyal to you forever.

WM: Yes, they were loyal.

JM: We wanted to do everything we could to help them, make them well.

PV: Now did you have a soda fountain?

WM: Yes, I did until Jean got into the antique business.

JM: After awhile we kept it but it was an old fountain and it was about to go. We mostly served ice cream and Coca Cola. We didn't serve food. Nabs and candy and gum. We needed the space for my antiques, so the fountain came out.

PV: We interviewed the Seeger's, Fred Seeger and Marie Seeger, and Fred worked for you, I think, didn't he?

JM: Did he for awhile, he probably did.

WM: I was in the Lion's Club with him.

PV: Now he talked about Lacey Gilbert. Was Lacey an employee of yours?

WM: No, but he ran that drugstore. It opened in 1950. This is history that I didn't get into.

PV: So the Franklin's ...

WM: Lacey Gilbert ran it for, I can't think of his name. He was a legislator. He married the girl, Bettingfield fellow. () He opened the store in that building in 1950. And I don't know what he named it, something like the Cary Pharmacy, something like that, but I'm not sure. It might have been his name. But Lacey Gilbert was in school with him, in pharmacy school. And when he got out, he ran this drugstore that () [John Henley was his name.] He lives down in Hope Mills. () Lacey Gilbert ran it for Mr. Henley, and Henley was a member of the state legislature. () He was in politics. But he also opened the drugstore in that spot in, I believe, 1950. It might have been in '51. And he ran that for about three or four years. But it didn't do too well, I think. So he sold it to Kenneth Franklin, and his wife was the one we bought it from. That was in 1956. So that's the real history of it. I forgot about that part of it. So who told you about that?

PV: Fred Seeger. Fred Seeger was a soda jerk, or soda fountain jerk and he worked for Lacey Gilbert, and he talked about how all the high school kids... Fred was still in high school, but he talked about how he, all the kids would come from the high school after school to get sodas or whatever.

JM: They would come to our store too, until Ashworth came in and then it got diluted.

PV: You split up the kids?

JM: () Seeger, Marie is Kay Mann's sister, isn't it? () And Kenneth Franklin also ran a drugstore in the Carolina Hotel, didn't he? Didn't he have a Carolina Pharmacy right by the hotel? What was the history on that?

WM: Well, that's not pertaining to Cary, but Kenneth Franklin was the one that did own it, and it was named Franklin's Carolina Pharmacy. He ran the Carolina Pharmacy in the professional

building in Raleigh. The professional building was THE building back then, professional, where all the doctors were, on Fayetteville Street, real close to the courthouse.

PV: So all the doctors had their offices?

WM: All the doctors were in the professional building, so he opened a drugstore, Carolina Pharmacy, on the bottom floor, and I believe it might have been in the Sir Walter Hotel there. See, they're right together. I believe his drugstore was in, next to the lobby in the Carolina, or Sir Walter Hotel. That's where the Carolina Pharmacy started, then he left there and moved it to Cary, but it was still Franklin's Carolina Pharmacy. That was the name of it when we purchased it. Then it became the Mitchell's Pharmacy.

JM: He used to, Wayne had really long hours. He would open at 8:30 and work until 9:30.

PV: Every weekday and on Saturdays?

JM: And on Sunday afternoons. Finally they started alternating Sundays.

WM: Ashworth's, they'd open one of us one Sunday and then alternate, in the afternoon.

JM: But one thing that we didn't get clear was that where those three stores were, in that building, as the town grew, Wayne took in the second store, knocked the wall out and took in the second store and grew more until he took out the second wall, take the walls of that three-store, and knock that out so that the whole building was one big store, like it is now.

PV: Where the India store is now.

JM: So we remodeled twice to expand. He kept a well stocked prescription. He had always had the latest thing, cause Ralph would borrow from him. So they knew that if they go to Mitchell's Pharmacy, that he'll have it.

PV: And you carried a lot of over-the-counter drugs and that kind of thing as well?

WM: Not too many over-the-counter, no.

JM: This was back in the prescription department. He kept up with all of that.

PV: So the prescription department, and then the soda fountain. What else did you sell before you brought in the antiques? What else did you sell in the store?

JM: We had front items, cosmetics,

WM: Candy, candy was a big item.

JM: Valentine was a big day. We wrapped.

WM: We were the only people between Raleigh and Apex that sold Whitman's candy, so we, Valentine's Day, that was...

JM: All red hearts. And those men would go up there and buy them. They would always buy, and then we would wrap them with fancy paper and put a ribbon on them. That was a big day. And Christmas we used to sell a lot of candy too.

WM: Toys, we had toys.

JM: Yes, we had a section of toys. We sold like a small department, but we didn't have things like they do now, like the big drugstores do. I think they have more, they are more of a general store.

PV: Baby items and clothes and all kinds of things.

JM: We had a little baby department. ()

WM: A regular drugstore.

JM: And our boys worked. They started working usually when they were about fourteen in the drugstore.

PV: Did any of them become pharmacists?

JM: None of them became pharmacists. They saw how hard they worked and what long hours. It would be nice to mention the names of our children since they grew up here. Our oldest is Thomas Wayne Jr., Tom. And he lives in Amsterdam. He is an international corporate lawyer for Baker MacKinsey. He's a big shot. He has two children, Clare and Michael. And then the three children that we have lost are the twins, Jess and Jim, and Sam.

PV: They were both boys?

WM: Yes, all boys. Everybody was boys. Five boys.

JM: But I finally got some granddaughters. And then Sydney Mitchell lives in Cary. He is an electrical engineer. I guess we should say Sydney and Renee, his wife, Sydney and Renee.

WM: This is about Cary now.

JM: They are a big part of Cary, they grew up here. They have two granddaughters, Victoria and Caroline, who are at Cary High now.

PV: That's quite a family.

JM: Never a dull moment. You can see why I didn't collect antiques until they got older, five boys bouncing around. ()

PV: What about the doctors. When you first arrived here there were probably very few, right, and you saw that grow?

WM: There were two doctors when we came. Dr. William H. Bland, and Dr. Yarborough. What was his first name?

PV: Frank. () So there were just the two doctors. And they were both general practitioners?

WM: That was it. General practitioners.

PV: And then you saw that grow, I'm sure.

WM: Right, but it stayed the same. As a matter of fact, it was reduced when Dr. Yarborough died in October of 1957, during the flu epidemic of 1957.

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JM: During the flu epidemic, it was so bad. Wayne had a telephone installed in our bedroom so that he could get up in the night or whenever and go fill prescriptions. And this was another thing he was known for was going out at night for sick babies and sick people. He would go down, open the store. ()

PV: You were on call twenty-four hours a day then, it sounds like.

JM: Back to the doctors now.

PV: So there was a bad flu epidemic in 1957?

JM: Yes. Whole families, our whole family had it.

WM: The phone was an extension. You've seen extensions in your house. This was an extension that ran one mile from the drugstore to our house. And that was unheard of back then. But it only cost about \$5.00 a month, something like that. A friend of mine who worked for the telephone company suggested it. He said, now if you want some extra credit, get your extension at home and you answer the phone every time it rings. And I would do that. And somebody said, I would come all the way down to pick the prescription up, I'd get in my car and make it to the drugstore before he did. That kind of stuff. You needed the business.

PV: Did you get many calls at night, was it often?

JM: I remember them in the middle of the night.

WM: Yes, we got some. But then after about a year or so, we took that out because it was a little bit disturbing, at twelve o'clock at night, and it didn't really mean anything. They didn't really have an emergency or anything. They thought they rang the drugstore. But Dr. Yarborough and I had sort of a thing. I told him what I was doing and he would call that number and I would meet the people down at the drugstore for awhile. That went on for a little while, for maybe a year.

PV: Because he would be out, he did house calls until the wee hours.

WM: Oh yes. And he would work until twelve or one o'clock at night. Sometimes he wouldn't start until five or six, and he would work until after one o'clock. And that's when a lot of times the phone would ring. I'd meet them down at the drugstore.

JM: Later on when they would want him to meet at the drugstore, he would have to call the police department and ask them to meet him because you know drugs became a problem. But they would meet him down there.

PV: So you had to really tighten security then, after drugs came in in the sixties. Was that a problem?

WM: Well, it never was bad here.

JM: It just was more of a safety precaution.

WM: Most people that called and wanted service, I knew them. If it was somebody I didn't know, and hadn't known anything about them, I might have had the police be sitting across the street in their car when I met them up there, something like that.

JM: Didn't Everett Thompson come pretty soon after that? When did Everett come?

WM: One of the first ones was Wally Evans. Let's see. Did Dr. Thompson come before, it seems like, who came first. Anyhow, Dr. Wally Evans and Dr. Benjamin Thompson, and Dr. Scott Thomas was the next doctor that was... there were more than that. Dr. Mary Munch.

PV: A woman. When did she come in, do you remember?

WM: She came in, actually she was the first one after Dr. Yarborough died, I think, that I can recall. She came and worked for several years. She married Waldo Rood who was the mayor of Cary, after his wife died.

JM: Actually she attended to his wife, I think that's when they, which was fine. Now Dr. Thompson had an office in where Serendipity is now, in Dr. Hunter's old office. That was Everett's first office.

WM: Yes, but Dr. Mary Munch was there before he was.

JM: Where was she, where was her office?

WM: In the Serendipity.

JM: Actually that was Dr. Hunter's old office, right?

WM: Yes. But I believe she was the first, and then Dr. Thompson. And then Wally Evans occupied that same space afterward Thompson moved away. And there was another one.

JM: Thompson built his own office.

WM: Yes, I remember that, but he worked out of Serendipity for awhile. But there was another doctor down in Georgia or somewhere that came here for several months who was killed in an airplane crash going back to Georgia or someplace where he was from, a couple of years after he moved here. He was in the Serendipity. What was his name? I can't remember, but somebody will know if you really want to find out. Maybe Ralph Ashworth. But he died in a plane crash on the way to Alabama, I believe it was, where he was from. But he was here at least a year. () But I believe the order that I can remember was Bland and Yarborough. Yarborough died so we only had one, and tried to get somebody. Dr. Bland tried to find somebody. Finally I believe the first one that he might have found was this doctor from Alabama that died, and then Mary Munch who became Mary Rood. And she died ten or fifteen years ago.

JM: And then Everett came.

WM: And Dr. Everett Thompson was in that same office. I don't know whether Scott Thomas, I don't believe he was in there. They often went in the same building.

JM: They built there across from Yarborough's house. Everett built that building. He was Benjamin Everett Thompson () He built that big office up on the corner right across from the library and across from Yarborough's office. Then Scott Thomas came in the office at that time, plus the ()

WM: Dr. Telfer.

JM: Then Dr. Telfer moved in. I believe that's about the first doctor.

PV: That's quite a few. As Cary grew, the number of doctors grew and kept on going, I'm sure after that.

WM: That was about it though for several more years.

JM: What about Dr. Brown? When did he move in?

WM: That was several years after that.

PV: And then the hospital wasn't built until the seventies? The Cary Wake Med?

WM: I would guess the seventies, but I'm not... '75, '80, I'm not sure. ()

PV: Are you happy that you chose Cary? Do you feel that it was the right decision?

WM: Oh yes. Wouldn't change it. We had a lot of good times and some bad times. By in large, I wouldn't change it.

JM: It was a wonderful community. The people were always very nice. The one problem is, a lot of them moved. You would get to know people and they moved. () We've been right here in this house since '63, and in our last house on Adams Street for seven ()

PV: The only other thing that I can remember that Fred Seeger told us was, I guess when Lacey Gilbert was running the drugstore way back when, that he brought in one of the very first television sets in Cary so that he could turn on the Pabst blue ribbon fights. And all the men in Cary would go down to the drugstore and watch the fights on whatever night it was in the drugstore. I guess at the soda fountain. Do you remember that? Or was that before your time?

WM: I remember the Friday night Pabst blue ribbon fights.

PV: At the drugstore?

WM: Well, not at that drugstore, because...

JM: They had it out when we bought it. Kenneth Franklin would have taken it out.

PV: That was a big event. All the men in Cary would come to watch the fights, and it was one of the only TVs in Cary, so that was a novel thing as well.

JM: Next to the drugstore at one time they had Saturday night bluegrass music. They didn't call it bluegrass. They had some famous people in Cary that would come in the drugstore. Who all was it, Wayne, that you saw?

WM: Ernest Tubbs was one. Let's see, the girl that was killed in a plane crash?

PV: Patsy Kline?

WM: Yes. All those from Nashville.

JM: See, that was a movie theater next to our store, the Randy Chandler family owned, and then they turned it into that little, what did they call it, the Saturday night country... some kind of Saturday night country music review. And they had a stage and all up there because it was a theater. So that lasted I don't know how many years. And then Randy turned it into a men's clothing store, and the Chandlers ran that. Randy worked at Belk's for years. He's a character, an old time... they're from Morrisville, didn't they? Carpenter.

One other interesting thing was, when we moved here, this was the route to Florida and we'd have people stop by to get fountain cokes and buy things on the way to Florida.

WM: U.S. 1 and U.S. 64 ran right there on Chatham Street, up until in the sixties. Sometime U.S. 64 was moved where it is now. U.S. 1 moved about the same time, they both moved where they are now. People from up north, New England, New York, would come through here on the way to Florida and then they'd come back. And some of the same cats would stop on the way down and then the same ones would stop on the way up, and they had a filling station, an Esso filling station right in front of the drugstore. They said the reason they stopped there, they could stop there and get gas, come over there and get ice cream.

JM: We had sandwiches too.

WM: So that was the big thing back then. And we served a lot of people just on U.S. 1 and 64.

JM: What else can we think about from the store.

WM: That's just part of Cary. At one time, U.S. 70 came through Cary, came right, U.S. 1. N.C. 54 and U.S. 70, U.S. 64 and U.S. 1 all came by Cricket service station on the corner. ()

JM: It had moved across the street.

WM: It was on the V down there that is formed by Chatham Street and the street that goes under the railroad track over to 54. Bob Strother's flower shop is there. Right there is where the intersection was for U.S. 70, 64, U.S. 1 and 54 all came right by there. So that was probably in the fifties when U.S. 70 was moved. Actually the new U.S. 70 went by the north of the airport, that was a new highway back then, so that was a long time ago. That was before we moved here.

PV: And not long before I-40 was put in, I would think. So then other than your soda fountain with sandwiches, were there any other restaurants in Cary where people could stop?

WM: Yes, the El Dorado motel and they had a restaurant in there. Enza, didn't she run it?

JM: Yes, Enza Batts she was then. It was hard to find a good place to eat.

PV: So now where was the El Dorado?

WM: Rogers Motel, that was the El Dorado, run by Mr. Batts.

JM: I don't remember his first name. And Enza Batts. () Wasn't Rogers Restaurant, Mr. and Mrs. Rogers?

WM: That was later on. They ran the restaurant where the appliance store...

JM: Wolfe's appliance store used to be, is where Cindi's restaurant is now.

WM: When we first came to Cary, Rogers ran the restaurant where Wolfe's Appliance is, back in 1956.

JM: When did Rogers buy that El Dorado?

WM: Several years later when he opened Rogers Restaurant, and the motel where it is now. And it remained there until about ten years ago, I guess.

PV: You've just seen so many changes and so much growth. Just at the intersection of Academy and Chatham Street, that had so many changes over the years. The same buildings but a lot of businesses have come and gone, I would imagine, along Chatham Street near Academy. But some of them have been there a long time, like Johnson's Jewelers. Haven't they been there a long time? They were just down the street, Johnson's Jewelers and the barbershop.

WM: They've been there ever since we have, both of them, they were there when we moved in.

JM: Well, Mr. Johnson ran Johnson's Jewelers then. Then the Capps bought it from him. The Capps run it now but they bought it from, wasn't it Mr. Johnson. ()

PV: And they're still there. And Rich's Barbershop, they've been there a really long time.

WM: Austin is still there.

JM: That was Mills Barbershop before. He's one of the ones that sold his property out to Crossroads for a \$ million an acre. He owned that store, barbershop. But he sold, the land started really getting expensive and then the Roysters held out. Maynard Royster held out and wouldn't sell his property, and they built Crossroads all around and here was his house down in the middle of this dense construction. But they finally, I think they finally sold it, don't you, but I don't know how much he got for it.

WM: Well, it's not there anymore.

JM: It's gone, but I don't know how much he finally got for it. His widow is still living. But they were glad to sell their land. Most of them were glad. Like Mills was tickled to death to sell his land for that, I would think. I would, wouldn't you? That was another interesting thing when they could do drugstores. All those stores downtown.

WM: But it had something to do with Cary.

JM: And the downtown area.

PV: You've seen a lot of history, actually, pass through your store and down your road and all around where you are. You watched the mall being built, probably, from right here.

JM: We can't even get out, at Christmas we have to go to Lawrence Road. There's one stoplight for us to get out, because the cars are lined up solid. But there's one other thing too, when we started to... I was in the Junior Women's Club, and we started the library, the first library. Didn't we have that also in Serendipity, or did we start upstairs over that building. I think we had our library there when we first opened. The doctors weren't in that office anymore. I can't remember. Because we had our library, we just started with a few books on the shelf. Then, of course, the county started giving some money. But Cary didn't have a library until the Junior Woman's Club started it. That was a good thing.

WM: You were active in that, weren't you?

JM: Yes. We wrote the constitution to it in my kitchen on Adams Street for it. Because my one of the twins, who was just a little toddler, and he bumped into something and split his chin open. I had to go have him sewed up and they were still working on the typewriter and we had to get him sewed up. He was spouting blood. Then it was fun to be in garden clubs and things like that, because you were home with the children and that was the time at Cary, in that older section, but I do volunteer a lot. I liked to volunteer. That's the important thing. But in Cary, you knew everybody. You'd go to the grocery store and you couldn't even buy groceries for standing there talking. It was fun, knowing everybody. Seeing everybody drive by, you know everybody in their car. It was just a nice place for children to grow up, for us to grow up, so to speak.

PV: A nice, quiet, safe...

WM: You knew everybody in Cary back when we worked here, only 4,500.

JM: We've been members of the Methodist church since '56. That's how long that... And the only two churches we had was the Methodist and the Baptists downtown. Then the Catholic church came, that was a big shock, a Catholic church.

WM: The Presbyterian was over there off of...

JM: Yes, a Presbyterian, it had the first kindergarten. It was right behind our house on Adams Street. Like you say, it really has been interesting to watch it growth.

PV: Well, this has been fantastic. Thank you so much. I just really enjoyed hearing all your stories and your memories. And the town certainly appreciates knowing all of this too. And I want to formally on tape thank you both again for donating the wonderful post office sorting table that you just donated to the town, that at one time stood in the Cary post office. We are thrilled to have it, and thank you so much for donating that to the town. We really will treasure it and take good care of it. Again, thank you for that as well.

JM: We really think we found a good home for it. And that it will add to people's knowledge of Cary when it was smaller. So we can't think of a nicer place for it to be. It's so good.

PV: Well, good. And we will treasure it and take very good care of it. So thank you so much for giving that to us. Thank you.

End of Interview