

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH GREGG ANDERSON
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY
SHAUN ILLINGWORTH
and
JESSICA AUMICK

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
OCTOBER 8, 2020

TRANSCRIPT BY
JESSE BRADDELL

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an oral history interview on October 8, 2020, with Gregg Anderson of the Rutgers College Class of 1970. This is for the Class of 1970 Project. Mr. Anderson, can you tell us, for the record, where you are today, what town?

Gregg Anderson: I'm in Somerset, New Jersey.

SI: I am in Hightstown, New Jersey, and Jess, what town are you in?

Jessica Aumick: I am in Hackettstown.

SI: To begin, can you tell us where and when you were born?

GA: I was born in San Luis Obispo, California, on May 19, 1948.

SI: Okay. For the record, what were your parents' names?

GA: Jack R. Anderson and Mary Grace Anderson.

SI: Starting with your father's side of the family, can you tell us a little bit about the family background, how they got out to California, that sort of thing?

GA: I'm a fourth-generation Californian. I was born there. My father was born there. His father, my grandfather, was born there, and his father was born there. I don't know if that makes me fourth or not, but they ended up in San Francisco long before California became a state. They had a restaurant or something in San Francisco. My grandfather and grandmother ended up moving to Watsonville. He [my grandfather] worked for the railroad; he was an ice man. That's where my father and his sister were born, and they grew up in Watsonville.

When World War II started, he left Cal Poly after I think two years of college and joined the Marine Corps. [Editor's Note: Cal Poly is California Polytechnic State University, a public university in San Luis Obispo, California.] Then, since he had some college time, they made him a sergeant. So, he was a drill sergeant in World War II in San Diego and he kept wanting to go be part of the combat and all that, but they needed him to train soldiers.

Eventually, he got transferred out and went to Guam, and he caught tuberculosis there. It was after Guam was liberated. They shipped him to Hawaii, and he had TB in both of his lungs. To cure it back then, they had antibacterials, but they deflated his lung and filled his lung up with antibacterial and then reinflated it. But his left lung never reinflated. So, he had a space between his ribcage and his lung, and he would've drowned. It would've killed him because the body doesn't like spaces, and so their solution to that was to cut out all of his ribs on his left side. So, he had these scars. He was, as a result of that, a totally disabled World War II veteran, even though he never saw any combat.

He was in the hospital in Hawaii for a year. Then, they transferred him to San Diego, and that's where he met my mother. We're not really sure [laughter], but they said they went to Tijuana

and got married. After he got discharged, he went back to Cal Poly [in San Luis Obispo], and that's where I was born and where my older sister was born.

My mother, she was born in Hudson, South Dakota, and I think she was kind of rebellious. In her background, she went two years to normal school, teacher's school, and taught school for a short time. She said she learned to pilot airplanes in the 1930s, unusual for a South Dakota woman. But then when the war started, she took off from South Dakota and was a secretary with the Navy, and that's where she met my dad.

SI: Did your mother ever talk about what her service entailed, what being a secretary with the Navy meant?

GA: A little bit. I can't remember who she worked for, somebody famous. I'm not really sure. She was a volunteer, and they would go out on the coast and they'd sit on a cliff and watch for the Japanese planes in case they were going to attack San Diego. She did that like three nights a week or three days a week, and the rest of the time she was a secretary. But I don't know exactly what division or anything like that.

SI: She was a civilian though?

GA: Yes.

SI: Okay. Jess, do you have a question?

JA: Yes. I believe you noted on your survey that your mother was mostly a housewife. Is that what she did after working for the Navy?

GA: Yes.

JA: Can you go into some detail about what that entailed? Was she involved in any community service or anything like that?

GA: She worked for my father. She did a lot of the bookkeeping because he had a business for a short time. After Cal Poly, he got a degree in landscape architecture, and we moved around a little bit, ended up in Sacramento. My mother was the bookkeeper. He had a nursery and a landscape business. She did a lot of the bookwork for that, but she did some volunteer stuff. When we were growing up, we were swimmers, and so she did a lot of the swimming mother stuff. She never had a real job other than working for my father.

SI: Your father, he went back to Cal Poly on the GI Bill.

GA: Yes.

SI: Okay. As you were growing up, I am just curious, did his disability affect the rest of his life in a serious way?

GA: He smoked two packs of those little Camels a day, and his doctor said, "You've only got one lung. What are you doing?" [laughter] It was when cigarette smoking wasn't known to be that dangerous, and so he just quit. But he was fairly active. He could play golf and tennis and do his landscape work. He was disabled; he got a pension check every month. It wasn't much in today's terms. Back then, I suppose, it really helped out. But he was very active.

SI: Do you have any siblings?

GA: I have an older sister and a younger sister.

SI: What are your earliest memories of growing up? You said it was in the Sacramento area.

GA: Yes. My earliest memories. He had the nursery--it was a busy street--on Watt Avenue, and we rented the house behind the nursery. He had a buddy that had an idea to build swimming pools, and so Dad offered, "Hey, you can try it out in our yard." So, he had an idea that he could dig a hole, put the bricks in, fill it up, and do a pool in forty-eight hours. He tried and it took him longer than that, but we had a pool in our backyard, so we had to learn to swim. Swimming really was, from then on, a major part of my life. The guy that taught us to swim suggested we contact this guy, Skip Roganville, and he had a swimming school. He also had a little swim team, and so we joined the swim team. That was something I did from the time I was seven until I retired from teaching, I was involved with swimming. In fact, that's how I ended up at Rutgers.

JA: Could you share what your neighborhood was like in terms of socioeconomics and race?

GA: Say that again?

JA: What was your neighborhood like in terms of socioeconomics and race?

GA: Middle class. On Watt Avenue, we didn't have any real close neighbors. There was an Afghan family that lived behind us, they had a little farm. The school I went to was a middle-class suburban kind of school. We moved from there to another house but within the same school district, and we were there about five years. Then, we moved to another house in the same school district. We tended to move about once every five years, but I never had to change schools. It was middle class. So, that part of Sacramento, in the '50s, [had] a lot of housing developments and strip malls and things like that.

JA: I think you would have been in school at the height of the Cold War and Cuban Missile Crisis, so I wanted to ask if you remember that having any impact on your life, if you did any drills in school or anything like that.

GA: I can remember, in grade school, doing the duck and cover, crawling under the desk and covering your head. We would do those periodically, along with fire drills and so on. The last move we made was to Terra Vista, and that was within walking distance of my high school. I went to Mira Loma High School, just outside of Sacramento. I don't remember bomb drills then, but I do remember it from probably third grade through eighth grade.

SI: Growing up, going through these schools, does anything stand out about your education? Do any teachers stand out in your memory as being particularly influential?

GA: I had a biology teacher that was probably one of the best teachers that I ever had, Miss Fiedler. When I got to Rutgers, I had to take a science. I took biology, and both semesters, I was way ahead. I knew I was taught almost college biology, because there were people at Rutgers that were struggling, and I seemed to have already had it. [laughter] It was an amazing experience in a science class, and I'm not a scientist. I was liberal arts. But people were really struggling, and I was blessed to have had that teacher. [laughter]

I ran for class president. I was junior class president, and I was president of the Student Council. Because of that, we'd go to the district Student Council meetings and I got elected to that, and so I was always kind of political. Then, I ended up with a poli-sci [political science] degree from Rutgers.

SI: What do you think drew you to that?

GA: I don't know. I was always interested in politics. The first election that I remember was Dwight Eisenhower against Adlai Stevenson and then when Richard Nixon ran against Kennedy. My mother was a South Dakota Republican, and my father was a working-class Democrat, because my grandfather, the ice man, was a union guy. He was always proud that he worked all through the Great Depression. He would load railroad cars with blocks of ice. His right arm was so strong because he used ice tong-like things. He'd shake your hand, he'd almost crush it because he was so strong. I had a Republican mother and a Democrat father. To listen to them talk about the Kennedy-Nixon debate, they cancelled each other's vote. I had a social studies teacher, and we did an electoral college map. We had to predict who was going to win what states, and that just intrigued me. I've done that ever since, every election. I really blew it in the last one. [Editor's Note: Dwight D. Eisenhower served as the U.S. president from 1953 to 1961. During the presidential election campaign in 1960, Democratic candidate John F. Kennedy faced off against Republican candidate Richard Nixon in a series of four televised debates. Kennedy went on to narrowly win the election on November 8, 1960.]

JA: I believe you were then in high school when César Chávez led a farm workers march in Sacramento. Were you aware of any of that happening?

GA: We were aware of it but not too actively involved in any of that. We would boycott lettuce. What I remember most in high school was probably Kennedy's assassination in 1963. I was in Mr. Sargent's English class, and a girl came in with a note. He goes, "What am I supposed to do with this?" He just read it to us, and the rest of the day was just chaos. They sent us all home. But that's one of those events in history that you never forget. School was closed for the next three days, and we watched television. [Editor's Note: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 in Dallas, Texas.]

SI: I am curious, would you talk about politics much at the dinner table, so to speak?

GA: Other than my mother [laughter] getting frustrated with my father, not too much. I was a reader. We'd get two papers a day, a morning paper and an evening paper. I started reading the comics and then sports. I'd look for my name in the paper for swimming, and then I'd go on to the news and so on. I was always a reader, interested in what was going on in the world.

SI: Were issues like integration a factor where you were living?

GA: The north area of Sacramento was a large mostly white community. The Millers and the Browns were the only Black families in my school. I think there were two Jewish kids in school, and there were a few of Japanese descent. Everybody else was white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. It was not integrated at all. In fact, after *Brown v. Board of Education* and such, they had to do a lot of bussing. But that was after I was there; that was in the '70s. Their solution to that was to create magnet schools, and they found that the magnet idea integrated better than the bussing did. That was because in Sacramento, there was almost all Black and Hispanic schools, and then on the outskirts, they were almost all white schools. So, I didn't have an experience with African Americans or Jewish people, or very few even Asians, until I came East. [Editor's Note: *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* is a 1954 Supreme Court decision that ordered the desegregation of schools in the United States.]

SI: Tell us a little bit about your early swimming career. How old were you when you started competing?

GA: I was seven.

SI: Yes, wow. Before high school, did any of your schools have a team?

GA: We had a club team. It was the Sacramento Skippers. Then, in the summers, they'd open up the summer swim clubs, and we belonged to one of those. Then, the coach, he was skimming money from the club, and so he had to get fired. That club closed.

We went over to Arden Hills, which is kind of a world-famous club. The coach there is Sherm Chavoor, and he ended up being the '68 and '72 Olympic coach. Growing up, I was a pretty good swimmer, and I had won some medals in Junior Olympics. Sherm contacted my mother, and we went over there to his club. I don't know if you know some famous swimmers, but Mark Spitz was on that team and Mike Burton, who's a two-time gold medalist in the mile, and Debbie Meyer, who won three gold medals in Mexico, and Susie Pederson and Johnny Ferris. I was the guy off in lane six, but I was still pretty good. [Editor's Note: Swimming coach Sherm Chavoor (1919-1992) founded Arden Hills Swimming and Tennis Club in Carmichael, California in 1954. In 1968 and 1972, Arden Hill swimmers won sixteen Olympic gold medals, two silver medals and three bronze medals. Chavoor was a member of the coaching staff for the 1968 and 1972 Olympic Games and earned the title of ASCA Coach of the Year in 1968. In 1977, he was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame.]

When I was in eighth grade, Sherm had a college team, except we were in all high school, and we would go on a fall tour and a winter tour. From the time I was in eighth grade, I swam college events, but I was a high school kid. We would do a north tour. We would swim Oregon,

Oregon State, Washington, Washington State. We'd go to the Bay Area and swim Cal and San Francisco State, and then we'd go south and we'd swim USC, UCLA. We had a winning record because we had some of the best high school athletes in the country. When I came to Rutgers, I had already had four years of college experience, except I wasn't in college. So, that was a major, major part of my life. I had a lot of acquaintances in high school and I could get elected to things, but I was only close with a handful of people. My real friends were people that went to other schools, and they were all swimmers. [laughter] It's hard to explain, but that was my experience.

SI: Were there particular events that you concentrated on, or did you do everything?

GA: I was backstroker, and I swam freestyle events, two hundred, five hundred, the mile, thousand. So, I was basically a distance freestyler and a backstroker.

SI: What would you say is your most memorable experience before coming to Rutgers with your swimming career?

GA: Oh, man. There was one summer, they opened up a 200-meter freestyle for twelve-year olds. Anybody that won that event would set a national record because it was the only time twelve-year-olds could swim that event. Coach said, "You know, if you win this, you get a national record." The gun went off, and I took off. The other guys were, I mean, Mark Spitz was in the race, Johnny Ferris was in the race, and I was a lap ahead of everybody. I got a national record for one year, and then Mark Spitz broke it when they opened it up again. That was a fun event. I swam in Olympic Trials in '64 and '68. I didn't make the team obviously, but I got to swim against some pretty fast people.

SI: I am curious, would you describe it as a high-pressure sport, or was it just something you enjoyed doing?

GA: It eventually just became a way of life. In high school, I'd get up at six, I'd be at the pool by seven-thirty, I'd swim until eight-thirty, especially junior and senior year, we had a "work experience," but our boss was Sherm Chavoor and we weren't working. We were training. He was the inventor, he had created over-distance training. I'd swim in the morning, in the summers, we'd swim again at noon, and then at three o'clock, we'd swim a third time. We were doing ten to twelve thousand meters a day. It was basically a way of life. In high school, I'd swim in the morning, go to school, do my homework, and then swim again.

SI: That obviously took up a lot of your life in high school, and then you also had the Student Council work. Did you have any other activities that you were involved in?

GA: No. [laughter]

JA: Did you ever have a summer job or anything like that?

GA: My parents really couldn't afford the Arden Hills membership. I had to work a hundred hours. So, I could lifeguard, I taught swim lessons, I sat at the front gate when members would

come sign in. My sisters were supposed to do that too, but they never really did. I took on their hours. He had a big clubhouse for weddings and political receptions and things like that, and I was a busboy there and could make some extra cash.

They had a Republican [event]. This was for the governorship of California of 1962. I was the busboy at Arden Hills. It might have been a fundraiser, I don't remember. But it was one of the experiences that I'll never forget. I'm busing tables and all these rich people drinking and so on. All of a sudden, the whole room changed. It got quiet, and the whole focus went on the door. In walked Richard Nixon. [laughter] It was one of the times that I've experienced that charisma because the whole room stopped and in he walked and greeted people and so on. I was kind of amazed to see that, but that was an experience that I'll never forget. He lost the governorship that year. [Editor's Note: In 1962, Republican candidate Richard Nixon ran against Democratic incumbent Pat Brown for the governorship of California. Nixon lost by over 300,000 votes. In his concession speech, Nixon announced his retirement from politics and declared, "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore," though he went on to win the U.S. presidency in 1968 and 1972, before resigning in 1974. Pat Brown served as the California governor from 1959 to 1967, and his son Jerry Brown held the post from 1975 to 1983 and 2011 to 2019.]

SI: I was just going to ask if you remember the ...

GA: [Pat] Brown.

SI: ... If you remember watching the, "Won't have Nixon to kick around" speech.

GA: The what?

SI: The speech where Nixon said, "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore."

GA: Oh, yes, yes.

SI: As you got towards the end of high school, what did you see for yourself in the future?

GA: It was interesting because the people that I swam with were off in different colleges. I was recruited by the University of Wisconsin, UCLA, Cal and Rutgers. Frank Elm, who was the Rutgers coach, was Sherm Chavoor's assistant Olympic coach. A guy from my high school, John Hannan, he was Class of '69, he was already at Rutgers. Two other of my buddies, one from my high school and one from a neighboring school, were already at Rutgers. So, I was heavily recruited and they gave me a full scholarship, whereas the University of California, they would give half and then if you did well on the varsity team, they would increase it. That's what a lot of colleges do today. When I got a chance to go East, I took it. My dad said, "No, you should stay here. You should go to Cal or UCLA." My mom said, "No, go, take it," because they knew they couldn't really afford my older sister in college and me in college, so that was a decision. [Editor's Note: Frank Elm served as the head coach of the Rutgers Swimming and Diving program from 1961 to 1993.]

SI: Did you know anything about the Rutgers Swim Team before then?

GA: Yes, because John Hannan was here.

SI: Yes, okay.

GA: So, I knew a lot about it.

SI: What was its reputation at that point?

GA: What?

SI: What was the swim team's reputation at that point?

GA: Well, they weren't aligned--there was no league or anything like that, no conference, so they were independent. They swam against a lot of the Ivys, Penn, Princeton, Dartmouth, and so it was sort of Ivy League-ish. The first meet I swam in, I set a backstroke record and the five hundred record, and so I was like a big fish in a small pond, you know, that kind of thing.

SI: Before we leave high school, like we talked about earlier, you were interested in politics, current affairs, that type of thing. Were you following the Civil Rights Movement or Vietnam, issues that would become really big during your time at Rutgers?

GA: Yes, I followed it. There really wasn't much of an issue in high school. I remember I had an English teacher that went to a demonstration in San Francisco and was fired the next day because his picture appeared in the paper. That affected us. We were really upset because he was a real good teacher and we liked him. In the '64 election, Johnson came to Sacramento to give a speech and I cut school--and I had never cut school--to go see him. The Civil Rights Movement, we'd read about it, but it wasn't really something that was happening, you know, there were no demonstrations, there were very few African Americans in my high school. Vietnam became an issue by the time I graduated though, and that was 1966. [Editor's Note: Lyndon Johnson defeated Republican candidate Barry Goldwater in the presidential election of 1964.]

SI: Tell us about coming East. What was the trip like? How was it getting settled on campus?

GA: [laughter] My mother bought this ticket, and I flew from Sacramento to San Francisco to LA to Atlanta and then Atlanta to [Newark]. I guess it was cheap. It was overnight, and in those days, you wore a jacket and tie on airplanes. I couldn't sleep, and I ended up playing cards in the back of the plane with the stewardesses and some other guy. I ripped my pants from crotch all the way up the back. So, I landed at Newark Airport. It's one of those September days, where it's a hundred degrees and eighty percent humidity, and my pants are ripped. [laughter] There's nowhere to change clothes, and I have this overcoat on. I get to New Brunswick. The dorm didn't open until like five o'clock, but they let me put my bags in. I was there at ten or eleven in the morning, so I'm walking around New Brunswick with this overcoat on and ripped pants. It was bizarre. I had a friend Tommy who was a Sacramento boy. He was a sophomore, and he was my roommate. So, I got settled in pretty easily.

SI: I do not know that much about swimming, but when does the season start?

GA: Well, we started right in September.

SI: Okay.

GA: We trained all the way through NAAs, which are usually in March. So, it's basically a year-round sport.

SI: Okay. Did you have to come early to train with the team, or did you come around the same time?

GA: No, I came for freshman orientation. They had a week-long orientation at Rutgers.

SI: Once you are on campus and could get changed, what do you remember about settling in, the orientation, and getting settled in your dorm?

GA: Well, since I had a sophomore roommate, I was at Frelinghuysen, a River Dorm, and there were very few freshmen there. Almost all the other freshmen were in other dorms, and so I was kind of isolated at the beginning. What do I remember about orientation? I don't really remember too much about it.

SI: Did they still do the dinks or any kind of hazing or anything?

GA: Yes, dinks, striped tie, a name tag. I had to wear it for the first semester. All men. I remember, phys ed, you had to take phys ed as a freshman, and you had to take a swimming test. Do you know the old Barn pool? That's where I swam for four years. Frank Elm promised, he said, "You know, by the time you graduate, there'll be a new pool at Rutgers." Well, the new pool at Rutgers didn't come until the '90s, the Sonny Werblin pool. We swam all of our meets and practices in that little four-lane pool in the Barn. You had to take a swimming test, and it's forty, forty-five people in this phys ed class, all naked. "All right, let's do this test." I swam up, and they said, "You're done, you're out of here." I told them I was on the swim team. Going to practice after, what, four or five classes of naked men swimming in that pool was disgusting. [laughter] [Editor's Note: The College Avenue Gym was nicknamed the Barn due to its outside appearance. The Sonny Werblin Recreation Center is located on the Busch Campus.]

SI: Tell us a little bit about Frank Elm and any other coaches that you might remember. What was their style, and what were they like as coaches?

GA: Sherm seemed like he had a mean attribute, gruff, and you never wanted to make him angry. You'd do almost anything that he'd say. As I said, he was an over-distance guy. If you swam a thousand or five hundred, you'd have to do triple that at practice. Frank Elm basically learned a lot about training methods from Sherm. They collaborated a lot. They were both the women's Olympics coaches in two different Olympics, '68 and '72. But Frank was much more laid back. He would do the practices, but he wouldn't be on your back. You had to do it

yourself. He would do anything for you. I was used to morning, noon and evening swimming, and he only had the swimming from six until eight at night, after classes. I don't think I was getting enough, so I said, "Can I come in, in the afternoon?" He said, "Come on in." He'd provide the practice and be there, and that made a big difference for me.

SI: Jess, do you have any questions at this point?

JA: Were there any meets at Rutgers that particularly stand out to you?

GA: Any what? Meets?

JA: Swim meets, yes.

GA: At Rutgers?

JA: Yes.

GA: Yes, we'd do dual meets in the Barn. I don't know if you know, but the wall lifts up. It's made out of cork and they would put portable bleachers along that wall, and we'd have meets there.

JA: Did you travel at all with the swim team?

GA: Pardon me?

JA: Did you travel at all with the swim team?

GA: Yes, we would have dual meets at Princeton, at Dartmouth. I can remember going to Yale. We traveled all over the East Coast for meets, Penn, NYU. The big meet for us was the Eastern. One year, it was held at Yale. One year, it was at Princeton, and a third, I think, at Penn.

SI: Did Rutgers have a particular rival at that point?

GA: We had a really strong team my freshman year. Sophomore year was a little bit weaker. Junior year was strong, but senior year we had lost a lot of swimmers and it wasn't as strong. They would like to say it was Princeton, but Princeton was far above our class. So, a rival, no, I don't think so.

JA: In 1970, you noted the swim team was cancelled or it had been turned into a club rather than a varsity sport. What happened with that?

GA: That wasn't in 1970.

SI: Yes, I think that was more recent, in the 2000s. [Editor's Note: In 2007-2008, Rutgers eliminated six Olympic sports as varsity sports. Men's lightweight and heavyweight crew, the

men's swimming and diving team, the men's tennis team, and the men's and women's fencing teams were relegated to club status.]

JA: Oh, okay.

SI: We will ask about that later on. Was there a particular event that you specialized in, or would you do more than one event?

GA: You're allowed four events, one of which had to be a relay. So, I'd always swim the medley relay, the backstroke. I'd swim the 200-free. The 200-back, which was my specialty, and then the 500-free, they're back-to-back events. The 500-free, then the 200-back, that's how it goes. So, Frank would put me in the 500-free with one of my buddies, Shelly Rosenbaum, and Shelly would swim a very slow nine-minute 500 on purpose, so that I could swim the race and then get some rest because I'd be up on the block the next race for the 200-back. I would usually win both of them. I made All-American in '68 and '69 in the 200-backstroke.

SI: I know that the Easterns were the big event, but were there other events where you competed in larger multi-team events?

GA: A bunch of the Easterns. My best swimming was at Easterns. My sophomore and junior years, I won both the 200 backstroke and the 500 free, making NCAA time cuts in both events. I made NCAAs my sophomore, junior and senior year. The NCAAs is a big swim meet, and you have to qualify. You have to do a certain time to be able to go. I always swam better at Easterns, and then I'd get to the NCAAs and I just didn't have it for some reason. I could taper and shave for the Easterns and go to the NCAAs and I just flopped. But my best swimming was always at the Easterns, where I'd made the time to go to the NCAAs, and I'd get to NCAAs and just didn't have it.

SI: Putting aside the swim career for a moment, once you were on campus, did you immediately start gravitating towards political science, or were there other subjects that you became interested in?

GA: From the day I went to Rutgers, I knew I was going to major in political science. I don't know why. When I was interviewed for the scholarship, when I came out for a visit, they said, "Well, what are your interests?" I said, "I want to major in political science." It was always very interesting to me. The other thing about it, in those days, there were certain requirements. You had to take a science. You had to take a language. You had to take a math. Basically, the political science curriculum at the time had a lot of opportunities for other classes. So, in the end, I think I got a really well-rounded education. I could take literature classes. I could take art history. I could take a lot of different types of classes, and I really appreciate that. I did, not that I was the greatest of students, but I really had a lot of fun and I think I got a well-rounded education. But I knew I was going to be in political science, and I really enjoyed the professors in political science. I had some great professors.

SI: Yes, I was going to ask if there were any professors in political science that stood out or any of these other disciplines you took classes in.

GA: I remember Gerald Pomper, and his study of American political parties is one that I really enjoyed. I can't even remember who my advisor was, but I remember Gerald Pomper. Oh, I don't know. I'd have to think about that. [Editor's Note: Gerald Pomper is a Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Rutgers University. He joined the faculty in 1962 and retired in 2001. His oral history is available in the Rutgers Oral History Archives.]

SI: You came to Rutgers in 1966. Rutgers was becoming a little more political, but it would really take off in a couple years. Do you remember being at least aware or maybe even more involved in causes around campus?

GA: I joined a fraternity, and that took up a lot of time. Of course, I was an officer. Swimming really took a lot of time, plus classes. I never missed a class. It's just part of my nature, I suppose. It's like when I was teaching, I ended up retiring with 420 sick days, which is crazy. [laughter] They only give you ten a year and I taught for forty years and I had 420, which is bizarre. I lost track of my thoughts.

SI: Oh, just if you were involved ...

GA: Oh, involved in other things.

SI: Yes, involved in any causes.

GA: No.

SI: Jess, do you have a question?

JA: What was the social life like in your fraternity?

GA: [laughter] I think they got thrown off campus. Originally, when I first went, there were a lot of swimmers, a couple of track guys, so there were a lot of athletes. As time passed, it got kind of wild. Union Street was crazy, a lot of alcohol, drugs, marijuana took over, especially by '68, '69, '70. '70 was probably the height of it. My mother saw the house that I lived in. [laughter] She said, "You live here?" It was awful, it really was. But it was a lot of fun, and I still have some good friends from there. There were a lot of parties on weekends.

One of the things that happened, my ex-wife was an Olympian in Tokyo in '64. There's nothing for women after the Olympics. There was no women swimming in any of the colleges. I mean, there were some small clubs, but nothing like it is today. In '67, she had retired from swimming. She was an Olympian. She was a world recordholder and retired and went to the University of Vermont. Then, in '67, she decided she wanted to try out for the '68 Olympic team. So, the coach came to us and he said, "Would you mind if Sue Pitt comes and trains with you?" because we would be better competing and training than he could give her with his club team. We said, "No problem."

It started off, he said something to one of the guys, he said, "You've got to give her a social life." It started off a group of people. Sue and some of the swimmers, we'd go to New York and go to a movie or we'd go drinking or something like that. It ended up Gregg and Sue, over time. It was like it started off as a group of people, and then it just kind of ended up there's Gregg and Sue. We were married shortly after graduation and then divorced in 2000, so we were together a long time. [Editor's Note: As a fifteen year old in 1963, Susan Pitt, a Highland Park resident at the time, set a new world record in the 200-meter butterfly. She competed in the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and in the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City, in which she was a captain for the U.S. Olympic Team. She went on to graduate from Douglass College in 1973.]

SI: I was going to ask you if there was any team at Douglass that you may have practiced with, but I guess not.

GA: I think they had a little club team, but it wasn't at the level that Sue was at.

SI: Okay.

GA: She was a phenomenal swimmer.

SI: She was from New Brunswick?

GA: She lived in Highland Park and transferred to Douglass. After this, she ended up making the '68 Olympic team but as an alternate. Her story is like--she was sixteen when she made the '64 team and she was twenty when she made the '68 team. She was an alternate in Tokyo and got to swim in the trials of the medley relay. That team eventually won a gold medal, but she wasn't the actual swimmer on the gold medal team. But she's technically a gold medalist. After '64, she set the 200-meter butterfly record and the 220-yard butterfly record. She has a bunch of world records that eventually were broken. Then, since it was nothing for women, no scholarships, no teams or anything, she quit and then tried out again. It wasn't until '74 when Judy Melick, who was from Piscataway, I think, she became the first woman ever to swim at Rutgers, but that wasn't until the '70s. [Editor's Note: Somerset native Judith Ellen Melick, MD was a member of the U.S. Swim Team at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich. Dr. Melick graduated from Douglass in 1976, went to Harvard Medical School, and became a member of the Rutgers Athletic Hall of Fame in 1994.]

SI: As we go forward into '67-'68, I am guessing national issues became more prominent on campus. Do you remember that affecting your life at all? Was that something you got interested in or involved in, or was it that more like swimming and fraternity were your focus?

GA: That was pretty much the focus. They came up with the draft lottery, and I had number seventy-five. As '70 came, I started getting my notices. When Kent State happened and Rutgers went on strike, that was a strange but interesting time because when they went on strike, they opened up the campus for teach-ins. The students took over Old Queens. There were demonstrations almost every day. We marched in a demonstration in New Brunswick. There were like ten thousand people marching against the war. I remember standing in front of Old Queens and I think it was a history professor, [Warren] Susman, giving this speech that was just

unbelievable. But I remember learning a lot and going to the teach-ins. Even though all my classes were cancelled, you had to go negotiate with your professor on what your grade was going to be. I always felt bad because I was doing really well that semester [laughter], but it was okay. But it was a strange end of a college career, very strange. Demonstrations practically every day, where Willie the Silent is, there were always people there demonstrating.

SI: How did you feel about the war and the prospect of being drafted, and when did that start becoming a really prominent feeling in your life?

GA: Probably '68, it became real. My freshman roommate, Tommy, he failed out of school. His mother always blamed me, but that's a different story. Tommy wouldn't go to class. He wasn't interested. It was too hard for him. Anyway, he got back to Sacramento and was drafted almost immediately, and I kept in touch with him. We would write letters. In '68, I remember this series of letters. I wish I had kept them, but I don't have them. He said, "You don't want to do this." He was explaining what he was doing and how horrible it was and that we have no business there, and that really affected me.

Somewhere in '69, they had an event at the Barn for future jobs, a job fair. I remember Sue and I were walking through there, and we took an application for the Peace Corps. We filled it out and sent it in and thought nothing of it. In 1970, I graduated. I had a summer job at a swim club, of course.

I got my draft physical notice, and that was one of the most horrible experiences. They put you on a bus in New Brunswick and took you up to Newark, and you walk around for four hours in a t-shirt and your skivvies. The people that I was with were like kids. One guy had a tattoo on his wrist, "F you," on his hand right here, so that if you're saluting, [it could be seen]. They rejected him right offhand. There were people that were really drugged up, so that they would fail. But I passed mine.

I got the notice that I had passed, and the Peace Corps called. They had two opportunities. They needed swim coaches in Peru and Tunisia. Sue was finishing at Douglass. I had a job; it was like a permanent substitute at Franklin High School. The Peace Corps called, but we weren't married and they said, "Well, if you want to be together, you have to get married and report to Philadelphia September 27th." It was like August 20th. So, we planned it, sent out mimeographed invitations, and invited both of our swim teams. We got married and reported to Philadelphia on September 27th. October 15th, I got my draft notice and turned it in to the Peace Corps and got a deferment. Somewhere along the line, Congress didn't pass the new draft law, so anybody that was eligible to be drafted got ex post facto law. You couldn't be drafted after that, so I got out of being drafted by joining Peace Corps service.

SI: I am curious, the Peace Corps, were they looking for coaches and somehow they got in touch with you, or had you made inquiries with the Peace Corps?

GA: We had filled out applications and they said, "What would you like to do?" English teacher, coaching. Today, the Peace Corps is a lot different. They ask for specialties, agriculture, IT, accountants. But back then, we were with a group of coaches and kindergarten

teachers in Tunisia, a track coach, basketball coach. The basketball coach [Bill Sweek] was part of UCLA's NCAA winning championships. He was the little guy, except he was six-five. We were part of a group of coaches that Tunisia wanted.

SI: Well, before we go into the Peace Corps, let's ask some more questions about Rutgers.

GA: Okay.

SI: During your years at Rutgers, the Black Student Movement really took off. I think it was the weekend after Martin Luther King was assassinated in 1968, they had a long teach-in event in the Barn. Do you remember any of that?

GA: I wasn't involved in that.

SI: Do you remember the reaction in general on campus when Martin Luther King was killed?

GA: '68 was a very scary year. You didn't know what was going to happen next. Robert Kennedy was killed. Martin Luther King was killed. You didn't know what was going to happen next. I can remember that year as clear as day. It was a scary time, but not so scary that you weren't doing everything you were supposed to do. I remember the summer, I think it was the summer of '68 [1967], and there were riots in Plainfield and Newark and they called out the National Guard. In the summers, I would sublet a place and work at a swim club. I never felt like it was too dangerous to go out, but I remember that whole year. That was kind of frightening.

SI: Would you usually stay in New Jersey during the summers?

GA: Yes. When I was a freshman, my parents moved from Sacramento to Fullerton, California. That's near Anaheim. I went home one summer, or maybe two. '67 and '68, I went home those two years. But when I went home, it wasn't home. They moved to Southern California; Fullerton is near Anaheim. When I went to visit them, I'd always want to go to Sacramento, and that's like a four-and-a-half-hour drive. Then the summer of '68, I was training to go to the Olympic trials, and I lived with my sister in a little apartment in Sacramento. From then on, my parents moved to San Diego, and then they ended up, both of them, back in San Luis Obispo and then back to Sacramento. They kept moving, so I really didn't have a home after that. I stayed in New Jersey in '69 and '70. Then, I've been here ever since.

SI: What happened with the trials?

GA: With the what?

SI: What happened with the Olympic trials?

GA: In '68, I was 27th and 29th in my events, and you've got to be in the top two or three. But I did my best times.

SI: I know the Political Science Department was very involved in the happenings on campus. Do you remember certain topics, particularly the antiwar movement, but other topics like the Civil Rights Movement, coming up frequently in your classes?

GA: I remember some really good classes. I wish I could remember the professors' names. I could probably look it up in a yearbook. [Ross] Baker, his class was excellent, and they were always on topic. One of the things that I do remember--and I tried to emulate my teaching on this--is to allow the students to express themselves without trying to give their point of view, except in a couple of cases. I had a woman; I can't remember her name. She was really good. It was on international governments, and we studied parliamentary governments. She walks in and says, "I'm Socialist." Right from the start, she says, "You may disagree with me, but this is the way I teach." It was a fascinating class. I wish I could remember her name, sorry. [Editor's Note: Ross Baker is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Rutgers. Dr. Baker was interviewed as a part of the Class of 1970 Oral History Project with the Rutgers Oral History Archives.]

SI: Yes, it reminds me of the Eugene Genovese teach-in in 1965 and him getting in so much trouble for declaring his socialism and support. I am just curious, were there other professors that kind of stood out as campus radicals?

GA: I remember [Warren] Susman; that's the one I do remember.

SI: You mentioned the one march in downtown New Brunswick. Were there other marches at Rutgers or maybe in New York or elsewhere that you attended?

GA: I attended one or two Marches on Washington. We had friends that lived across the river in Virginia, and so we could stay there. We drove down, took the train in, and marched on Washington. That was kind of frightening, too. I don't remember if that was '69 or '70, but they put city buses around the White House. We were in a crowd of people marching, and all of a sudden, the crowd turned and we felt like, "This is not right. This is not supposed to happen this way." We kind of got out of the crowd and went on our way. Sue and I did march a couple of times.

I kind of got in trouble once too. [laughter] There was a guy standing there holding a garbage bag. He said, "Put your draft card in, put your draft card in." I was afraid to do that because you're supposed to have your draft card, but I had an old classification card, so I threw that in there. I found out later on, when I was in the Peace Corps, my mother, she was part of the "Mothers Against the War," and she contacted a lawyer to try to see if she could get me out of the draft or something. He got, through the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of an FBI record on me. In it--he said, "This is fascinating," he wrote to me and he sent a copy of what was in my record. Now, this is really weird. I forgot about this. My father got a landscape contract. He worked for somebody that got a contract to landscape Nixon's San Clemente house, to put in the sprinkler systems and plants and stuff. I didn't know it, but a Secret Service agent came to the fraternity and interviewed my roommate, the house mother, and whoever was sitting in the living room, about me, and that was in my FBI report. My classification card from the demonstration was in the FBI report. There was a picture of the crowd in a demonstration in

Washington, and the picture had my face circled. That was in my FBI report, and I just found that fascinating.

SI: Well, that brings up one of my questions, if you ever discussed the war with your parents. Did you have any discussions about evading the draft?

GA: My mother was vehemently against the war. My father said, "No, if you get drafted, you get drafted, and you have to go." There was no discussion, but my mother just raised her eyes and huffed away.

SI: Jess, do you have questions about Rutgers?

JA: I do not have any more about Rutgers.

SI: Well, I am curious to know a little bit more about fraternity life. First, what drew you to Delta Sigma Phi?

GA: Yes, Tommy Sove, John Hannan, those guys were swimmers. Mike Pringle, Bill Clark. It was like a swimming and track fraternity when I first joined, and that kept on for some time. Then some of the younger guys, as they came in, went to DU [Delta Upsilon] or didn't join a fraternity at all. At the beginning, it was a lot of swimmers and track people, people that were athletes. There were a couple of soccer players, no football or basketball or any of those.

SI: You mentioned having a house mother, which I kind of associate with the older, more traditional fraternity life. What aspects of life in the fraternity house would you say were still kind of that classic fraternity style, where you had a house mother, maybe you had formal dinners, things like that? Also, did that change over your years there?

GA: We had three meals a day, and dinner was always served. We had a cook and we had a house mother, and that went on all four years. I would always work, three days a week, breakfast, because I was already up. If you cooked breakfast, you got money taken off your board bill. It was the old traditional fraternity, and we had great house mothers, good people you could go talk to.

SI: Would you have dance weekends and things like that?

GA: We probably had a party once a month. They would even put bands in, these local bands, and a lot of beer and games in the basement and dances on the first floor. Probably once a month, we'd do that.

SI: Were there competitions between fraternities?

GA: Yes, I didn't take part in those. They would have basketball--it was like intramurals--I know that they did soccer and basketball. I think they did softball. I was so busy with the swimming and classes that I didn't take part in those.

SI: I am curious if the coach or the coaching staff, as campus politics were coming more to a boil, did they tell the team not to get involved things, anything like that, cautioning you against activities?

GA: No. Frank Elm was probably my best friend. I could stop in to his office anytime and chat. I'm still in contact with him. He's ninety-four now. He lives down in Florida, and we chat probably once every two months or so. But he was apolitical.

SI: Did you have any other run-ins or relationships with any other administrators at Rutgers, or faculty members, people you had some reason to have a lot of contact with?

GA: I recall two things. One, I was walking to class in the mall by Willie the Silent, and Mason Gross was coming toward me. I saw him coming, and I said, "Hi, Dr. Gross." He says, "Hi, Gregg," and it floored me, like, "The president of the University knows my name?" Then, I realize that I'd seen him at swim meets. He would attend. I'd see him at basketball games. I'd see him at football games. I'd see him, and that's probably how he knew who I was. That was one incident. [Editor's Note: Mason Gross served as the president of Rutgers University from 1959 to 1971.]

I remember sophomore year, I was going home for Christmas, and my mother bought this ticket. It was a cheap one. I can't remember the dates exactly, but it was the day before my oral exam in Spanish. So, I went to the teacher and I said, "Is there any way I can take the oral exam early?" I explained it all. "Oh, we have to go to the supervisor." So, I had to go to the supervisor, and they denied me. So, I had to go to the dean, and he denied it. I ended up paying like three hundred bucks--and that was a lot of money back then--extra for probably a five-minute oral Spanish exam. I call that my Rutgers screw. I don't know if you've heard that term [laughter], but it happens to everybody somehow and that was mine. I couldn't believe it. They scheduled this exam, you have to go at this day and this time. I said, "I want to do it earlier. I'll do it right now." They wouldn't let me.

JA: Rutgers voted to become a coed school in your senior year. Do you remember anything about that? [Editor's Note: In 1970, the Rutgers Board of Governors voted to make Rutgers College coed. The first women enrolled in 1972 and graduated in 1976.]

GA: I don't recall. I don't remember. I know that by the time I graduated, there were a lot more women in classes than before. That was kind of a gradual thing, and men could take classes over at Douglass by the time I graduated. But it wasn't fully coed until, I don't even know, '72, '71, but there were a lot of women on campus by the time I graduated.

SI: You mentioned you were part of some marches and activities. Did you ever see any violence directed towards protestors?

GA: No, I never saw any violence. The march in New Brunswick was interesting. We were with the diver on our team, Pete, and he was carrying an American flag. We were marching through New Brunswick, and some people on the side start yelling at him for carrying an

American flag. I remember Sue saying, "We're American, too. We have First Amendment rights." But no violence, I never saw any violence.

SI: I guess, looking at your time at Rutgers, what would you say was your most vibrant and vivid memory? What do you think about the most when you think back on that time?

GA: Oh, I'd have to think about that for a while. I remember graduation was interesting. They did it in the stadium, and Sue had made me an arm band with a dove on it. I got my picture taken, and it happened to be in the *1766 Magazine* after that. But the most vibrant time? I don't know. Let me think about that.

SI: To turn towards the Peace Corps years, you said you had to go down to Philadelphia.

GA: Yes.

SI: What did that consist of? Was it like a full training course?

GA: First was orientation, and they started language training right away. The Tunisians were owned by France until their liberation, and so they were teaching us French. We had four hours a day of French every day, plus the orientation into the Peace Corps. That lasted about three weeks in Philadelphia, and then we went to Washington for continued language training. Then they sent us to--they wanted a cross-cultural experience--and so the whites in the group, we were sent to Roanoke, Virginia, and we had to live with poor people for two weeks. The Black people in our group, where were they sent? They were sent to Boston to live with Portuguese people for two weeks. It was interesting because people dropped out after that. But it was a really good experience living with Cousin Cliff for two weeks. Then, we're off to Tunisia for a month-long orientation and training in Tunisia.

SI: What did you do during those two weeks in Roanoke?

GA: We lived with Cliff. The idea was to live in a poverty situation, and Cliff was a totally disabled former truck driver. He was getting paid by the Peace Corps, cash under the table, so that they wouldn't take his disability away. He would take us to real poor people's places. Roanoke is in the Appalachians, and so we got to visit some people that literally had no running water and lived in shacks and killed a pig every year for their meat. It was an interesting experience, very boring, but we did it.

SI: How did you get over to Tunisia?

GA: They flew us over.

JA: What was the reaction of your family to you going to Tunisia?

GA: Again, my father was opposed, and my mother said, "Go for it." Sue's parents were really in favor of it. They had traveled an awful lot. My parents didn't travel that much. I don't remember a vacation. We went to Disneyland once, but that was ruined because my younger

sister had had her tonsils out and on the way down to Disneyland, she started hemorrhaging. We were stuck in Fresno for like three or four days until they got her under control. Growing up, vacations were swim meets. My dad said, "Son, time to get a job. Come back to Sacramento." But my mom was all for it.

JA: Where in Tunisia were you? Was it a more urban area?

GA: Well, we were swim coaches, and the pools were in Tunis, which is the capital city. We rented an apartment from a departing Peace Corps volunteer. He was leaving, and we just rented his place. They had three pools in the city. One was at the college. One was an outdoor fifty-meter pool and an indoor twenty-five-meter pool underneath the stands. That pool had been built by Bulgaria as a gift to Tunisia for the Maghreb Games or the Mediterranean Games, where all the countries in the Mediterranean basin swim, or they have all sorts of sporting events against each other. We had this beautiful indoor and outdoor pool and then a college pool and then-- what was the other one? The other one was, I think, connected to a French school. So, we had three pools that we could work with.

We worked with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and we were immediately assigned the junior national team that they had already selected. We coached them. They wanted us to do a learn-to-swim program because Tunisia has a thousand miles of coastline, kind of like New Jersey, and a lot of drownings. They wanted the kids, at least in Tunis, to learn to swim and they have the pools, so we worked with some volunteers there and we tried to put together a learn-to-swim program.

It was very frustrating, because we put the whole plan on paper the first year, and then they were supposed to implement it the second year. First, the schools weren't informed, so they informed the schools. They had to transport the kids and the bus company wasn't informed, so they informed the schools and got the bus company. Then, there was a presidential election, so all the buses had to be used for the presidential election. [laughter] We worked hard two years on this program and it never really got off the ground because of political reasons mostly. We coached; we coached the junior team and then the national team.

JA: What was your relationship like with the kids you were coaching?

GA: Wonderful. They were really good athletes and good kids. We had a swim meet in Morocco. It was Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria. Libya was supposed to come, but they were in turmoil and so it ended up just the three countries ... [phone ringing]

SI: You can take that if you want.

GA: Let me run and get that.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

SI: All right, we are back on. What was a typical day like in Tunisia?

GA: We would have a meeting almost every day with the Ministry of Youth and Sports. We'd go in and sit down. They would get their ashtrays and put it in front of them and their coffee and put it in front of them, and they'd smoke cigarettes and chat. Then, we'd be done with the meeting. It was like nothing was getting done, and then we would have a swim practice at noon and then a swim practice at four. Most of our days, we would go to this one-hour meeting or so. Some days, they'd just cancel it, and then we'd have our practices. It was a very easy experience. It was basically coaching. The kids would be bussed in. They were selected from various parts of the country, and they all basically lived together. That was easy.

We had Peace Corps friends. We lived in the city. A lot of the people in the Peace Corps--we actually had a shower--and so people would come visit us, "Hey, Gregg, can I come over and take a shower?" because they didn't have them. Several of the kindergarten teachers lived in very rural communities, and it was tough living. It was tough for Sue. We were in a city. Shopping was different because you'd have to go to the market at least once a week, and they'd have the fruit market and the vegetable market and the meat market and you'd have to go to different places to get different [items]. Where we lived, it was a city, and we lived in an apartment. Most of the days were coaching, which is really weird. I mean, it's a North African poor desert country, and they have swim coaches and basketball coaches and track coaches. The coaches before us were Americans. The coaches before them was a French guy and before him was a Belgian guy. The Tunisian coaches were really good, but they were afraid to take on that role.

SI: Would you say that the kids that you were coaching were a cross section of Tunisian society, or were they from the more upper levels of society?

GA: The girls were an upper level because it's a Muslim country. Although the Tunisians considered themselves to be more European than, say, Algeria, a lot of the women in the city weren't covered, but a lot of them were. So, the girls that were on the swim team were basically from the upper class, but the boys were a broad mixture of very poor kids to very wealthy kids.

SI: We may have been interrupted, but you started to talk about the meet ...

GA: Oh, in Morocco?

SI: Yes. What was that experience like?

GA: We took twenty kids to this swim meet, and it was called the Maghreb Games. There was a soccer tournament. There were track events. There was a swim meet. It was in Casablanca, and it was right on the coast. The pool was a fifty-meter outdoor pool that was literally filled with Atlantic Ocean water. [laughter] The amazing thing about it was that the pool was crystal clear. They had this filtration system that was just amazing. We got there, and we trained for two days. Then, the events started. Our kids won thirteen of fifteen events, and the Algerians were pissed. I had all the boys shave down, which is something we do here in the U.S. before swim meets. You shave your body hair and leg hair and all that, and the kids objected to that. Our manager was a former Olympian. He played water polo for the French water polo team, and he actually earned a bronze medal, a great guy, M. Azure. Anyway, he helped me convince the boys to

shave down, and they swam out of their minds. We had two kids make Olympic qualifying time, but it was a month too late to be able to turn in the time and go to the meet. But they actually made times and set something like eight country records at that swim meet. That was a fantastic experience.

SI: When you were not coaching or working, would you do a lot of sightseeing or do other things around the city?

GA: Yes, we did the whole country eventually. I'm kind of into photography, or at that time I was, and there's a lot of Roman ruins in Tunisia. Tunisia was where Carthage is, and so there are a lot of Roman ruins throughout the whole country. We'd take day trips and even weekend trips and go exploring. We had other Peace Corps volunteer friends. There was a group of English teachers there. There were some engineers there. There were bankers there. So, we would have a Peace Corps-embassy kind of social life. We'd go to people's apartments and cook dinner and stuff like that.

SI: How do you think the local population viewed Americans at that time?

GA: Very, very positive. The people we worked with loved having Americans around, and they were appreciative, as we were. I developed some really good friends. Our closest friends was a couple that taught language. Sue decided that she wanted to learn more Arabic. We spoke French, and the kids that we coached spoke about as much French as we did. So, we wanted to get to know what they were saying. We took language lessons, but it was really kind of a sneaky way to get our language teacher, Fidella, paid for teaching Sue to cook Tunisian recipes, but she'd teach us some. [laughter] We got to know what the kids were saying, not that we could speak it that well, but we could hear what they were saying. It was pretty interesting. Americans were appreciated.

I remember they'd have parades. I saw Anwar Sadat; he came to Tunisia for a state visit. I saw Muammar Gaddafi. I saw him; he came for a state visit. [Houari] Boumédiène from Algeria, he came for a state visit. We'd stand in the crowd while the cars went by. The police, the army people would immediately surround the Peace Corps volunteers, but generally we had no trouble, except Sue. She'd walk to the store or to the market, and the same men would call out to her. The same men would say stuff to her because she wasn't covered, over and over, and that got frustrating for her. For me, it wasn't that bad, but there were times of unbelievable sexism and misogyny.

SI: Did you keep in touch with any of the people you coached, or was it just some of your local friends?

GA: Well, the language teachers, they both passed over time. It's been, God, '70-'72, it's been fifty years. We kept in touch with some of the kids for probably ten years, and then it just stopped. Now, Sue visited there, oh, about eight years ago. We've been divorced now since 2001, but she visited and actually saw two of the girls that we coached. I mean, they're in their forties now, and she said that they're just the same. They're just like the kids they were. But I haven't visited there.

SI: Were there other ways that interacting with the local culture affected your life or things you had to do?

GA: Like what?

SI: Like anything you had to do that would be different than your normal life.

GA: I've got this rug. [laughter] I have a bunch of artifacts that we brought back. I speak a little French, a little bit of Arabic. I learned to cook there because everything had to be done from scratch, right from the beginning, so we both really basically learned to cook. I still cook three meals a day from scratch.

SI: Now, I am just curious, because one of my high school teachers was in the Peace Corps in Morocco and he would remember how Ramadan was and things like this and would talk about how different it was from American society. I was just curious if anything stood out in that regard.

GA: Well, when the kids were fasting at Ramadan, we would fast. One Ramadan, we were at a camp and we were staying at the phys ed college. It was right at the end of Ramadan, and we were fasting like the kids were fasting. It was tough training then because they were so hungry all the time, but that was a great experience and the meal that we had, [Eid], was wonderful. Can we start again tomorrow?

SI: Yes, sure. Well, thank you very much for today's session. It was very enlightening. Let me just conclude for now. Thank you very much for today.

-----END OF TRANSCRIPT-----

Transcribed by Jesse Braddell 11/17/2020
Reviewed by Jess Aumick 12/10/2020
Reviewed by Michael Farner 4/1/2021
Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy Rizzi 4/16/2021
Reviewed by Gregg Anderson 4/20/2021