

**Interview of Jess Martin for Southern Chapter  
History of the Southern Chapter Committee  
August 2, 1996  
Interviewer: Susan Selig**

This is an interview of Mr. Jess Martin, former Director of the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Library. This is for the Oral History Project of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association. The interviewer is Susan Selig, Associate Director of the University of Tennessee Center for the Health Sciences Library and Biocommunications Center. The interview is taking place on August 2, 1996.

SS: Mr. Martin, before we start talking about the Southern Chapter, could you give us just a brief biography of your professional career?

JM: Sure, be happy to. My career as a medical librarian began even before I received my Master's of Library Science degree at the University of Southern California. I was appointed Director of the San Diego County Medical Society Library in 1953 before leaving for USC in 1955 on an MLA scholarship on a leave of absence from the County Medical Society. The only nonmedical library job I held was for one year at Conger (sp?) Astronautics in San Diego which was an engineering librarian or engineering library and I was uh head of technical services, which is unusual. In 1958 I returned to medical librarianship when Al Brandon at the University of Kentucky asked me to join him as his associate librarian in charge of public services. My academic rank at Kentucky was instructor. I stayed with Al from 1958 to 1960 at which time I was offered the job - head job - at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, and was there from 1960 to 1963. In 1963 I was offered the job as Chief of Library Branch, National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, where we uh planned a new library building

and moved into the new library building and then in 1968 I left NIH to become the Director of Health Sciences Library and Associate Professor of Medical Librarianship at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I stayed at Temple for three years, 1968 to 1971, and left to become the Director of the Center for the Health Sciences Library and Professor of Medical Bibliography, later changed to Professor of Library Science, at the University of Tennessee and I left in 1971 and stayed with the University of Tennessee from 1971 to 1988 at which time I retired.

SS: Now let's talk about some of your Southern Chapter activities. What were the professional positions you held during your time that you were involved with the Southern Chapter?

JM: All during the time that I was a member of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association, I was Director of the UT Medical Units Library, later changed to the UT Health Sciences Center Library and I was with the UT Medical Library from 1971 to 1988 at which time I retired. Some of the offices held in the Chapter: I was a member of the Honors Committee; in 1976 and 1977 I served as Chairman-Elect of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association; and 1977-78 as the Chairman of the Chapter. The meeting I presided over as Chairman was held in Jackson, Mississippi, at the University of Mississippi Medical Library where Irene Graham was Director of the Library.

SS: Can you tell us anything about the founding of the Chapter, that may have been before you came down south, I don't know.

JM: Anything that I know about the founding of the Chapter I've heard from others, but I'll pass along what I've heard. The Chapter apparently was founded in the early

fifties and Mary Louise Marshall and Bill Postelle Sr. were primarily responsible for its founding. It's my understanding that about fifty people attended the early meetings. In the 1970s the attendance rose to 100 to 140 and I was talking to someone the other day about the upcoming attendance at the meeting to be held in Memphis and was told that it's still about 140. Pretty good attendance for a southern chapter.

SS: Do you remember the first meeting you went to of the Southern Chapter and can you tell us a little bit about what went on at that meeting?

JM: The first meeting I attended was in October of 1971 after I had arrived in Memphis in March of 71 and it was a very important and significant meeting for me for a lot of reasons, one of which was that it was held at Vanderbilt University where a protégé of mine, Dick Immis, at that time was Director of the Library. He was a former staff member of mine at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. It was an enjoyable and informative meeting, attended by about 120 people, as I recall.

SS: Can you give us your observations on how the Southern Chapter has evolved through the years?

JM: At one time as most everybody knows, the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association was a much larger chapter, stretching from Puerto Rico to New Mexico. I think it was at the 1971 meeting that I attended that an early discussion of splitting the chapter into two smaller chapters began. I was very much opposed to the split. That officially took place in 1973. Some members of the Southern Chapter maintained membership in both chapters after the split. I remember Mayo Drake and Johnny Shea and others, I think Bill Postelle Jr., all maintained membership, as did others, in both chapters, because they hated to see the chapter broken in two. Lee

Jones of Texas led the split movement. Helen Brown Schmidt, then Executive Secretary of MLA, attended the meeting and presented the proposal for the division of the Southern Chapter and I think this occurred, not at that meeting, but at a subsequent Southern Chapter meeting.

SS: How do you feel that the Southern Chapter has affected your professional development through your career?

JM: I learned a great deal about professionalism from some of the outstanding southern librarians of the early 70s and 80s: Mildred Jordan, Bill Postelle, Mildred Langner, Miriam Libby, and Sarah Brown, to name a few. While a member of the Southern Chapter I was twice nominated for President of the parent organization, Medical Library Association. It was an honor to have been nominated, not such a pleasure to have lost twice. Mark Hodges, recently retired from Vanderbilt, and I are the only two Tennesseans who hold the distinction of losing two Medical Library Association elections. Oddly enough, I lost my first election soon after I had served on a committee that voted in favor of, as did I, of nominating not just one but two for consideration. Nominations before that time - a nomination had been tantamount to election. The first loss occurred when Sam Hitt of Texas outpolled me, or out-uh received 802 votes to about 687 for me, so that was close enough to get me a second bid, but something odd happened the second time. Stan Druelson, a librarian in Alaska, and I were nominated, and I'm sure each of us thought we had a good chance, but I think for the first time in the history of the association, I'm not sure of this but I think it might be true, there was a nomination from the floor. Irwin Pizer nominated Gil Clausman of New York, and Gil split the vote and beat both Stan Druelson and myself, but no matter what, MLA was in

good hands, because Gil Clausman was a good president. My work with the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association provided me with enough name recognition to gain for me the election as President of the Tennessee Library Association in 1975-76.

SS: You have already mentioned several people that I know that you feel like have contributed to your professional development. Are there others that you would like to mention?

JM: All of those previously mentioned certainly contributed, but most important to my development within library circles were Al Brandon and Dr. Andrew Lazlow, and of course, as we know, Al Brandon passed away just about a month ago. Outside the library profession but within the medical profession, Dr. Stanley Monroe and Dr. Clifford Graves, both of San Diego, California, and both surgeons and dedicated library users, influenced me greatly. Of course, and I must say this because I mean it, all the staffs that I have had the privilege of supervising at my various job locations, contributed much to my development.

SS: What do you recall about some of the early meetings of MLA?

JM: The first meeting, MLA meeting, that I attended, was held in Los Angeles in the late 50s when I was Director of the San Diego County Medical Society Library in California. I was new to the profession but the better known medical librarians, such as Mary Louise Marshall, Bill Postelle, Sr., and Bertha Hallam, took time at the meeting to talk to me and to encourage me. That made a great impression upon me. Bertha Hallam was the President of MLA at that meeting, and she was a little lady, under 5 feet tall, and had to stand on a platform to reach the microphone. That meeting was

attended by about 200 people, a far cry from the number attracted by today's meetings.

SS: I know that the Southern Chapter has a lot of traditions and I just wanted to know what are some of the ones that you remember in particular that were special to you.

JM: I think the one tradition that I remember most and appreciate most is the tradition of friendship and friendliness and these people in the south at the Southern Chapter are friendly to everybody and they even showed and displayed a friendly attitude toward me, a transplanted Yankee from the north. They were willing to share their library experiences with any and everyone. UT Memphis hosted the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association in 1953, 1964, 1973, and 1979, and of course, again this year, 1996. The 1973 meeting honored Miss Irene Jones, who served for many years as Director of the UT Medical Units Library until her retirement in 1970. I was privileged to serve as her successor.

SS: Mr. Martin, I want to thank you for your taking time to talk with me today and I just want to say a personal note that I, knowing that we worked together for 17 years, how much I learned from you and I shall never forget that you're the one that gave me the opportunity to go to library school and get my master's degree, and I'm not sure I would have taken that step without your encouragement and I will forever be grateful for that. Are there any closing comments you would like to make?

JM: Everybody needs proteges and I consider you one of mine. It's been a pleasure talking to you and it was a pleasure for me, an honor for me, to work with you and the other staff members for 17 years.

SS: Thank you. This concludes our interview.

**Southern Chapter/Medical Library Association**

**History of the Southern Chapter**

**Notes from Interview with**

**William Leazer**

**November 4, 1995**

**by Anne K. Robichaux**

This is Anne Robichaux. I am sitting here with Bill Leazer. We are in our pajamas. It's a Saturday morning, November fourth, 1995. I am taking advantage of Bill's being in town for the Charleston Conference to sit down and chat with him about his memories and to reminisce about his involvement with the Southern Chapter of MLA. Bill, my first question for you is , um, what were your professional positions during your time of involvement with the Southern Chapter? What can you tell us?

My door to the Southern Chapter was opened by the Majors boys, as they're popularly known, when I went to work for them in 1971 as Manager of the Serials/Continuations Division, which I instigated and developed for them. Later, I became Manager of the Journals Department. Through the Majors friendly relations and rapport with everyone they met, I became an immediate member of the family. When the Journals Division was acquired by EBSCO in 1993, I had been promoted by the Majors to Vice President of Majors Scientific Subscriptions. The remainder of my working days were as Special Projects Coordinator for their Biomedical Division at EBSCO. Upon retirement I became Consultant for their Biomedical Division.

When did you retire from Majors?

I never retired from Majors.

Sure you did.

No, we had a farewell party and a wonderful time was had by all at *Watel's* restaurant in Dallas. We invited the librarians around to come and it was, uh, a very special event.

What year was that, was that in '94? or '93? I don't remember exactly when they decided to sell their Journals Division.

The Journals Division was never sold, it was "acquired."

I'm glad you're here to correct me on all this (laughter).

Talk about informal, you can talk like you want in your pajamas. Uhmm, where was I?

Well, I think its time to move on to the next question, but I'm still trying to get fixed when you went to EBSCO it was January of '94, maybe?

I began August of '93, I believe, and went over for a month and had orientation at the EBSCO offices, meeting everybody in the various departments, getting a full appreciation of the magnitude and coverage that EBSCO is responsible for. And then when I came back from the orientation the Majors had a farewell party for me because they were not able to get that all together before then.

And you began working with EBSCO as a Special Consultant in their Journals, Biomedical Journals division and just recently retired, then, or are you actually not retired?

Officially I'm retired because that means if I were working for them I would be more part time because that has a different connotation. I'm simply consultant and as a consultant I'm updating lists, and, uh, attending a few meetings.

Thanks for helping set the record straight; I wasn't real sure on all of this. Moving on to

the next, um, question, I've been around in the field since 1969, and it seems like you have been around maybe almost as long. I don't remember you from those very early meetings, but what can you tell us about your earliest memories of the Southern Chapter?

Strange, but my working career in the vendor world is bracketed by the Southern Chapter meetings hosted in Birmingham. The first time I saw Birmingham, it was amidst the black smoke spewing from those belching chimneys out by the airport with a subsequent pallor hanging over the city. The latest meeting in '94 (Interviewer's Note: Birmingham meeting was in '93) showed what a miraculous change from the darkness to light had evolved during the intervening years! What stood out the most at the first meeting was the beauty of the Lister Hill Library's History of Medicine Collection.

As for personages, there was the omnipresent quartet of gracious Southern belles who were the reigning queens - archaic, that is - of the Southern Group. Sarah Brown, Mildred Langner, and Mildr--Miriam Libbey were all soft spoken, and then there was Irene Graham who spoke out a little more than the others. These true southern beauties formed the leadership and continued to provide the leadership regardless of any other powers that were supposedly in charge. It was a privilege to be in their presence, and I admired their enviable camaraderie. You learned from them that a gentle and kind word, strongly enough said, could achieve wonders. Besides being gracious, kind, beautiful and strong, they were all so very smart. Each has left the heritage of a great library for each of us to envy. Miriam exemplified all of this up to the

very end. I remember visiting her with Louise Warren and Ken Robichaux in the rehabilitation nursing home, I think it was Woodlands, in Atlanta following a stroke which left her partially paralyzed. She spoke with patient vocal struggle to thank us for the chocolates as well as the visit. While weak, she was determined to overcome.

Fortunately, we still have three of this quartet with us. In her final years as Director at Rowland Medical Library in Jackson, Irene also served on the accreditation committee for Dental Libraries. I had given her an open invitation to dinner should she find herself in Dallas. This she did and we made arrangements for dinner. I was to pick her up at 6:30 at the Sheraton in downtown Dallas. When I got there, she wasn't registered. I called every Sheraton around the area, and she wasn't registered at any of them.

Gracious as she can be, don't stand her up! Finally, I went to the restaurant where Al and Jan McClendon were waiting for us and asked them what in the world I should do. While deciding, I called my roommate at home who is also named Bill. Irene had called and asked if that were Bill answering, and when he answered in the affirmative, he got an earful before he could explain that he wasn't the Bill she wanted. Fortunately, he had gotten her room number at the Sheraton, so I dashed back over and found her at last. We went to the desk to see why she wasn't registered and discovered that they had interpreted her name as "Fred" Graham, because of the illegible writing. She says it wasn't her penmanship! All's well that end's well, they say. We laughed about it, and I now sing that I'm in love with a girl named Fred!

That sounds like Irene. I can't believe you had that, uh, well I can believe that all of that

happened with her. She's quite a character and still, uh, comes to an occasional meeting, although I don't believe I've seen her in awhile. She was at the Birmingham meeting, I think, in '94 (Interviewer's note: This meeting was in 1993) Do you remember?

I don't think she made the Birmingham, but she was in Atlanta.

That was it. That was the big anniversary meeting for the fortieth year, so she came to that. Well you've given us some reminiscences on people, what do you remember specifically about some of the early, earlier meetings of the Southern Chapter?

Well, I remember, uh, the Charleston 1920's party doing the Charleston with Anne Kabler, at that time, and her long pear-r-r-l necklace that she could spin around her slender waist. (Laughter from interviewer). At that meeting I also remember running around with John Majors to buy liquor for the opening night reception party because the hotel wouldn't furnish it, or else they were charging exorbitant prices, I'm not sure what the circumstances were. The entertainment at the banquet was an ambitious - oh, this was the different one, this was in, another 1920's at the joint Winston-Salem banquet, well (Interviewer: 1985) in 1985, when they got together a show, the librarians put on, based on George M, with Ada Seltzer, shimmering and shimmering and shimmying in her Charleston dress. Of course, she shimmied later too, at the Birmingham meeting, and we will never forget that strip. (Interviewer: Oh, boy!) Everyone put a lot of work and time into that production back in Winston-Salem and it was fan-tas-tic. It was enjoyed by one and all.

And, I also remember the wonderful meeting in Johnson City and the fall colors, and the story tellers; I remember the beautiful harbor of Jacksonville, the boat ride in Tampa, all that wonderful food, all the time, the Country Western Museum in Nashville, and again the 30th anniversary bash - er, the 40th rather anniversary bash in Atlanta. Then there were the joint meetings ... one with the ACC Group in Asheville, in Winston-Salem, and another with the TALON in New Orleans.

(Interviewer: The Winston-Salem was with MAC, I believe?). With, with MAC, right.

Uh, New Orleans is not only the home no longer home of the Southern Group, but also the home no longer home of Majors Scientific Books. So we're very, we were based there originally, uh, Majors was based there originally. Yes, and we do love our formal banquets. When it comes to partying, it's hard to out do the New Orleanians. Both at the joint meeting and the national MLA meeting the banquets were bubbling over with good food and good times, especially the parade of the flaming baked Alaska desserts led by the Dixieland Jazz band and Second Liners. When we arrived for the MLA banquet, Anne Macomber gave Al McClendon, John, Jam and Bill Majors and myself our own specially made umbrellas to be honorary Second Liners. My mother accompanied me that night, so at 88, in her golden gown, I took her back with the others into the kitchen. She didn't have a clue what was going to happen! The Majors boys were playing football with the bread loaves while waiting. Mother's eyes gradually go bigger, and bigger, just a little, like a little girl, as the baked Alaskas were lit, the lights were turned out, the band played and we danced into the banquet ballroom. She

didn't have an umbrella, but I told her to just wave her hanky and strut. She had the time of her life. Afterwards, I let mother keep the umbrella, which she treasured. I treasure that memory, and especially how everyone from the Southern Group went out of their way to make her feel welcome. That's the way the Southern Group is.

We've always been known, I think, for enjoying our parties and, and banquets, and everything, I think one of the um, um attributes that the Chapter has had has been the comraderie and good friendships. People don't seem to leave the region that much so we've, we've known each other for a long time. Um, what are your observations about how the Chapter has evolved over the years?

Well it's true, the chapter has increased in size, but the problem for the future will be to maintain these numbers. Especially with the hospital library being caught in the cut-throat HMO acquisitions, it is important to fortify these vital points of light throughout the area. The emphasis is indeed on this, with the academic medical libraries working hand in hand to fulfill informational needs through a variety of programs. Technology must be controlled - it cannot control us. E-Mail, WWW -World Wide Web - home pages, etc. can be dangerous to our health otherwise. Knowledge and research must be protected with credence as well as from hackers. There is a very lively challenge ahead for all librarians.

This can be met best at the regional level with national support. I believe that the Southern Chapter continues to be endowed with directors of insight. They may not be as soft spoken as their predecessors, but they are certainly librarians of like action.

It is definitely a time of challenge for all of us. Um, I'm going to throw a zinger in here for you, Bill, and I want you to tell us a little bit about how you got into this business, your pre-Majors days, and then, um, get into how perhaps the Chapter has affected your professional development as you became involved with it through Majors over the years. So tell us a little bit about your early pre-Majors, how you got into this business, and what you were doing before you went with them.

How far back do you want me to go?

As far back as you wanta confess to and you, and you can give us a year or two because we need to put this into kind of some focus, um, so go for it.

(laughter) Well, New York is where it really all began and, uh, I worked at the music store, *Patelson's* in 1950's and also on the side I worked in a law firm that handled British actors and actresses and thereby got involved eventually by visiting uh in Rome at the beginning of a one time famous scandal, and, uh, people called Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. And we had represented Richard Burton in the New York office, so when I came upon the scene they suddenly needed another person to help because, um, one secretary was out at the , uh, studios, *Cinecitta*, and then somebody had to stay in town and take care of regular business because things had gotten very, very hectic. And I stayed with them three years until they got married and that year Elizabeth gave me a thousand dollar bonus and I stayed on down in Puerto Vallarta and looked after the house all winter, went swimming every day, and had a ball and got in a rut, I had to get out of that rut..

Sounds like a pretty nice rut.

(laughter) It was a little too, too comfortable, you couldn't accomplish a heck of a lot, and I like to accomplish things. So I flew back to New York and they had just come to uh Boston with Hamlet, and, uh, after they, they had just gotten married, and uh I called them to congratulate them and they again were in need of help because of all the mail that was coming in, they had bags full of mail, congratulating them on the wedding. So I flew up and at that time Elizabeth was imprisoned in the hotel, so she used to come in and uh for company and watch TV with me. She'd come in in her Christian Dior - what do you call it? - peignoir and uh flop in bed with me.

A little more elegant than our sweats that we have on at the moment.

(laughter) But we're not exactly in bed. (laughter) So anyway I consider that I've been to bed with Elizabeth Taylor although it was very platonic and we were just watching TV.

(laughter)

Why was she imprisoned in the hotel? Richard was working on Hamlet and she felt like she wanted to maintain a low profile? Was this still on the edge of the scandal business?

It was impossible to retain a low profile for Elizabeth and there were people hanging around the lobby waiting to catch a glimpse of her, there were paparazzi, there were gossip reporters -- one of the gossip reporters had taken a room at the end of the hall from our suite just watching our coming and going. We had to hire police to keep people out of our hall way. Any time she went out people would try to get a piece of her

clothing, or rip her hair or something, so we had to use devious means to get out of the hotel for her, like coming up out of the, the garbage exit, or something (laughter) like that to get into the limo to get, uh, to go to any special events. But, um, anyway, uh, during one summer hiatus I, uhm, was in New York and Mrs. Valentine at uh Maxwell Scientific International, which was organized by Captain, the infamous Captain Maxwell, to distribute books for Pergamon Press the imprint which was handled by Macmillan. But he didn't feel they were doing a good enough job so he had Maxwell Scientific International which Mrs. Valentine headed. Uh, it came to the point where he felt that it was important to have his own company and they set up offices in Long Island City to handle Pergamon books, and he got the contract with Mac, with, um, Macmillan had ended. So, uh...

How did you find out about this job, now, did you know Mrs. Valentine previously or you left uh the Burton's employment and went to New York and ...?

Well it so happened that uh with the situation with Richard and Elizabeth, they had - Elizabeth had two secretaries, and Richard had two secretaries, and we took turns doing various films, and this summer we were out in Long Island staying at a house of um a young couple that worked for Marcel Dekker. And my friend had worked with Mrs. Valentine before at the British Book Center, so that's how I, the connection evolved. And Liesel had two little babies, one was six months old, or three months old, I don't remember, and the other was three years old, and, uh, my

friend had been married and had had babies and knew all that, changing diapers, took care of all that stuff, so I didn't have to mess with the mess. And uh, Mrs. Valentine needed somebody to come and work for her because one of her girls had an appendectomy and she immediately thought, knew Jim was in town and called. Well, he couldn't go because he had to change diapers. I didn't know how to change diapers, so you can say, he suggested I go and work, which I did. And so you can say I got into publishing because I didn't know how to change diapers.

I think its amazing how we sort of fall into jobs sometimes (laughter). That's, I hadn't heard that story before, I don't think. I knew about your position with the Burton's, but I never knew exactly how you got into the publishing business. So you worked for Mrs. Valentine, for... how long, roughly...

Well, uh, after that two week stint, she wou, she kept after me to come and work, and so after that I went to Mexico, Boston, and when I was in Boston, flew down for an interview and was hired to set up their marketing files so I physically went over and got the marketing files from Macmillan for Pergamon titles, and set up the files in Long Island City, and, then promoted the books through Maxwell Scientific International, because it was a transition period. Uh, but Mrs... at that time, Springer-Verlag decided to open offices in the Flat Iron Building in New York and Gunther Holtz was very influential and heard of Mrs. Valentine, she being German uh would have no problem communicating with their offices in Germany. And with her knowledge of distribution

was uh would prove invaluable to Springer-Verlag in the U. S. operations. So they made an offer that she couldn't refuse and she went and joined them and then I followed her to Springer -Verlag shortly thereafter, so I worked with Pergamon Press only about nine months. And uh, then, uh, we were about eight people at Springer-Verlag in those days, and really started to put it on the map in the United States.

Was Jim Boyer with Springer at that time? I think, I think that he worked there also, but that may have been after...

Yeah, that was much later when we were larger and had uh, as we evolved, there wasn't a promotion department in the beginning but as we grew, it became necessary to have a promotion department. I became Manager of the Promotion Department for the western hemisphere for Springer-Verlag. And I'm not sure at what point uh they were big enough to hire salesmen to represent them, but it was, it was quite a bit later.

Did you then go to Majors from Springer, and if so, how did that uh come about?

Well, I had been, New York you can only take so much of for so long and I, and the work promoting four hundred books a year and uh all the journals, it, you get burned out so to speak and you have to get away, so I went to Portugal for three weeks...a month in Portugal, in April in Portugal. And when I came back, MLA was meeting in New York City that year and I went up and uh (Interviewer in background: Do you remember which MLA?) No, oh, yes it was 1971. And, um, I always had a good rapport with the Majors at different meetings, they always included me with uh dinners and things so they were already family at that time. And I felt free talking with them and

I asked Bill Majors if he didn't have a job for me and he said "Well, sure!" and I said "Well, I'll take it!"

(laughter) Without finding out any of the details.

(laughter) Right. But several weeks went by and I hadn't heard from him after that meeting and so I called him and he said, "Oh, were you serious?" (laughter) And I said yes, so they flew me down for an interview to decide what I should do, could do for them and that was when it was decided that eh it would be important to consolidate and set up a continuation department - serials.

This was kind of pre AI and Jam days (Bill: HA!), wouldn't it have been? Were they just a gleam in their fathers' eye at that point? They both seem so young to me.

Don't make me feel older than I am. (extended laughter) But, yes (more laughter). I remember Jam when he was a little boy coming into the offices, and learning the ropes, and working in the warehouse, and doing all those kind of things that the son of the owner would do.

Did he do that summers when he was in high school or even younger?

Well, mainly when he was in high school and summers and earlier on of course he tagged around, but, yeah, he was, eh, he was not a gleam in his father's eye when I came on board, I can assure you that.

(laughter) Sorry, didn't mean to imply that you are older than you are. You're still young. We're all still awful young. (Unintelligible, laughter) So you went to Majors somewhere like around 1971. It's interesting because my first Southern Chapter

meeting that I remember attending I think was actually held in Texas in Houston in 1970. I think that was a Chapter meeting and not an MLA meeting. At any rate, you started, you got involved with Majors, and started, um, going to more professional meetings possibly? Uhm, how do you think the Southern Chapter, well has the Southern Chapter, do you think affected your professional development over the years? And if so, how do you think it, it might have done that?

Well, as I mentioned before coming to Majors, I worked uh on the publisher side with Pergamon Press and Springer-Verlag. And when we attended meetings as publishers, we treated time at the exhibits like regular work hours. Librarians generally regarded us publishers as outsiders - I might say there has been greater integration in recent years. When we as publishers went to the triple A S and American Mathematical Society meetings, the exhibits were visibly, visibly profitable from a purely sales standpoint. At MLA, on the other hand, sales were never visibly profitable. The exhibits were for establishing good relations. Heaven forbid that a new journal be announced! I wasn't aware of this problem when exhibiting as a publisher, though. However, when the exhibits closed, we went our own ways. Once with the Majors, it was a sudden change -- I was going to say "rude awakening". From the moment you woke up and stepped outside your hotel room until the wee hours of the morning when you finally fell into bed, you were totally involved as one of the Group. It was fun, interesting, confusing, and exhausting. Whenever I returned from a Southern Group Meeting, I needed a vacation to recover!

I think that the relationship with uh publishers, and vendors and librarians has, has changed, more so now with, with the specialized conferences like NASIG and the Charleston Conference. It's given all of us a forum to meet on more equal terms, and I think that's probably been a positive thing. Maybe that's, you've felt that more from the distributor's point of view um over the years also.

Well that probably all began in the early meetings when they used to have publisher, vendor, librarian seminars at, at the regional meetings. And, uh, I participated one, in one in Atlanta and very early one in the Southern Northern Chapter of the um Southern Northern California Chapter uh and also at MLA Montreal. Eh so it was an evolving eh thing that people were trying to get closer together to understand each other so the conferences, its true, that Katina started here in Charleston and that NASIG evolved from the UKSG has brought them indeed closer together where they can have a forum to discuss openly problems and um see where everybodys coming from.

I think that's becoming more and more important as we move from the traditional formats to the less traditional, the electronic form, although that's, that's soon going to be the more normal format, I would expect. Um, moving on, talking about the Southern Chapter affecting your professional development, do you have any, any people that come to mind that um have affected your professional development over the years?

Well its hard to pinpoint anyone special because everybody eh certainly provided feedback that eh helped with the development of eh the Serials/Continuations at Majors and later the Journals. However, um first and foremost, the Majors have all had the

immediate affect by hiring me in the first place and by having faith in me and my abilities.

Sarah Brown was one of the first librarians to influence my development by inviting me over to Les Lister Hill to reorganize their continuations which badly needed updating and which had been ordered through various vendors and publishers scattered around the world. These were all consolidated and set up for efficient central handling. It was a wonderful experience and excellent training.

Each and every one of the librarians involved with journals and serials/ continuations have affected my development. I felt we always worked as a team and I continue to feel this warm relationship to this day.

That's a very generous statement on your part.

It's true.

(laughter) Well I think we do all learn from each other for sure. Moving away from the Southern Chapter for a moment um you've already touched on some of the early MA MLA meetings, I wondered if if, particularly the one in New York, which um was kind of the turning point I suppose in your career when you talked to Bill Majors about um a new position, and that was, you said 1971. I think that was one, one MLA meeting that I did not attend, and

(I hope it wasn't SLA)

(laughter) Well SLA, MLA. Actually MLA was in New York that year.

(I think it was.)

But do you have anything else to add about some of the earlier MLA meetings?

Well we always had a lot of fun. I remember Minneapolis when John Ische was dancing on the table with a long-stemmed rose in his mouth at the hotel bar.

And Montreal, with all its very, very rich food. And I remember Bill Majors taking a group to dinner at a restaurant which had closed, but he got a hold of the owners to open up. And we had a wonderful evening meal. Bill Majors could do that.

That sounds so like Bill. I think he could talk his way out of a paper bag or talk his way into just about any place he wanted to go. I think he still does that.

Well he has a lot of charm and anybody who's been around him uh feels, gets a benefit from that, feels uh good, just being around him. He has that that personage.

Uh San Antonio was my first MLA with Majors eh but I had to miss the big fiesta party, the eh, sort of the final banquet, I guess, uh to go back to Dallas to meet with Don eh Dan Dan Tonkerey on his way back to D. C. where he was working at National Library of Medicine at the time. He came through to review our Serials/Continuations Department and it was the beginning of a long and healthy relationship with National Library of Medicine for Majors.

Seattle's - I remember that wonderful boat ride to the salmon feast with the Native American dancing, um, and our own dancing on the boat going back which was never ending it seemed.

I think you and I were the only ones dancing on the boat as I recall.

Well there was also Jackie Fincher if you remember, with her high heels. Where was

she from South Carolina, she was from South Carolina some place, yes... I don't know what's happened to Jackie but after this, after that boat ride I went up to Vancouver and she was waiting for me at the uh uh Butchart Gardens (ed. note: Should be in Victoria). When I got off the top of the double decker bus, there she was waiting for me downstairs and we strolled through the Gardens together. I don't know what's happened to her. Maybe somebody can...

(What was her name?)

Fincher. F-I-N-C-H-E-R.

And, um, then Portland of course had another riverboat ride. That's where we danced, was that riverboat ride, not the Seattle one.

Our memories are shot. Mine are, anyway (laughter).

(laughter) No that was, that was where, the Portland one, yeah that was great, and um... then in Hawaii, uh, that was a wonderful meeting eh but we couldn't get a quorum because everyone was on the beach. The food at the banquet was one of the best that I ever remember, it was mahi-mahi, coconut shrimp and chicken marinated in coconut milk! Oh, it was fantastic!

And of course Chi..

I can't believe you remember these menus. I think that's great.

Well when something exceptional like that, I do remember it. Uhm, Chicago, with the blues bars and of course there was the night on the pier with the buffet all around, that was that was a fun meeting.

San Francisco always speaks for itself, as does D.C.

But Boston, we explored Yale, going out to the Friends of NLM party at the Kennedy Library, going to Boston Pops... (Yale's not in Boston.. Harvard) Oh, Harvard, did I say Yale? (laughter) Good grief, my memory's slipping! Harvard Yard, Harvard (and Cambridge) and Cambridge. Good grief, thank you. I'm going to correct that in my memory. Uh, and then ending up with Anne and Ken after the Boston Pops at the beginning of their romance, listening to the cabaret pianist play just for them.

Something like "It Had To Be You," I think.

(laughter) I think you're um adding to history here but I do remember the piano player, he was quite excellent. And uh we had a pretty large group in there that night, um but you're right I think that's when Ken and I started talking a little more seriously about things.

There were sparks beginning to fly. I also had to endure this affair at the Southern Group meeting in Johnson City. Well, we know all know how that turned out! (laughter). It wasn't an affair at that point; I think we did spend some time there, 'cause after that meeting um Ken called me to tell me he was taking a trip to Florida and would like to come through Charleston on his way - which was a little bit out of the way from Atlanta - but that's when the romance actually started.

We haven't clarified who Ken is. That's Ken Robichaux who at that time - and still does - works for Majors. (laughter) In case you didn't know. (laughter).

And of course, (laughter) what ..?

Are you still recalling early memories of MLA? That's not so early, that's a fairly recent um, that meeting was 1989 I believe.

Yeah, but we're recording this for posterity remember. That's (laughter) at a later date it will be early.

And of course our own Houston with probably the last convention to be held in the great Shamrock Hotel. It is now the sight of the Biological Research Center. And what a fu, what a fun evening we had at the rodeo with everybody throwing cow chips (unintelligible) to see who could throw them the furthest.

The biggest disappointment I remember was not having MLA in Cincinnati, one of my favorite cities. Theoretically, the promised hotel rooms would not be available at the time, but we did have an excellent alternative meeting in Minneapolis.

As for New Orleans, I'm always ready for a convention there, wearing as it may be for those great folks. We've, now they've got the great new aquarium and a fantastic IMAX theater next to it since we were last there. Time for another joint meeting with SCC, formerly TALON?

In the meantime, I'm really looking forward to the Southern meeting in San Juan.

That's coming up next week, it's uh not that far off. Um we talked about the Chapter meetings um in one of the earlier questions, but can you think of any traditions that um are kind of, um well may have started with some of the early Chapter meetings. I don't know if we have that many that have continued, but I can think of a couple, can you?

Well I know you uh you like those cocktail parties (laughter) that were traditions that the Majors threw, and I uh, then that developed I guess into something more healthy with the Majors 6:30 a.m. bracing walks. Free T-shirts and breakfast help get those eyelids open, if not made up - speaking for the ladies, that is! This has become a tradition for the Southern Group as well as the National.

At the National meeting, we have a wonderful tradition of the annual Southern Group cocktail party. I remember especially the Boston meeting with our party in the Boston Public Library's beautiful rooms upstairs.

No, that was the SCC Group. Sorry, folks... but those New Orleans gal got me confused!

Well, la de da tha that's all, folks!

I'm confused about this. Now this was the national meeting, um, you're talking about a Boston meeting (that was national MLA in Boston) and we have an annual Southern Group cocktail party at the national meeting? (or that's the South Cen..)

They, its now the Armadillo Ball. (Oh, its the South Central MLA.) It's the South Central. That's why I'm correcting myself.

Oh, I see. So South Central has an annual cocktail meeting in conjunction with MLA (and also) Yeah I think s (a lot of Southerners get there) Yeah, that's, well you know um South Central and Southern and some of the Mid Atlantic states all were actually one Chapter for many years and I don't know, um I think, I don't know when the Mid Atlantic

states, um some of them dropped off but I, it wasn't until 1972 that Southern Chapter and South Central, actually, or Louisiana, I guess, was still in the Southern Chapter, and that was the state that um moved to South Central. So there's some some overlap still I believe with with individuals coming to each other's meetings, that kind of thing.

Yes, and there're a lot of similar traits, but uh I the Southern Group is one of my most favorite.

Well thank you, Bill, and we've enjoyed talking with you this morning, um do you have anything else you'd like to share with us before we shut off the microphone?

I continue to look forward to seeing each and every one of you.

Thank you very much (oh)

You're welcome.