

Interview of: Ruth Miller
Interviewer: Mary Beth Lasseter
Interview Date: June 23, 2005

July 6, 2005

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Interviewee: Ruth Miller
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[Begin Ruth Miller Interview]

0:00:04.5

ML: Okay, all right; today is Thursday, June 23, 2005 and this is Mary Beth Lasseter. I am here at the Kappa Alpha Fraternity House on the campus of Ole Miss interviewing Miss Ruth Miller, who is the house mother for the KAs. Miss Miller, could you please state your full name for the record?

0:00:26.1

RM: Well my name is Ruth Kelly Miller.

0:00:31.0

ML: And where are you from originally?

0:00:33.1

PB: I was born in Ecu, Mississippi; it's a little tiny town in Pontotoc County. But I lived most of my young life in Sheffield, Alabama.

0:00:46.5

ML: And where did you go to school?

0:00:48.0

RM: I went to school at Blue Mountain--in Blue Mountain, Mississippi, and Florence State College as it was known then. It's University of Alabama--North Alabama now and then when I started teaching kindergarten I--I took summer courses at Mississippi Southern.

0:01:08.4

ML: How many years did you teach kindergarten?

0:01:10.6

RM: Twelve.

0:01:12.1

ML: And tell me a little bit about your family.

0:01:14.8

RM: Well I--my mother and father were Scotch/Irish and I have--I had one brother and two sisters. And I was the oldest and all three are--all of them are deceased now. So I'm the only one left.

0:01:37.0

ML: And tell me about your husband and children.

0:01:39.7

RM: Well my husband was E.J. Miller, Jr. and he was from Lauderdale, Mississippi, and I met him when I was 13. [*Laughs*] And he was--well he was eight years older than I was, but he waited for me. [*Laughs*]

0:01:58.8

ML: That's great.

0:02:00.3

PB: So and we were married and had four children. Oldest one was Gail and then I had a son, E. J. Miller, III; then after about eight years I had two more. I had another son, Frank, and another daughter, Elaine. And Frank and Elaine and Butch are still living. Gail and my husband died within eight weeks of each other.

0:02:34.7

ML: Oh no; where--where are your living children residing?

0:02:38.0

RM: They are all in school. [*Laughs*] My oldest son is a Professor; he's Dr. E. J. Miller, III in [Ruston] at Louisiana Tech. My daughter teaches art at--in West Memphis, Arkansas. My son is a coach and he teaches economics at [Hatley] High School in [Hatley], Mississippi.

0:03:06.2

ML: Okay.

0:03:07.3

RM: He coaches girls' basketball.

0:03:09.7

ML: Now do you have any grandchildren?

0:03:11.0

RM: Yes; I have four grandchildren. I have two sons--two grandsons and two granddaughters.

0:03:17.8

ML: Okay; tell me a little bit about how you came to be a house mother.

0:03:21.6

RM: *[Laughs]* When we moved to Charleston from Jackson, we moved to Oxford first and stayed here five years. So my husband played golf with Dr. [Chang] and--all of them were golf addicts. They--my two sons still are. And he--they just you know--they played golf together and we knew them. Then when we moved to Charleston after Ed died about oh--he died in May; I think sometime that summer Dr. [Chang] called and wanted to know if I wanted a job--I wanted to do something besides you know... and it was too early then; so I didn't come up then. And then the next year he called and he said, "[ATO] needs a house director. So that's the way I came up and didn't know anything about what I was supposed to do or anything. But I had a cook there that had been there for about 12 or 15 years, and she--*[Laughs]*--she taught me. *[Laughs]*

0:04:40.3

ML: That's great. Can you tell me a little bit about what a house mother does?

0:04:44.2

RM: Not much. *[Laughs]* Not really; I plan the meals. I buy the food. I supervise the help. Now we have--we have three cooks here and two house men. And the--I you know supervise their--what they do. Then I'm here for the boys and whatever they need me to do, like call the plumber *[Laughs]* and all of that--I do; that's it.

0:05:23.8

ML: Now you have an apartment here in the house.

0:05:25.4

RM: Uh-hm.

0:05:26.2

ML: Do you live here full-time or...?

0:05:28.8

RM: I am here because they--they have boys that are here for the summer session and Dr. Angle asked me I would stay this summer. So I am; I'm here.

0:05:43.2

ML: But you still own your home?

0:05:44.3

RM: Yeah; I still own my home in Charleston.

0:05:46.6

ML: Okay.

0:05:47.1

RM: Uh-huh.

0:05:47.8

ML: Tell me a little bit about ordering the food. How do you plan the menus and where do you get your food from?

0:05:52.7

RM: You plan the menus on what the boys like. [*Laughs*] If--and here and at the ATO House I had a food chairman and they--they--they are really helpful because they hear the comments that the boys make you know in--where they don't tell me. They'll hear the comments and they'll say well if--let's don't have anymore like that, and if--it's their food and it's their money and if they don't like it there's no point in serving it.

0:06:30.0

ML: How many means do y'all serve here?

0:06:31.8

RM: We serve three meals a day, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and Friday, we have breakfast and lunch and that's it.

0:06:42.3

ML: Okay; where do you get your food from?

0:06:44.7

RM: I order my food from Sysco and US Services.

0:06:52.3

ML: Why do you order your food from those major suppliers? Is it ease or price?

0:06:58.8

RM: Well in the first place, you buy by the cases [*Laughs*] for meals like this. And I don't think I--I don't know whether I could go to Big Star and--and if we had something like Hot Pockets and buy six or seven cases, which is what we use at a meal. So you--you... and it is cheaper. But it--you have to buy it by quantity and we buy bacon by the case [*Laughs*] and eggs by the case.

0:07:38.2

ML: Now how did you make the transition from living alone and cooking for yourself to ordering...

0:07:43.8

RM: [*Laughs*]

0:07:44.4

ML: ... and preparing for a hundred-plus guys?

0:07:47.0

RM: That's--that's where Liz Miller was here.

0:07:51.2

ML: Can you tell me a little bit about her?

0:07:52.9

RM: Yes; she had been here several years and...

0:07:57.7

ML: Now when you say here you mean on campus?

0:07:58.9

RM: No, no, I mean ATO.

0:08:00.4

ML: Okay.

0:08:00.5

RM: She was at the ATO House and she had--she--she knew how many cases it would take if there were 36 say pepperoni pizzas, you know in a case then we--we knew that--we were talking about say if we had 100 boys, you don't--they don't eat just one. **[Laughs]** They--you never know what they'll eat but you always buy--I do--a little more 'cause I'd rather have some leftover because we can always use it, and she was the one that kind of just led me into this. **[Laughs]**

0:08:46.1

ML: Now how many years did she work with you?

0:08:48.5

RM: About 11 or 12.

0:08:54.7

ML: And did she help you plan the menus as well?

0:08:57.5

RM: Yeah; she did because she had been there cooking for them, you know with--and ordering food and--and she did. She said, "Well they just--they just won't eat that." So I took her word, and it worked.

0:09:12.7

ML: How would you classify her style of cooking?

0:09:16.8

RM: She didn't use a recipe. **[Laughs]** That's it really.

0:09:24.2

ML: She never used recipes--interesting.

0:09:25.5

RM: Uh-um; uh-um.

0:09:27.3

ML: What kinds of things did she cook, what kind of dishes?

0:09:29.9

RM: Oh well she would cook casseroles--bean casserole, potato casserole, especially potato casserole. They like it here and there. She cooked desserts--cobblers, things like that. She made brownies from scratch.

0:09:47.9

ML: Oh great.

0:09:49.3

RM: Uh-hm; after a while--now this one here does use you know the food--I mean it's already prepared in--but she cooks it like she'll--she'll make brownies, but she'll make it from brownie mix. But the cook that we have here, she came with me from the ATO House and Willie, one of the house men came with me, and they--Patricia is just about like Liz. She can--and she'll say, "All right now; all right just...." I said I don't have a recipe for that. "Okay, okay; we'll get it." And that's it. **[Laughs]** And it's gotten.

0:10:32.6

ML: That's great. How have you seen cooking change? You mentioned that Liz cooked from scratch and now they're using mixes...

0:10:39.2

RM: Uh-hm.

0:10:43.2

ML: Why do you think that change has happened over the years?

0:10:43.5

RM: Well look at all--look at all of the foods that you get that's already packaged and you know it's in a--it's in a box or it's in a package, like your hash browns and all of that you know. They--I guess it's just--it's just the way. **[Laughs]** It changes.

0:11:07.3

ML: It's more convenient.

0:11:08.3

RM: It's more convenient--that's right; you can get it in because it would take all day to peel potatoes [*Laughs*] you know for hash browns.

0:11:18.2

ML: Now are you serving more boys today than you served when you first began...

0:11:23.2

RM: Uh-hm.

0:11:23.1

ML: ... being a house mother?

0:11:24.5

RM: Uh-hm.

0:11:24.2

ML: How have the numbers grown?

0:11:27.1

RM: Well they have--they are more--there are more over here... we served around 100 at the ATO House and I think they serve around 100--we prepare for about 120 here. But I don't know; we just--we didn't have the numbers when I started that we have now that belong to a Fraternity.

0:11:55.5

ML: How--how has your kitchen staff changed over those years?

0:12:00.8

RM: They haven't; they're still good.

0:12:01.5

ML: Do you employ the same number of people?

0:12:04.6

RM: Uh-huh; uh-huh; we had over at the ATO House we had a breakfast cook and then Liz came in; after she died, Patricia came in around 9:30 and we had--and then the breakfast cook would leave in the afternoon, and also one of our house men is a good cook. **[Laughs]** So I brought him over here with me, too. **[Laughs]** He--he can cook just like they do and he doesn't use a recipe. **[Laughs]**

0:12:40.2

ML: Hmm; now how do you go about finding your cooks? The ones that were at the house I understand what you do there, but how do you hire new people?

0:12:49.0

RM: Someone recommended--I think it was--it was the breakfast cook, Tracy, and she recommended Patricia and so Patricia... I--I had one or two before Patricia came, but they didn't want to do this and they didn't want to do that, you know. They--they had their own way and sometimes it--it--it didn't make a difference whether it was my way or not; it was just that the food--that--the boys didn't eat it. And so Tracy brought Patricia and she just fit. **[Laughs]**

0:13:33.1

ML: Now how--let me see--think how to say this.

0:13:37.0

RM: All right.

0:13:38.0

ML: When cooks cook at the ATO House and then they moved to the KA House what are some of the reasons for those transitions? Are they following house mothers they've had good working relationships with or do you house mothers refer cooks to each other? How does that work?

0:13:51.8

RM: I don't know because I'm really--after Liz died I've never had--had to hire anyone until I got Patricia, you see.

0:14:03.3

ML: Okay.

0:14:04.1

RM: I've--and so of course, our--our house burned, so they--Patricia came over here with me and Willie came over here with me.

0:14:16.9

ML: Do you know what happened or what the other cooks who were working in the ATO House are doing now?

0:14:22.8

RM: Tracy--Tracy is with SAEE, I think; she went there before we came over here. *[Laughs]*
And so she just--she stayed there. Then Tracy--and that's it...

0:14:41.4

ML: Okay.

0:14:41.8

RM: Because I've got the others over here. *[Laughs]*

0:14:43.6

ML: All right; just to clarify for the sake of the interview I want to make note that...

0:14:46.8

RM: All right.

0:14:48.7

ML: ... Miss Miller was the house mother at the ATO House and they had a fire and they've closed the house for the academic school year of 2004 and 2005. And Miss Miller has come over here to work at the Kappa Alpha Fraternity House and when we're talking about the distinctions between here and there...

0:15:01.5

RM: There... *[Laughs]*

0:15:02.3

ML: ... we knew ATO is in the past and she's currently working at the KA House.

0:15:06.0

RM: Yes. *[Laughs]*

0:15:06.2

ML: For those who--who aren't local and don't know our back-story.

0:15:09.3

RM: I know because I was over there 23 years.

0:15:14.8

ML: Okay; now you're the KA house mother. Now do you have plans to stay or are you going to return when the ATO House--or is that not decided yet?

0:15:23.6

RM: [*Whispers*]

0:15:25.7

ML: Okay; how many boys do you work with here at the KA House?

0:15:31.7

RM: How many are here?

0:15:31.9

ML: Uh-hm.

0:15:35.0

RM: I--around 120 I think is what they--that's the number they give me you know for--to plan for the food and everything else.

0:15:47.2

ML: And did it just so happened that the KAs had an opening when you were making the transition?

0:15:50.4

RM: Yes; Max Miller is--was one of our Trustees at the ATO House and when it burned I thought well now is the time I guess. I've been here 23 years; I'll just go home. And about a week later he came over--I was--I was staying on campus; he came by and he said, "KA has--KA has not had a house director for three years. They've been using...." Should I mention that?

0:16:29.9

ML: Uh-hm; they've been using an outside caterer.

0:16:31.6

RM: Outside catering and, "They want a house director." And he said, "Would you go over and talk to Tim Angle--Dr. Angle?" And so I went over and talked to him and here I am. **[Laughs]**

0:16:49.2

ML: So interestingly, their concern about food service is what got you the job--the food preparation here; they wanted a local in-house crew for you to manage?

0:16:57.7

RM: Uh-hm; uh-hm.

0:16:59.9

ML: Oh okay; that's interesting.

0:17:02.5

RM: They did--they did.

0:17:03.3

ML: Okay; well tell me a little bit about the kitchen that you run so well. What--what sorts of--what sorts of foods do y'all cook here?

0:17:08.5

RM: **[Laughs]** Meat.

0:17:11.8

ML: **[Laughs]**

0:17:13.8

RM: We tried veg--we tried a meatless meal one time **[Laughs]** at the ATO House; there were signs all over the kitchen, all over the place, "No more no meat days." **[Laughs]** It was--it was hilarious. And they--they want meat, they love vegetables--baked potatoes, beans, peas; they like rice. Just what they--we--you can tell what they like by what's left.

0:17:50.4

ML: Is there an effort to balance their tastes for food with nutritional...

0:17:54.6

RM: Uh-huh; uh-hm; we'll--we'll try--they try not to--say it calls for a cup of butter; they will use maybe an oil--little oil base in there that is less in carbohydrates and calories and stuff, plus about half and half; they do that. And then they--we kind of you know just try to stay away from too many calories, because they'll say, "Look, I can't button--I can't button my belt now."

[Laughs]

0:18:34.8

ML: Okay.

0:18:36.3

RM: I do think--we think--we think about that and--and I make out the menu a week ahead of time, and then I'll take it to Patricia and she'll tell me if we need this or if we have this or if we have that. Then she writes down a list of what we don't have and then I just--I do the meat myself. I mean I--because--unless we have something that's left over in there. And then she will say, "Well all right; I think maybe potato casserole would go well with this meat," you know and so we go together on--on things that we do for the meals.

0:19:21.4

ML: Do you spend a lot of time in the kitchen supervising the staff/

0:19:25.0

RM: Uh-um.

0:19:26.8

ML: Okay; so they work on their own?

0:19:27.0

RM: They work on their own and they do a good job.

0:19:30.6

ML: How is the team structured? Is there a--a head cook or what's your staff like?

0:19:34.5

RM: No; well I would say Patricia is because she is the--she helps with the lunch and she's the dinner cook. So that's the main meal, you see. But the way it is now, the--oh she comes in and she will come in for breakfast and she cooks breakfast and they give their orders. We have--we have bacon and sausage out there, you know on the heat--heat table, but if they want an omelet, she fixes an omelet, you know--like that. And then when she's through with breakfast, she has a--oh about 30 or 40 minutes in there, and if there's--she has the menu in there, and then if there's something that needs to be done early she'll start that before Patricia comes in. So they work well together.

0:20:33.7

ML: So how many hours do you have staff in your kitchen? What's the earliest someone arrives and the latest?

0:20:39.2

RM: From 6:30 until 6:30.

0:20:42.2

ML: Okay; 12 hours a day?

0:20:43.7

RM: Uh-hm.

0:20:45.2

ML: Now do y'all have dishwashers or do you use paper plates?

0:20:47.7

RM: Uh-hm; we have dishwashers.

0:20:48.7

ML: Okay.

0:20:49.8

RM: We use paper cups.

0:20:52.5

ML: Oh okay.

0:20:52.7

RM: [*Laughs*] Because our glasses disappear. [*Laughs*] Sometimes--sometimes we need to use paper--I mean plastic forks and stuff because our forks disappear all the time. [*Laughs*] But we do use plates and--and silver.

0:21:08.4

ML: Now do your students always eat in the dining area or do they have an option for take-out?

0:21:12.3

RM: They have an option for take-out, and if they're--if they're--they need an early plate, they--they will get one. The--the cooks will fix it, you know. Like we have lunch from 11:00 to 1:00 but if somebody needs one at 10:30 most everything is ready by then. They will fix that for them because they may have a class at 11:30. And then at night we go from 5:00--5:30 to 6:30, and if somebody needs one after that, they fix them a take-out plate.

0:21:51.0

ML: Okay; do the boys then go back in the kitchen a lot or is all this ordering done through a window?

0:21:56.8

RM: It's just--well now we had a window over there; we don't have a window here. [*Laughs*]

0:22:06.7

ML: Okay; well are the--are the boys allowed back in the kitchens while--while dinner cooking is going on?

0:22:11.4

RM: No; they don't go back there, uh-uh, no.

0:22:14.2

ML: Okay; are--is there any sort of accommodations made for snacks during the day? Do y'all have a pantry area where they can go or...?

0:22:22.9

RM: They--they have--they have the drink machines out there and other than that it's nothing else. During exams I make them a dip and stuff like that at night. **[Laughs]** And about 10 o'clock....

0:22:43.6

ML: They get snacky?

0:22:45.1

RM: They get snacks at exams. **[Laughs]**

0:22:48.5

ML: Do you think and your opinion as a house mother that the foods you cook here for boys in Mississippi are any different than foods prepared in other Fraternity Houses in other parts of the country? Do you think there's a regional style to the cuisine here?

0:23:05.6

RM: I don't think so because I--you go by what they want, you know--what they will eat here. Now at Alabama, they might--they might want something different; I don't think they do. **[Laughs]** And at LSU--now they--they do. **[Laughs]** But we have--we have quite a few things that are what you would call Cajun food because they love it and they love any spicy food. **[Laughs]**

0:23:41.4

ML: Now do you season your foods like vegetables with fat-back and ham and things like that--that are traditionally considered southern?

0:23:51.0

RM: They do--they--they--they use ham and if we--we could get some ham bones that's what she uses, and I found one in the freezer while ago. **[Laughs]** It's wrapped up and it has ham bone on it. **[Laughs]** That's what they do for vegetables.

0:24:10.2

ML: Okay; so they do season here then?

0:24:12.6

RM: Uh-hm; uh-hm.

0:24:14.0

ML: Great; do you think there is--or what do you think are the similarities or differences between your job here, running a kitchen at a Fraternity House and say managing a restaurant? Do you see--do you see any parallels or...?

0:24:36.2

RM: [*Gestures*]

0:24:36.4

ML: Okay.

0:24:37.1

RM: No, because you have different orders there all the time. These all--they eat the same thing.

0:24:43.7

ML: Okay.

0:24:43.6

RM: But to be--to me it would be easier--this.

0:24:49.2

ML: Now...

0:24:49.0

RM: [*Laughs*]

0:24:50.0

ML: And you--you serve everything buffet style with the exception of the short order breakfast menu, correct?

0:24:55.7

RM: Uh-hm, uh-hm; now...

0:25:00.6

ML: Okay....

0:25:04.2

RM: We have seated dinners.

0:25:08.1

ML: Okay; how often do you do that?

0:25:13.2

RM: Let me see; we used to at the ATO House we had them once a week--no, twice a week.
[*Whispers*] I can't say that.

0:25:27.1

ML: Okay; so--so there's--there's table service at the seated dinners whereas...

0:25:30.8

RM: Uh-huh, yeah; uh-huh and they--the--the plates--everything is set up. The food is put on the table.

0:25:40.6

ML: Okay; so is it family style or your plate with the food already on it?

0:25:45.5

RM: No; it's family style. It's in--you know in the middle. And like you have your meats. Now the meat will be on a platter and then the vegetables and the bread and butter will be, you know in the middle. [*Laughs*]

0:26:05.2

ML: Okay; so they can pass the...?

0:26:06.0

RM: Yes; you pass it to the right. [*Laughs*]

0:26:09.2

ML: [*Laughs*] Do you have the responsibility of--of teaching the boys etiquette in addition to...?

0:26:15.4

RM: Well most--I would say most of them know it. I really would.

0:26:22.3

ML: Okay; that's great.

0:26:24.2

RM: [*Laughs*] Surprising but it--it's true, and they--they are well behaved--really.

0:26:31.6

ML: Now in addition to the regular meals and maybe a special seated dinner, does your kitchen take responsibility for any catering or party food preparation for special events that go on either with alumni on football weekends or...?

0:26:48.4

RM: Yes; we have--if it's--if it's alumni weekend, they are here, but we don't--usually we--they don't do the food; we cater with Dixieland Barbecue.

0:27:07.4

ML: Okay.

0:27:07.5

RM: We do, and that way we get our barbecue, beans, slaw, your buns, you know and all--we get everything that you need for that meal. Now if we need--and for--maybe the kitchen help will make brownies or make cookies or something like that here; they will do that in the kitchen but they are here when we have something even if it's catered.

0:27:39.6

ML: Who is allowed to eat at the KA House? Is it just members or alums, girlfriends...?

0:27:46.6

RM: Alums--[*Laughs*] anyone you know--any KA member--alumni, visitor, anything--they're allowed to eat here and they bring their girlfriends sometimes and that's fine, because we have enough to--you know they don't--everybody doesn't bring one. Now if they did, we--we would have to do something about it. [*Laughs*]

0:28:13.8

ML: Okay; so as a member if you're--if you bring a guest to dinner it's not necessarily an additional charge for the meal?

0:28:18.8

RM: No, uh-uh, uh-uh, uh-um.

0:28:20.8

ML: Okay; so there's no money changing hands at all in the--in the food service?

0:28:24.0

RM: Uh-hm, uh-um.

0:28:25.1

ML: Okay.

0:28:25.6

RM: Not here.

0:28:26.7

ML: Okay; well tell me a little bit about some of the favorite recipes that y'all prepare here. What--what do the boys really like to eat?

0:28:34.3

RM: [*Laughs*] Now you've got me. They--hash brown casserole [*Laughs*]; that's the favorite of--as a vegetable. Ah, they like roast beef; they like--they like pork chops, chopped sirloin steak with a baked potato; they like that. They don't eat liver and things like that, which I love.

[*Laughs*] And I can't serve it. And they like barbecued foods--just any--anything I would say in the meat. [*Phone Rings*]

0:29:28.1

ML: We'll pause this for a second...

0:29:29.0

RM: All right.

0:29:31.0

ML: So you can answer your phone. Mini disk recorder, okay; and we're back with our interview and I just had two more questions for you. The first was I wanted you to describe a typical day for yourself at work.

0:29:45.0

RM: At work? First thing I do when I get up--get my cup of coffee, maybe a bun or something and the paper; then I check the kitchen. I go in and if we have--see if we have everything for today just to be sure because sometimes we forget [*Laughs*] and sometimes I have to run to the grocery store.

0:30:17.1

ML: So that's what you do if there's a lack in items?

0:30:18.3

RM: If there's a lack there, I go to the grocery store and pick up what we need--we may need--maybe more potato chips or something; I go to the grocery store. Then I come back and a typical day on Monday and Thursday--I play Bridge [*Laughs*] at the Downtown Grill. And--from 10 until about 2; then I come home from that and do whatever--if there's anything to be done I'll do it here. The other days I'm here and here I check with Andrew, who is kind of the man--house manager here. He works here--Andrew [*Inaudible*]; he's--he's--I think--well you would call him the house manager; that's his job but at the ATO House I had a house manager and usually there was two or three things to be checked and I'd call the plumber, you know--any of the utility that--numbers that we needed and then we have--had lunch. I don't eat lunch with them; they like to talk about [*Laughs*] last night or this and that and the other and there's one thing--there's--they don't use language--foul language I would call or you know--or--in--in my house. My children never used that, so I don't--they don't use that here. And they don't. They abide by that. And then in the afternoon, I--I read; I'm an avid reader or I go to the library or I go shopping or you know just what I would do at home.

0:32:22.9

ML: Okay.

0:32:23.6

RM: That's it. [*Laughs*] I just do what I would do at home.

0:32:26.7

ML: What is your favorite part of your job?

0:32:32.2

RM: Being around the boys; they'll say, "Hey Miss Ruth," and you see that smile.

0:32:40.3

ML: Do you have any special memories of boys or stories that you recall fondly?

0:32:46.5

RM: Oh well I'd--I'd have to think about them. **[Laughs]** There's so--there's a lot of them. **[Laughs]** Just all right; I have--here's one that--and this is typical of quite a few of them--is that there is an ATO here that lives in Oxford and he's at Bottle Tree Bakery. And at Valentine's he brought me a thing of French bread and a round of sour dough bread. And he--he's been doing that ever since he was--he started here and he's working on his Master's now. So that's been about five or six years. You know things like that and one of them will call and say, "What did you--what did y'all have for lunch today? You didn't have one of those old things like we used to have?" And then he'll laugh **[Laughs]**, you know things like that--just things like your kids do.

0:33:55.5

ML: Now do you ever get--to any of the students ever come back and maybe show you their own children?

0:34:00.8

RM: Uh-huh, uh-hm; I have pictures here and now. I've got a little one over there of Tom Hadley's--he sends me one. He has two now--several of them; I get baby pictures. **[Laughs]**

0:34:15.8

ML: That's wonderful.

0:34:16.7

RM: And I keep them. That one is over there. Oh....

0:34:22.2

ML: Well in wrapping up is there anything that you want to tell me about your job or the boys that I haven't asked you? Is there anything you--like a final note?

0:34:32.8

RM: No; they are wonderful and I love every minute of it. And all my friends think, "When are you going to retire?" And I said as long as I can keep walking **[Laughs]** or until they fire me it's a joy and it makes each day different, you know.

0:34:57.0

ML: Uh-hm; well that's great.

0:34:57.4

RM: Even--you see the same faces probably but it's different. And they are--as I said, 99 and nine-tenths wonderful.

0:35:11.1

ML: [*Laughs*]

0:35:11.4

RM: [*Laughs*]

0:35:12.1

ML: Well that's great.

0:35:12.7

RM: Really they are and I just--I don't understand people saying, "Our younger generation is going to pot," you know. "They're just doing this and...." They're not; they just don't know the right ones. And this--this is not just this one--this Fraternity; it's--it to me it's all of them.

0:35:37.3

ML: Well that's a great thing to end on.

0:35:37.5

RM: They are good. It is.

0:35:38.7

ML: And I'm sure that they appreciate you.

0:35:41.0

RM: Well I--I appreciate them. [*Laughs*]

0:35:42.5

ML: Good deal, all right; we'll wrap that up.

0:35:44.0

RM: And I'll say on there to tell Ned hello. [*Laughs*]

0:35:48.5

ML: Tell Ned hello; we'll certainly do that.

0:35:51.7

RM: Oh me [*Laughs*] because he was one of those top ones.

0:35:56.0

ML: Was he?

0:35:56.9

RM: Yes, he was.

0:35:58.0

ML: Good boy, huh?

0:35:58.6

RM: He--good boy, but he was--he was you know a--he was a sophomore, freshman, junior, or senior but a good one.

0:36:09.0

ML: Good.

0:36:11.8

RM: [*Laughs*]

0:36:12.0

ML: Oh no; that's fine.

0:36:13.3

RM: That's all right.

Interview of: Ruth Miller
Interviewer: Mary Beth Lasseter
Interview Date: June 23, 2005

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[End Ruth Miller Interview]