

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

YSU St John Episcopal Church Project

St John Episcopal Church

O H 1358

BEVERLY LINDSAY

•  
Interviewed

by

Jane Butterworth

on

October 19, 1990

BEVERLY LINDSAY

Beverly Lindsay was born on April 29, 1915 in Youngstown, Ohio. Her mother died at an early age, and the four Lindsay children were raised by Miss Lindsay's maternal grandparents, the James. She graduated from South High School and studied business and secretarial skills for one year at Youngstown College, where she excelled in typing and despised shorthand.

A major turning point came in 1937 when the departing parishing secretary [at St. John's Parish] recommended Beverly as her replacement. She worked full time until 1983, when she continued to help on a part time basis. Until Summer of 1990, Miss Lindsay was indispensable one day a week for proofreading and mailing the St. John's Bulletin.

She lists her special interests as collecting paperweights and helping elderly friends. She has resided with the widow of Dr. Kinder, the former rector of St. John's from 1942 until his death in 1949, for forty years. Another very special interest is her grand-nephew Justin White, who was born in 1986.

During the interview, she speaks of her childhood memories of St. John's and her years in the youth group there. She was involved in the meetings of the "Kinder Club," which primarily catered to young married couples. Because she was the "constant" in an ever changing succession of clergy, she also speaks about the different rectors and assistant rectors, as well as the changes they inspired.

Of special interest in the interview are the major renovations of 1951, the progression of church rectories, and her keen insight regarding the inner workings of the church and its staff. She also discusses the years of World War II and recalls fascinating details about the building of the parish house in 1928.

As a third generation member of St. John's Episcopal Church, and a three-year employee,

she is in a unique position to recall the changes in the church throughout her lifetime. She has a razor-sharp memory for names, faces, and events. She has literally had her finger on the "pulse" of St John's for many years. She was honored by the Parish upon her official retirement in 1983, but this interview for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program is a testament to her lifelong contribution to her church

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St John's Episcopal Church

INTERVIEWEE      BEVERLY LINDSAY  
INTERVIEWER      Jane Butterworth  
SUBJECT            St John's Episcopal Church  
DATE                October 19, 1990

B      This is an interview with Miss Beverly Lindsay for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on St John's Episcopal Church, by Jane Butterworth, at Miss Lindsay's home at Park Vista, on October 19, 1990, at 2 00 p m.

Miss Lindsay, you mentioned that your family is third generation at St. John's. Can you tell me maybe about your grandparents and parents, anything you remember about when they started?

L      My grandfather and grandmother were from England and Wales. My grandfather came over to the States first and came to Youngstown. He had not done heavy work. His father was--my great-grandfather--was a supervisor in a coal mine back in Britain. He never wanted my grandfather to go down into the mines because he wasn't the type for that kind of work. This man was musical and he wanted him to go on with his music. So anyway, Grandfather came to Youngstown because they knew of a family. They called her Grandma Lewis, and that is all I know about her. They

just referred to her as Grandma Lewis. The Lewis' lived in the Briar, what is known as the Briar Hill section, where some of the mills remain today, the remnants of them. In those days Briar Hill was apparently a nice place. So, he came and he worked for two years and he sent for my grandmother, who had three children to bring. They came over and joined him. He met them in New York. They came by ship. I guess it was a rough journey. Anyway, he eventually was able to get out of the mill and he was one of the first Prudential agents. He started at Prudential and his paycheck, when he started, was \$7 a week. He was quite disturbed, my grandmother said, because it was only \$7 a week and she said, "We will get along." And they did. My mother was born October 11, 1892, and died at the age of thirty-four, February 5, 1927, and left four young children. I'm the eldest of the four. There are only three of us living. Anyway, my grandfather went to, what they refer to as, "Old Saint John's," which, I think, was a wooden structure over on East Wood Street. It did exist and was, I think, might be Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church. I think that is what it is.

B I wanted to ask you about that because there are two. The histories only say "at Wood and Champion Streets" and there are two little churches there.

L They are up on top of the hill. That was the original Saint John's. Saint John's also established a parish out on Mahoning Avenue called Saint Mary's, I understand. I am not sure, but somehow I have the feeling it is a Hungarian Presbyterian Church if that particular structure is still in existence. Anyway, as my grandparent's family grew, they moved to, what is referred to, as the East Side of Youngstown, which was a nice residential section and they walked to church. There was no other way to get to church. The children went to Sunday school, and they went to church, and there was an evening service, and everybody went, and they walked. They spent all day Sunday going to church and that was about it. That was the only recreation there was really.

In time, as their family grew, and they became more affluent, the lower part of South Side, of Youngstown, was developing and they decided they would like to go out there. By this time street cars are running and they made sure they were on a street car line. They would have to walk a few blocks. They bought a home on what is known as Garfield Street and that was the lower, which is referred to as the lower end of the South Side. Which, of course, has changed considerably, but it was a nice part of the city. They lived there for some time, I don't recall how long. My grandfather, of course, sang in the choir for many, many years. He was also a lay reader.

B What was your grandfather's full name?

L John Edwin James. In the meantime he was with Prudential and doing well. So, they did. Then the South side was developing, and so they decided they would like to

move further out, which they did. I can show you the house that is in there. They bought a home. They had this home built and my grandmother really was a person that took charge and saw to it that the contractor did exactly what he said he was to do. [This was] because they learned that sometimes he tried to cheat on what he was doing but she just stood over him. She was the aggressive one between herself and my grandfather. She was the aggressive one. He was a very gentle man. He never drank, he never smoked, and he never swore. The most I ever heard him say when he would get a little upset about something is, "Bless my days." That was it. We had great respect for them. After my mother died, which was a very traumatic experience for the whole family, she saw to it that we were raised. When my mother died, my dad just went to pieces. She was his life. He did straighten out finally.

Well anyway, we went to Sunday school. Their home faced West Philadelphia Avenue and it was a very beautiful neighborhood. She thought maybe we could go to Saint Andrew's, which at that time was on Oak Hill. Well, we all put up such a fuss. My grandfather said, "I think you had better back off from that because the children's friends are at Saint John's and that is where they are comfortable. I don't think they need anymore upsets." So, that took care of that. As time went on we belonged to the youth groups. There were two groups. Kappa Beta Kappa was the younger group, and then after we graduated from high school there was what was called Gamma Theta Phi, which was the young adult group--college age, some older. I became a member of that and I still have friends there, which were there. We were all a part of it. Then Marie Turley, at the time, had been hired to be Christian Education Director but she also ended up being the first secretary. I was baptized under the Reverend Abner Fraser, then he went off to be a chaplain in World War I and Dr. Leonard Stryker then followed him as rector. So, I really grew up under Dr. Stryker. Then he retired and we had some interim clergy. One of whom was a very fine, great preacher, Dr. John Gass. He was just a little bit of a man but he gave a powerful sermon and he attracted people from all over the city. Well, in due time--the vestry was searching--and they found Dr. William R. Kinder, who was a powerhouse and a very fine man. The people really grew to love him because one of the things he did, which hadn't been done for many years: he called on every home in the Parish. In that time it was a considerable number of people. If you weren't home he left his calling card but he made the call. People couldn't get over it because, as several said to me, "I've been going there for twenty years and it is the first time any clergyman in Saint John's has put their foot inside my door." He was a terrific person and well loved by the clergy of the city and the people who got to hear about him. The editor of The Vindicator, Mr. William F. Maag, Jr., was a member of Saint John's. As was Judge John Willard Ford, who grew up in Saint John's. His father was Edward L. Ford, for whom Saint John's Parish house is named. The Ford's lived up the street, in a house, which is now, or was, the Dana School. It was the Ford House, and it was on the corner opposite the Pollock House. William Hitchcock, who lived on Wick Avenue also, who grew up in Saint John's. Hitchcock's were an old family. Those three were the search committee. After Dr.

Stryker retired, Dr Corwin C Roach, who was the Dean of Bexley Hall. Bexley Hall being the seminary down at Gambier, connected with Kenyon college. It isn't there anymore, much to the chagrin of some of us. It was merged with a Divinity school in Rochester, New York. Dr. Kinder was a graduate of Bexley Hall and he fought hard for Bexley. Well anyway, the search committee were looking and Dr Roach, being the Dean, he knew Dr Kinder. Dr Kinder was the rector of Saint Joseph's parish in Detroit. So, he began there at Saint Joseph's as an assistant. When that rector retired he became the rector and, I think, was there about twenty years. Then we heard about him and the three of them went one weekend to look him over and hear him. They decided he was what Saint John's needed. Dr and Mrs. Kinder were invited to come down and look us over. I remember standing out in the hall, looking out the window from my office. The four of us looking, and he is coming up the walk with Mrs Kinder and I didn't even remember that they were there. I said, "Here comes your next rector." And there was stunned silence and finally the Judge said, "Why do you say that?" "Oh," I said, "I don't know. I just think he is the next rector. He looks like he's got everything together." And so, because he liked these men so much and he liked what he saw, he decided maybe it was time to move on. They had two children, a daughter and a young son. They were about fifteen, maybe the girl was fifteen, and the boy about eleven. They finished growing up in Youngstown. The son went to Kenyon, followed his father to Kenyon, and he is a fine man. Well anyhow, then of course Dr Kinder became ill with emphysema. The doctors tried to help him, but people that get emphysema either have a hard time getting air into the lungs, or getting it out. Anyway he was under medication and the doctors care, and he tried so hard to keep going. He finally thought it was not fair to the parish not to go on but the parish didn't care, they wanted him. But, it got to the place where he just had to resign. They found a young man from New York City to fill in. His name was James Doubleday and Dr Kinder met him and said, "He will be alright." He knew it was just the interim. The day of Dr Kinder's burial service Saint John's was packed and people standing. People [were] standing in all the aisles. I couldn't find a seat but somebody said, "Squeeze in here." So, I sat on the edge. The church was packed. People from every walk of life came to pay tribute to a great man. Well, in time, time heals. We all finally got through that traumatic experience and then they had to start looking again. Bishop Tucker, beloved Bishop of Ohio, he conducted Dr Kinder's service, and it is just as he said, "There will never be another Bill Kinder."

So anyway, the guys start looking again. They heard about this young chaplain at the University of Michigan by the name of John Burt. Mrs Kinder knew his father, Bates Burt. She wondered just what kind a person the son would be. John turned out to be a good choice. He was totally different from anything Saint John's

Any person Saint John's had. He did a great deal in the seven years that he stayed and he was the one that was instrumental in having the church renovated to the way it looks today. Some of our elderly were getting to the place that they were having a hard time climbing the steps to come into the parish house and getting to the third

floor. Well, when the parish house was designed, Ralph Adams Cram, the famous architect from the east, was hired to design the parish house and his idea was to have the entire third floor, as it is now, on the ground floor. The choir room and so forth connected with the choir room on the third floor. That is what should have happened.

B Oh, how interesting!

L But something happened to Ralph Adams Cram and on the vestry was a local architect, who was a great friend of Dr. Stryker. There was a little nucleus, I will not say who. With their own little clique and everybody knew it and a good many didn't trust, unfortunately, this man. So he decides that everything that Ralph Adams Cram designed for the bottom floor and the top floor, he was going to reverse it. That was a mistake. We found out that the whole third floor should have been the ground floor.

B It is interesting to imagine it, if it had really been that way.

L Yes, and it should have. Then, John Burt was instrumental in getting some of these folks who were clamoring for an elevator in, said they would be willing to contribute if they would just get that thing built in and installed. They said fine. So, the elevator was also in the original plans but the man, this person, decided we could do without that. He was trying to make a big impression in cutting costs on the Ford family. Well anyway, that is neither here nor there, but we did get the elevator.

B Miss Lindsay, you were telling me about the parish house, the building of the parish house and that Ralph Cram was the original architect.

L Ralph Adams Cram, C-R-A-M, I think. It may say that in the blue book. The blue history book may say that. He is the one who designed it. He was the architect. Some how or other it ended up with a man in the parish by the name of William H. Cook, who was an architect, who finished and shifted what is now the third floor, which should have been the ground floor. He did. The dining room, kitchen, and auditorium should have been on the ground floor, so I was always told. And the choir room should have been up on the top floor, because at the time there was a design for an elevator. They couldn't afford it, and they didn't need it right then, which was a mistake because they had elderly folks then. The elevator was not done until John Burt came to be the rector, following Dr. Kinder. We had a modernization drive and that was one of the things that some of the folks contributed generously to, was to the elevator because they couldn't climb. The steps were hard for them to climb all the way up to the third floor. That is when the interior of the church was all done over.



B. Was that 1951?

L. Somewhere around the early 1950's, yes, 1951 or 1952. The stonewalls were sandblasted. Everybody was having a hemorrhage because they thought they ought to still be dirty, dark walls. It was a good idea and for months and months afterward we still had powdery stuff sifting down. It was under John Burt that we got the new pews. The floor of the church was completely done. Some of it is, you might say, almost fire proof. The statues were eventually put into the reredos and they of course, you have seen the plaque I'm sure, were given in memory of Dr. Kinder.

B. That was because he was so ?

L. Because he always said, "Those niches just yawned." They should have been filled long since, said he. Dr. John Angel, from New York, was the designer of the statues. He was the sculptor. Of course, as you know, the figure of Christ and the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

B. Was there any kind of voting on what the statues should be, or had Dr. Kinder expressed an idea for the design, or was that pretty much left up to Dr. Angel?

L. I know John Burt and William Hitchcock had a lot to do with it. There is, in the files, a folder on the statues that is very interesting. There might even be some copies stashed away somewhere. There used to be some in some cupboards in Julie's room, way up top. Now whether things like that are still there I couldn't say.

B. Well, to jump back a little bit, I wondered if you could tell me some of your earliest memories of Sunday school as a child growing up at Saint John's.

L. Well, we didn't have that beautiful big parish house for a long time. The parish house was someone's old home and it was up there on Wick Avenue, across from the University, and it is where there now is a parking lot. [It] is where the parish house was. That is where we went to Sunday school. That is where Dr. Stryker had his office and we had classrooms. At one point in my life, when we were still going to that building, to Sunday school, the Sunday school was outgrowing the space. So, where the University is, even before it was really built as a college it was one of those big old homes. I think they called it the YMCA or something. Anyway, we rented classroom space over there. At a certain age, I can't recall how old I was--maybe I just might have been twelve--but anyhow, they would take us across the street, the older children only, to classes over there. Then they had a big drive. Eventually they realized they really were outgrowing the facilities and it was time to do something. The Judge was not a judge, he was a young man, but his father Edward L. Ford lived in the house where the Dana school is out there on the corner of Wick and, I think it is Spring Street.

B Yes

L That was the Ford house The Pollocks lived on the other corner. The Fords had beautiful gardens and tennis courts down behind, you couldn't see them. They owned quite a bit of property

So, it was E L Ford and the Butlers that lived along there, and the Hitchcocks. They all said it was time to build Somebody knew about Ralph Adams Cram and I guess he was the one that they hired to come and design the building His idea was to connect that building with the church, so that people really wouldn't have to go outside if they didn't want to. There would be this bridge to the church It was decided that it was an excellent idea So then, I don't recall how old I was when it was completed, and then we went there for our Sunday school classes

B To the parish house?

L To the parish house I think the chapel, the undercroft, was a very dark, dingy place as I remember it as a child That went through quite a renovation at the time, refurbishing, as did the chapel You know how bright it is now

B So, the chapel was built much later?

L The chapel was there

B Oh, it was always there?

L. It was there but it had some renovating done to make it brighter. Really a great deal of work was done in that. No one can ever believe what a dingy place it was, but I remember, it was We have had rectors who, for the most part, all had a great deal of vision It has been good because it has been good for the parish as it is today The membership used to be larger but, in time, after I did become the secretary, a vestryman said to me, "I don't know why all these people are kept on this parish list " In fact it was John Ford, who was the treasurer at the time, and he said, "Why don't you do something about it?" And I just looked at him and I said, "I've only worked there a year and I don't know everybody and I don't know who is active and who isn't " I said, "You just can't willy-nilly throw somebody off, you are liable to throw the wrong person off, or family " It has to be somebody who really knows and say, "No, they don't come anymore " I said, "In the first place, the only way you are going," I said, "there is no calling that is getting done " In time, when they got assistants, and they had them off and on When I was growing up and even after I started to work there, they got busy They would do some calling and find out what families really should be kept and what families really weren't interested It was unreal It took quite a while

- B I imagine so.
- L I didn't do it in a year or two either. It took some time. I had to get familiar. It takes a long time. We did get it all fixed up. Dr. Kinder called on every home in that parish when he was living, until he became ill. That is when we really began to weed out. From there on then we could do something.
- B I've always been curious about the choir in its early days, in coming through. I know you said your grandfather sang in the choir.
- L Yes.
- B. It was only a boy's choir for a very long time?
- L It was a boy's and men's choir for many years. Well, they had what they called Saint Cecilia Choir, girls and women, but they only sang on Wednesday nights and Lent, as I remember. My sister, two years younger than I, was part of that. Now Mr. Forcier, Robert W. Forcier, was the first really--I guess there was a man before him and I don't recall his name but I didn't know him--Mr. Forcier was the first real organist choir master, I guess you could say. He was just a young man, so they said, about nineteen years old but he was gifted. He was the choir master and organist for a long time and then he wanted to stop. He was a stockbroker and he was getting pretty busy. He wanted out and he thought there should be a younger man. Then, they found Frank Fuller and he was organist choir master and had boy's choir. I'm trying to recall which rector came along. There was a period there were there weren't too many children being born. Was that in the 1950's?
- B I think more of the 1940's because 1950's they always talk about the baby boom.
- L Maybe the 1940's. See, the baby boom came after the war. So, there weren't very many children and there weren't hardly any little boys. You just couldn't get a boy's choir with the men. Whatever period that was then they realized they were going to have to rely on trying to get women. I forget which rector that happened under, that they got a mixed choir--men and women.
- B But the boy's choir continued didn't it, until maybe twenty years ago or so? Or maybe later than that, I thought? Or was there maybe a children's choir, something that there isn't now? I have heard people talk about being in the choir at that age.
- L Yes, there was something. I'm trying to think when it became all adult. I don't know whether it became all adult under Ron Gould or whether it happened before because

B· Okay, one thing I wanted to know was how you actually evolved into being the parish secretary How did that come about?

L Marie Turley, when I was a teenager, had been hired as the Christian Education Director. Dr. Stryker's sister-in-law, Miss Pairon--I don't recall her first name--well Miss Pairon was the secretary She died when I was a child because I remember distinctly my father telling my mother--he worked with the New York Central Railroad--that the casket was put on the train to go back to New Jersey or wherever. They came from New Jersey or something I remember that Then Dr. Stryker had to look for somebody So anyway, I guess Marie Turley must have somehow they had a way, I don't know how they did it Anyhow, Marie was hired as the Christian Education Director and ended up being parish secretary as well. Which she didn't really want to be, but there was no alternative because there was the Depression. That is the way it was All of us who were teenagers and growing up loved Marie very much. She would listen to all our problems and troubles. She was from Texas and she decided she wanted to go back to Austin She got a position there before she left St. John's Then they began to get in a dither, "Well, who are we going to get now to run this office?" So, Judge Ford, who wasn't a judge yet, but he was the treasurer and a member of the vestry, and several, and Dr. Stryker, finally they said to Marie, "Well, do you have any suggestions? Is there anybody you know or think of?" She said, "I think of one person She has not had the experience but I think she will be alright if you give her a chance." "Well, who is that?" "Beverly Lindsay " Well the Judge said, "Who is she?" She said, "You know her but probably not by her name. She is Mr James' granddaughter." He finally said, "Yes, I think I have seen her but I guess I didn't know her name " Then he said, "I'd like to meet her." So, he called me up and asked me, and made an appointment for me to go down and see him in his office, which I did, scared to death

B How old were you?

L About twenty-one, or twenty-two It was in 1937 So, I went, and we chatted a bit and he told me what my salary would be, which was starting salary, at \$40 00 a month If I hadn't lived with my grandparents I'd have never made it Anyway, I managed to survive There were several folks who voiced objection. It was two people in one family and I won't say who they were because they are all dead now anyway The brother thought that this lame sister should have had the job and the lame sister thought she should have had the job and the other sister made no comment whatsoever The brother tried to make life miserable for me at first Having been raised you don't talk back to your elders, I just never talked back to him I just let him scream his head off Anyway, it is just like everybody saw They were the only ones that objected that I know about. It is just like some members of the vestry said, "Well, look how many times this kid runs those stairs up there " This is before the elevator "If she has to go up and tell somebody they are wanted on the

telephone--because they didn't even have a phone in the kitchen, you know--how many times does that kid run the stairs? This woman could never do that." So anyway, eventually they got a phone in the kitchen and improvements began to be made gradually. I guess I worked out because there I was.

B What were your duties originally? It seems to me you always absorbed more and more as you went along

L There were a lot of things, a lot of duties Marie taught me how to run the . . . Well, I was doing that We kids would go down and help her run and put the Sunday leaflet out anyway We didn't mail out a bulletin in those days. Marie mimeographed a thing for the Sunday service and we kids would go down and help her So, I had that to do Mr Fuller would give me the copy of the hymns and the service and I would have to cut a stencil on the typewriter It didn't have a long carriage so we had to splice the stencil and then cement it together and put it on the mimeograph Eventually, Marie said, she got them to throw out that mimeograph and get a new one She said nobody should have to cope with that one. Which they did do and then eventually I got them to give that one away and get one that was more up to date. Then, eventually, we began to have the bulletin printed because the parish was becoming more affluent, people giving more. That is how come it gets printed these days So, I had to do the bulletin, record the services, answer the telephone, and ten thousand different questions. People would get upset about something, you just listened, and you made no comment but you passed the word onto the rector, whoever If they came in with any complaint you did the same thing. You just listened and you kept your mouth shut. Eventually you know a lot confidential things that get pushed way back in the recesses of our mind and then they're just forgotten At first I had to look after the Sunday school offering, but then gradually that became part of her work, so I got rid of that There were just all kinds of jobs Letters, to send. The directors would dictate I was busy, I was always busy I never had a day off until Dr Kinder came.

B You worked seven days a week then?

L Yes He said, "No more of that Everybody on the staff is to have a day off. You have to have a day off " So, for a long time I think it was Friday, and that wasn't a good day He hated to say something, but it got back to me I think it was Mondays, the same day he took off That was better We were both off on Mondays. Lots of things improved under him Gradually as time went on, and then under John Burt, and Huntsdon Cary--let's see, who followed him? Was it John Wygell that followed?

B That seems to me to be the sequence

L I think that was John Wygell I was in Michigan on vacation when I heard about .

I got a phone call saying that they were thinking of hiring this man. He was from Birmingham, and a lot of people in the surrounding cottages were from Birmingham. "See what you can find out " I said, "Okay." So, I went up and down the shore. "Yes, I've heard that name. I thought he was from the Cathedral " But they didn't know a whole lot about him So, I called back and I said, "Well, this is what I find out Sounds to me like he really hasn't made his mark, but I don't know " Well, anyway there were several couples that were gung-ho. Who was it that Michael was under? Have we got all the rectors?

I find out Sounds to me like he really hasn't made his mark, but I don't know." Well, anyway there was several couples that were gung-ho Who was it that Michael was under? Have we got all the rectors?

L I can't recall the number of our young men. At the back of the church Well, you know, when you come in the front door, the vestibule, and you come into the church proper, to the right Dr Kinder had what we called the war shrine set up I am sure that somewhere around there, stacked away, would be pictures of that. There were candles that burned and a flag It was for all our boys who were in World War II. There is, and I'm trying to think where it is--It might be in the library--it is about this big, it is framed, very nice, and beautiful lettering It was done by Mr Ivan Wettmore, who had a beautiful penmanship, and did beautiful lettering He listed the names of all the boys, young men, who were in World War II at the time I hope that is still in the library somewhere It has got to be stored somewhere

B There are some wrapped packages in some of the shelves in there

L That might be one of them

B That could be

L I hope so

B Were there any special projects I mean did any of the groups get together?

L Well, what we did, Dr Kinder wrote to all those young men Because he had been an ambulance driver in World War I, he knew how nasty war was. He knew what those boys were going through He kept correspondence with them and the church

He made sure they got mailings from the church, which they appreciated because it kept them in touch with what was going on at Saint John's Those who knew him before they left, grew to know him better, and those who hadn't met up with him, grew to look forward to hearing things from him Especially his editorials, because here was a man who understood what it was to be in war and war really is. They made it their business to come and see him when they got back That photograph album you brought me, did I show it to you at all?

- B. Yes, you did.
- L. My brother-in-law's picture is in there
- B. I know several young men in uniform
- L. Yes, yes I remember who they were. I wish I could recall how many we had but we had quite a number.
- B. I can imagine
- L. They were all, of course, my generation. World War I was supposed to have been the "war to end all wars," and when this other war broke out and here are these young men and young women going off, my generation, that generation was really upset. They never thought their kids would ever have to go through it. After that came the Korean. Somebody always has to have something rolling. That is evil, unfortunately. It seems that way doesn't it? Evil begets evil, I think, I guess. I don't know. I must have heard that somewhere. Well, anyway.
- B. I noticed when I was reading in the printed histories of Saint John's that Dr. Kinder was described not only for his wonderful sermons but also described as a "church militant", that he was very much in favor of change I guess. I wondered if you could talk a little bit more about that.
- L. About change?
- B. Well no, about Dr. Kinder, his sermons and anything else. We have talked about him a little bit in relation to other things I know. You mentioned that he called on everybody in the parish.
- L. Yes, he did.
- B. He was the one that he believed?
- L. He believed in it. He said he was a firm believer. That should be part of the job.
- B. How long was he actually there?
- L. He came in the fall of 1942 and he died in January of 1949.
- B. But he had retired from Saint John's by that point, sort of?
- L. You can't say that he had retired, no?

- B That was kind of unclear in the history. That he left for his health.
- L He became ill and he decided he had better take a leave, is what it was
- B Okay.
- L Hoping to eventually get back We don't talk about it out loud and I don't want to refer to in the record but he developed an emphysema. Before he came here the doctors up in Detroit thought it was just asthma, beginning of asthma, but it was a doctor in Youngstown who discovered what it really was. Emphysema is a disease of the lungs and they either have problems getting air into the lungs or getting air out of the lungs I had an aunt, my mother's youngest sister, my grandparent's youngest child, died of it also in 1962 It is a terrible thing to have
- B I wanted to ask too, going through the histories I have noticed that the rectory has been a lot of different places I wondered if you could tell me about some of those I thought that would be interesting
- L Well, the rectory that I remember first, the first rectory was where the Strykers lived It was on West Madison Avenue. Then, when the Kinder's family came there was a consensus of opinion among the vestry and also their wives, (I'm glad they put their oars in) and that nobody should be asked to live in that house The Kinders, Mrs Kinder just right out said, "We can not live in that house."
- B It was too run down?
- L It was run down, it was old, and drafty and people just didn't feel that we should ask them even to think about it It needed a lot of work and I think it was sold eventually, or whatever happened to it. Anyway, what they did, they said They rented a home for them on North Heights, which was much better, and they lived there quite a while until they could have an opportunity--the Kinders and several of the vestry--to look around for a nice home Eventually they did It was a beautiful home on the Redondo Road, 49 Redondo As you go down Fifth you make a left and the Stanier family lived on that street also, a couple houses up It was a nice beautiful neighborhood and overlooked part of the ravine of Crandall Park It had four bedrooms, a finished third floor for the maids--whoever had maids that had lived there--and it had been owned by a family by the name of Todd; T-O-D-D. Not our Tod family, another family It had a big, huge double garage It was a brick home It was four bedrooms and complete bath and the finished third floor quarters and it had a huge living room and dining room and a study--for Dr Kinder, a nice room--big kitchen, a huge kitchen What was it? We had the same thing at home at my grandparents house and what did we call it? The outside kitchen, I mean.



B: Sort of a pantry, maybe?

L: It was covered. Unless it got very, very cold--below freezing--you could leave certain vegetables, fresh things, just right out there. We used to do that at my grandparents. It was really a remarkable home, nice staircase and a huge basement and a nice lawn. They did a lot for the house. Things done that folks that owned it hadn't done. The Kinders were very reluctant, that doesn't have to go in there, but they were very reluctant to ask the church to spend any more money than necessary. They often took care of the repairs, or whatever, themselves. Which was crazy, but that is the way they felt about it. A lot of people didn't seem to understand that, but they didn't make any noise about it. And anybody else that followed thereafter boy, the church paid for everything. So, they just might as well have had the church do this and do that. Of course, he was kind of handy. If he had the time and was able, he would fix it himself. He was training his young son to grow up and be able to do things, which Bill can. He is a fine young man.

B: That house doesn't belong to the church anymore?

L: Oh no, that has long since been sold. We don't own a rectory.

B: Was that the last rectory?

L: Now the Burts lived there. John and Martha and the children and they loved it. And the Carys' lived there, but when John Wygell came, they didn't want any part of it. They wanted to be out in the suburbs. We said okay. They said, "Okay then, you will have to get your own house." "Okay." Then they offered him so much for his housing. The clergy, other clergy, got a lot more than Kinders ever did. They got auto-allowance, they got this, they got that. That is alright. I'm not quarreling about it. It is just that they were in an era where clergy salaries weren't very high. Now people think they are high now, but they almost need to make what they make if they are going to survive.

B: That is true.

L: You see. Because of the inflation that came and the period we are living in. \$20,000 is nothing to pay a rector in a sense, you know what I'm saying. It is really nothing.

B: Well, they always put in a lot more hours than at church too.

L: Well, they put in a lot of hours. They are not putting in forty-eight hour weekdays, weeks. You know what I am saying? They put in long, hard hours and people don't understand this.

- B: I think it is probably true So then after Dr. Kinder, Dr. Gass was the interim?
- L: He was the interim.
- B: I know there is later a mention of a Kenneth Gass, were they related?
- L: Kenneth Gas was an assistant of Dr. Kinder's Kenneth had been, had grown up in Dr. Kinder's parish in Detroit and he went into the ministry. Ken was one of his first assistants and then Ken went on, of course, in due time. He got to have his own parish He is dead now He went on to be the rector of Saint James, Birmingham Which was quite a plum and that is when Kenneth died. I think he went very suddenly
- B: But he was no relation to Dr John Gass?
- L He was no relation to John Gass.
- B: I wondered being so close in time and the same spelling if they were . . .
- L No, his mother was a widow She raised Kenneth I think he was just a year older than I We were about the same age He would be a year or so older than I am maybe, around the same age She raised him just like we were raised, without his dad His dad died suddenly, I knew something happened. He was devoted to Dr Kinder He was just devoted to him At Dr Kinder's death, Kenneth came It really was sad to see him He was a mess for about an hour after we got together but he straightened out His mother was with him and his wife He married a lovely girl They had one child in fact I'm not sure whether Mrs. Kinder still hears from Jan. I think Janet is still living. I think she told me that I must ask for her again Janet, she is my age That was a quick thing for Ken, he was young He had so much to give.
- B: I notice in 1945 they put in a new public address system in the lighting fixtures
- L I don't remember the year but we did get a
- B Did that make a big difference? Were a lot more people in the church?
- L Yes, it made a big difference That new lighting, Dr Kinder pushed for that He was right The lighting in that church, Janey, was terrible He called them pool room lights That is about what they were, honest to John They were way up in the ceiling and they had kind of a green shield and a bulb. If you had poor eyesight it was just something I used to see people struggle. Of course, I grew up with that

- B. Because there is really only one time in the morning that the natural light comes through. The rest of the time?
- L Oh yes, it was a mess I looked up at the lights and he said to me, "Those damn lights Miss Lindsay, if you don't mind, they look like pool room lights." (Laughter) And I said, "They do?" He said, "Yes, they do." And then I took a real good look at them and in those days the choir had what was the lounge was a recreation lounge where they played pool. And I looked at those lights and I thought, "He is right. They do look like pool room lights." So, eventually Let's see, who did he contact about those light? He always got outstanding people. He always knew . . . I think it was Rambush I know Rambush did something from New York and Connick and Sons did something Everybody agreed that something had to get done with those lights It did He went into it very carefully He even designed He designed the thing that comes down
- B The shield?
- L The shields He designed those
- B. Oh, I didn't know that
- L A lot of people don't know a lot of things He designed them
- B A lot of the changes that came through then in 1951, were those based on Dr Kinder's ideas?
- L Some were his and then John Burt had ideas also He was, I'm sure, was very glad to have those new lights
- B I wondered if you could talk a little bit about the windows, the new windows that were put in representing the steel
- L No
- B Does that put you on the spot?
- L Yes
- B. Not the technical things but just what you remember about the decisions being made and the response to them and that kind of thing
- L The te deum window is the big window up over the front door that leads in the back there That was in there ever since I can remember The aisle windows at the time

weren't like glass, but sort of a colored glass. The big windows were sort of like that also.

B The way two of them still are? Or three of them? That kind of creamy white glass

L Yes

B: Sort of parchment colored, almost

L Yes, sort of. I just have a vague recollection of

B: Because there are three windows in the church that still have that kind of glass. They have never been made into stained glass

L. Where are they?

B In the transepts

L In the transepts?

B I see that because I am in the choir. So, I'm looking the other way. L. Oh, okay. Now which side are they? Are they that side?

B As I'm in the choir, I think there is one on this side, one on the pulpit side and then two on the lectern side that are not stained glass

L There is one on the pulpit side, and two over on the other side. I think you are right. Yes, those haven't been filled, have they?

B: No. So, did all the windows look like that until people ?

L Yes, they did. Now I am trying to think. The windows up in the chancel were like that also. There is one window in memory of my grandfather that my family gave. I think you will find that most of those windows are in memory of someone. I don't know why I think there is a Hitchcock window. We do have literature on those

B I knew there was literature on the other windows too, the little ones, representing the steel industry in the background

L In the aisles, you mean?

B Right.

- L· Oh yes. How did that come about? I need to study it myself.
- B It seems a very unique thing to me That they are representative of something more modern, and I wondered what people thought about that at the time.
- L· Oh yes, people saw a big difference They are very beautiful windows. I am trying to think who did those windows. I think it was Konage Studios. Tops, always at the top. If you notice the stained glass, the colors that are the true reds and the true blues, and whatever else colors are the true colors That was gone into very carefully
- B I just wonder, it seems to me that St. John's always pushes for tradition over modernization At least, for example, sandblasting the walls As you said, everybody had a fit about that
- L. Well, I wouldn't say everybody did, but a good many did. They said, "So what if they are black, that is the way the church got like that " It was just plain dirt from the steel mills that sifted in and covered those walls Well, that doesn't say it had to stay like that forever and a day Yes, for months, we had dust kept sifting down, and sifting down Probably a whole year or two it would still come down from above But eventually it all went away Most of us, I would say . I don't know maybe it was the older generation--some, not all--that might have been a little disturbed about it Or else, they just didn't think it was necessary.
- B· That could be it too
- L That is probably That is the way it was Most of us thought it was a good idea to get them cleaned up It made a big difference in that church It made the church brighter.
- B I would think so.
- L It did!
- B Of course, now I hear a lot of people saying it almost needs to be done again The walls aren't quite black yet but they are getting pretty dirty
- L It is not as black as it was I'll have to take a real good look around and see if it does need it again Maybe it does, I don't know. They had a reputable company come to do it It was from out of town somewhere It was gone--everything was gone into very thoroughly. Went to see what kind of work they did, what they had to say about it. I mean these guys really knew what they were doing The people in charge meant that they knew what they were doing

- B: I have always been interested in the painting, the large painting that hangs near the bridge. I think maybe it was done in the 1950's or the 1940's, somewhere in there.
- L Oh, that was done in the 1950's because John Burt is in that
- B But the old pews are still in it It is before that
- L. Yes, John had that done. There was a man, he is dead now, but he was in real estate. One of his hobbies was painting, oh, you know, art work He came and asked Mr. Burt if he could do a painting of the church and John accepted readily because he thought there ought to be something that would depict what the church was at that time, before anything did happen So, I think his name was McCall, I don't know why I think that He came and I'm not sure, but I think I am in it somewhere. We had people come and sit so there would people around. Yes, he came. What I don't recall is whether this man took a photograph first and then painted the painting This is what I don't recall because it has been so long ago
- B It is really interesting to look at that because it is so big it really shows a lot of detail
- L Yes, it does
- B That some of the old photographs don't
- L Yes, it does
- B So, I have always felt that was really interesting.
- L I thought it turned out to be a very good idea because people can see what it really was like
- B It needs to be restored now I think I noticed one little part of it is torn. I don't know if there is anything they can do to put it under glass or something
- L It is not under glass right now, is it?
- B. No, it's not I think it maybe should be.
- L Where is it torn, Janey?
- B I can't remember I'll have to look and get back to you on it
- L It is on the front though? It's torn on the front part?

- B I think so I think I noticed a little Not a major gash but something that concerned me
- L A little crack somewhere?
- B I think so
- L I wonder if it happened by itself or if somebody bumped against it.
- B I don't know Oil and You know canvas can be pretty fragile if you are moving something through a hall and it's not covered
- L Well, that is right Next time I'm there I hope I remember to have a look and maybe something could get done
- B Double check too, maybe I made a mistake
- L Yes, take a double check because it would cost a fortune to have it framed but it might be worth it
- B Yes, I think so You have seen a lot of sextans come and go I'm sure and some were there for a very long time and others not so long I wondered, of the people that were there for a significant amount of time, if you could talk about them a little bit? Who was the sexton when you started as parish secretary, do you remember?
- L I just have a vague recollection of him Oh, when I was growing up, it was a man by the name of Mr Wilson That is all I remember about him, was Mr Wilson. Who was the other man? There was a Mr Wilson I don't know how long he was there, I just remember seeing Mr Wilson as a kid Sometimes you don't pay that much attention Who followed him? It seemed to me there was a Mr Percival I think his first name was Enoch and I don't know who followed who I remember, this has been many years ago, as I was growing up Well, in time, when I was growing up, there came to the parish the Pior family They had Jack Renfill. Let's see Florence, Jack, Renfill, Mable, and Gwenny was born here. They had four or five kids Renfill was a year younger than I He is dead now Jack or John became a clergyman and he did have a parish somewhere down in the one of Carolinas I don't know whether he is still living or not Oh, another girl was Irene She married a Bob Campbell, they don't live in town anymore Mable was a school teacher, very friendly girl She married someone and they moved out like to Nevada or someplace like that The last I knew, and I haven't heard from her in a long time, that her husband wanted a divorce after "x" number of years and children because he met up with a young chick. There was no reasoning with him, she said, whatsoever So, she gave him the divorce I don't know what has happened to Mable. The youngest one that was born

here, Gwen, she married a professor. The last I ever heard anything about Gwenny she was living in the Chicago area. Where these girls are now I have no idea. I wish I did know. I really would like to know where Mable is.

B Now did they, was their dad .

L They were with their parents. They grew up and finished growing up in Saint John's. And believe it or not that whole family lived on the top floor apartment.

B. That is incredible.

L. Yes, it is incredible, but they managed.

B Did the Sextons always live there, as you were growing up, that third floor? I mean after the parish house was built obviously.

L Yes, they did live up there. There was one Sexton, I can't remember his name, but they had to get rid of him. Then the Sexton that followed him was William George Brown and his wife. His son's picture is in my album, Hayden. They had one son. A wonderful couple, they were English and Welsh. He was a good Sexton. "Don't bring lunch today. Come eat with us." After my grandfather died and the house was sold and I was on my own in an apartment, they often asked me to have supper. Brownie, I just started calling him. Well, all we kids called him Brownie. He would walk me down to the bus and see that I got on the bus to go home or to my apartment, whichever it was at the time. They were lovely people. Let's see, they followed the Priors, and who followed Brownie? I don't remember who followed him. I would have to go back and get out minute books, vestry minute books.

B I was sure it was somewhere official but I just thought it would be interesting. They do so much behind the scenes.

L Yes, there is so much that goes on behind the scenes with me. Of course, Jim Pasquale is our latest, and who was it before him? Well, who was that?

B Bob did it really briefly.

L. Oh well, Bob. Oh, Don Heckert. They found Don Heckert he was a real find, Don was.

B He was there for a long time wasn't he?

L Pardon?



- B: He was there for several years?
- L: Oh yes, he was there quite a few years. He was there quite a few years and he retired. He is the one who hired Bob Murphy. Bob would still be there today, and the only reason he isn't, he was on vacation when he got home there was a letter telling him that his services were no longer required and they were in shock. He tried to find out, "What did I do or didn't do?" He was a good worker and he saved them a lot of money when it came to painting. They didn't have to go out and always hire painters to come and do classrooms or whatever because he is a good painter.
- B: Now, who is this?
- L: He works for us at home.
- B: But when was this, Bob Murphy?
- L: Bob Murphy? When was it?
- B: Yes.
- L: Well, whenever it was that Don hired him. I can't tell you the exact years.
- B: But I mean it was towards the end of Don's time or
- L: Oh, he was with Don for quite a while before the end. He thought the world of Don. But what happened Bob was on his lunch hour, that I definitely know, and a person--woman--happened to come that day and unfortunately he was caught in the dining room, where he had eaten his lunch, because it had been in the refrigerator.
- B: The little lunch room or the upstairs dining room?
- L: The upstairs dining room and the guys would just be in the kitchen and make themselves coffee or tea, a cup of coffee or tea. Bring their own lunch and sit at a table out in the dining room and eat their lunch. They had a lunch hour. So, he finished his lunch that day, he was on alone that day. Must have been Don's day off. This person came and happened to go up there for some reason. Poor Bob was stretched out on one of the long tables--I'm not sure we even have those around anymore--having a nap. Which was perfectly alright, he was on his lunch hour. What happened is this person never bothered to find out whether he was on his lunch hour. She just spread the word and said that he was sleeping on the job.
- B: Oh!

- L And the next thing he knows, he is out.
- B Nothing could be done?
- L: I'm telling you, to this very day, that couple has told me, they still can't understand what happened I can't tell them. I don't know, maybe someday I will, but I doubt that I will I simply can't say why They don't know who instigated. They are completely at sea And I can't say to him, "Well it was so and so, who didn't bother to find out what was going on You know who so and so is too." That should never have happened When I found out about it, I did say something to Don. I said, "You've made one hell of a big mistake " "What do you mean, Miss Lindsay?" I said, "He was on his lunch hour " Nobody ever bothered to find out or ask him, but I happen to know that he was
- B: But there was nothing you could do at that point?
- L. And I said, "This has been a terrible injustice You know as well as I do, he is not lazy He has fixed a good many things around here that you couldn't fix and that you would have to hire to have fixed " And I said, "My God, the painting he has done " They don't, they mentioned it to me this summer when I was with him. They simply don't understand it They said it was the most unchristian thing they ever had happen to them This is a couple that really try to be Christian in what they do, Janey
- B It really seems unfair
- L He helped my sister get me moved in here You know, he wouldn't take any money for it
- B Did we finish talking about Don? How many years was he there, Don Heckart?
- L: Oh my, how many was he there?
- B Did I put you on the spot? I'm sorry
- L You know how the years go
- B I have been here four years and I know he only retired two or three years ago He was here when I came
- L. Well, it was at least ten and it might have been longer I have heard him say, and I used to know for sure, but I just don't recall.
- B But he was there a long time Oh, I wanted to talk about the new hymnal and the

prayer book, when they were revised and came through. What were the congregational responses to that?

L Well, of course there were some objection from some about the hymnal. I think most of us felt that it was needed and a lot of the same hymns are in the hymnal as I recall. The prayer book was the one that caused the furor. Of course, that wasn't only in Saint John's, the prayer book caused a furor all over the Episcopal church. Still, I think the language of the old Book of Common Prayer is beautiful language.

B I like it too.

L Most people will agree, even clergy will agree, that really is their favorite. The language is beautiful.

B The 1937 prayer book?

L What year was that?

B It was 1937 wasn't it?

L I don't want to say I think so, but I'm not sure. Then, they came out with the newer one, what year was that?

B I think that was 1985.

L Yes, it has not been out too long. There still is pretty much the same in that prayer book.

B. If you could find it, you have to look a little harder.

L You have to look to find it but it is there. I suppose one of the reasons they changed it is they felt that it would speak more to the younger generation. Maybe it does but at the same time I'm finding that some of the younger generation has said to me, "Well gee, there is beautiful language in some of these collects and prayers."

B I have to admit I'm one of these.

L Maybe a word here or there has been changed in some things.

B "Inestimable" got removed out of some of them.

L Yes, then of course they came out with, in the communion and morning prayer, Rite One and Rite Two. Rite two, I can see, appeals to a lot of the younger folks. It is a

the little more modern I can accept them but I still like Rite One for both.

B: Of course, it gave a lot more choice of the Eucharistic prayers: A, B, C. Do you have a favorite in those?

L: A favorite what?

B: When they use in Rite Two Eucharistic prayer A, or B, or C, do you have a favorite?

L: I don't think so I would have to have the

B: Have it in front of you.

L: I was thinking the other day that I thought I had a small red prayer book somewhere and I haven't been able to find it Maybe it is tucked away somewhere that I haven't looked It is not in my box of books because I already looked in that box It is not over there and the next time I am at the church I want to get a copy. I do have some favorite collects There is one, that one that, "support us all the day long." That is one of my favorites I think that is morning prayer isn't it?

B: I think so It would make sense

L: I don't know I thought I had a copy of the prayer book and I don't know why I don't I realize also I thought I had my Bible here but I think it is down at the church I must remember, if I ever get down to that office again on Tuesdays, I want to pick up a prayer book and my Bible and have it here. I used it a lot. I used my Bible a lot, when we set up the services for the bulletin, which I used to do Poor Mary she got stuck with and she said she would be glad to see me again on Tuesdays, especially to proof read She said, "I'll bet you find mistakes You're always finding mistakes in that bulletin I'll bet, although you don't say " Of course I do see them but then it is because I'm accustomed.

B: Well, they should send it to you They should hand deliver a copy out here and have you dash it off and take it back L: Well yes, she has to get it to the printer I'll be down there one of these days

B: I think you will

L: I hope so

B: Do you think the addition of so much service music at the beginning of the hymnal has increased participation?

- L Of course, that is what they were trying to do I believe, was to have people participate. Which some of us participated anyway A lot of people, they follow the words but they don't say or sing whichever I don't know Janey, whether people participate more or not Maybe they do, I never paid that much attention. People that kind of like what it is, they kind of sit back and they like to hear the choir
- B That is hard for me, when I'm in the congregation; I always participate but maybe it is because I sing in the choir
- L Well, that is because you are accustomed, yes Some people will participate As I look around I see people participating, and some are just listening intently to the choir, maybe, but following along
- B Checking us for mistakes
- L I don't know No, I think they are just listening
- B One of the biggest changes, and I can't imagine Saint John's without them because I never saw them, but the banners, everybody says, have made an incredible difference Whose idea was that? Was that somebody's brain storm in particular, do you remember?
- L Let's see, who wanted the banners The women worked hard on those banners.
- B They are beautiful
- L People that sewed and had ability about things like that. Well, like Eleanor Love and Burt Jones, I know there were others I just don't call them to mind They worked downstairs in the recreation room with all the stuff spread out
- B How long Did they wait and hang them when they were all finished? Or did they hang them as they were finished?
- L They hung them, as I recall, as they were finished The one was Saint John's flag eagle When Dr Kinder was rector, as I told you, we had the lighting changed and you'll notice the shields over the lights, up in the chancel, and he designed the shields and the eagle Did you ever notice those?
- B I'll have to really look
- L Well, take a look sometime when you are gazing around and not singing, and look at those shields He designed those

B Those are the ones that actually look like shields, that are over the lights.

L They are big

B Right

L He designed the shields I think it was Rambush, a company in the East, Rambush that did the lighting He knew where to go to get the best, but he designed those shields

B And then that was carried over onto one of the banners?

L Well, let's see, I'm trying to think who started the banners I would have to go back I don't think it says in the black book, does it? B No, I don't think they are that old.

L I would have to

B I don't know when they were done but some bishop that was here recently hadn't seen them That they were new since his last visit

L Who was that?

B I can't remember It was somebody that hadn't been here for awhile

L Probably somebody who hadn't been there for a long time

B I didn't know, I just assumed they were maybe in the last ten years I didn't know

L I'll have to dig in the file about those

B I know on the wall of the office, of the church office, there are the descriptions of each banner In him whose memory they were made, you know for each one is dedicated to someone else, like Dr Ronda's father I think is one

L Where is that in the office?

B Over the couch Right when you walk in the door the couch on the left, there are two pictures and they have a diagram of the banners I'm pretty sure, maybe I'm wrong I've seen one somewhere maybe it was just printed but I thought it was framed on the wall so that you could go in and say, "Okay, this banner was for this person "

L Well yes, most of them are in memory of somebody

B Whose idea it was, how it came about?

L Well, this is what I am trying to remember, whose idea. I don't know whether it was Dr. Cary or John Wygel.

B: They were here before Mr Brewster then?

L. Yes, I think so

B Well maybe some of the other people that actually worked on those would remember

L Burt might remember because I know she worked on them. If I knew exactly when the idea developed we could go back in the permanent files for old bulletins Because they give you a lot of information about things

B Well maybe that is the nice thing about this project is the pieces are designed to interlock There is a lot you can come up with that nobody else does

L I could make a list of things to check on. Or, I could just go down some day when I feel well enough to go out and it is just like Kay Connor called me Saturday morning after breakfast and said, "Bev, it is a gorgeous day, how would you like to go for a ride?" I said, "I'd love it " And it was a beautiful day and she said, "Well, there are going to be days when you won't be able to get out of there and I think we ought to go " I said, "Fine." We had a gorgeous ride We went north. We went out Warner Road and all through That country is beautiful out there right now. Some of the people had their farm things out to sale Went through Vienna, Howland, and stopped on our way back out here at Denny's for a cup of, she had a coffee, I had tea I guess I told you We left at two and I was back at 4.30 It was just a gorgeous day B How great! How nice of her to have the idea

L Yes, I thought it was wonderful

B One of the other things I wanted to ask was about Cynthia Bronson, was she our first woman minister?

L No

B There were others

L No, she was not the first

B Can we go back?

L We go back to Elizabeth Rothchild Who was the rector when Elizabeth came? Was

it Huntsdon? Her background was German, Jewish and she and her family escaped . Where were they living when the Germans, the Nazis, they escaped to England It was there that she became involved in the Anglican church Eventually came to this country and went through and studied, went to Seminary Anyway, she was a director of religious education and our assistant at the time was James Kirkoffer, his father was a Bishop And this is what I'm trying to recall, who was the director that hired up Jim and Elizabeth? You don't have any of the books with you? You never noted that have you?

B No, I didn't ever come across her name

L They might not even be in the black book What year was the black book written That was the most recent

B I think it was 1939 through 1954

L It was a 125 anniversary, the black one

B Yes, it goes through 1954 I think

L As early as that?

B It ends when?

L. 1954

B I think so

L 1954, that would have been John Burt then

B No, it must go later than that because I've got notes on 1958 Possibly does it end in 1959?

L Well let's see, Huntsdon Cary followed John Burt I think Huntsdon came in 1957, that is when John left, end of 1956, early 1957 John left to go to California

B Yes, because the last note that I made was a note of Clarence Meltser being the new organist August 1, 1958 So, that must be near the end of that book.

L Yes, because Mr Fuller had retired and then they got Clarence Personality wise he didn't work out He really was a nice young man but that must have been Huntsdon that found Ron



- B See, there is nothing about Dr Gould in that book at all. So, it ends before he starts
- L I don't know how long we were without a permanent until we found him. I'm pretty sure it must have been Huntsdon Carey at the time. I think he is the one that somehow got Elizabeth Yes, it was. Then it was Jim Kirkoffer, Jim's father was a bishop Then Jim Kirkoffer left and went out west to California I don't know what he is doing now but he didn't stay in the church He went into the selling insurance the last I knew.
- B So, when Elizabeth was hired she wasn't hired as an assistant but she was the director of education.
- L Director of education, but she was very frustrated She was very difficult to get along with too It didn't take long to find that out Elizabeth was difficult
- B So, she never really served in the capacity of an assistant or an associate director?
- L I don't recall that she ever did
- B And then was there another one before Cynthia?
- L I think Barbara Turner was next She was a director of religious education and a very nice person Everybody was crazy about Barbara and she did a lot She got along with people Elizabeth very often rubbed them the wrong way It was just her personality unfortunately
- B And then Miss Turner was the director also Did she ever serve in the church as a minister?
- L Not to my knowledge Not in Saint John's no
- B And then after that?
- L She left to go back East to be near her mother Her mother wasn't very well And became a church secretary I don't know what Barbara is doing. We never corresponded, kept up I have no idea I wouldn't be surprised she is retired now She was a fine person, bright Everybody liked her. A lot of fun
- B So, at that time, they tended to hire someone that had actually been through seminary, to direct the Christian education
- L Well, they either went to a seminary to learn to be or someplace The black book goes up to when, 1959?

- B That is what I'm thinking, 1930, 1940, 1959 or something like that
- L We would have to go way back in the bulletins and dig up all this stuff about some of these people. It would be interesting
- B I just wondered, I know some people still are not comfortable with role of a woman minister
- L That is right
- B Doing communion in the Episcopal church and I wondered if Cynthia was actually the first person to do all of the church functions that a minister, the clergy, would carry out. Or if somebody came before Cynthia that actually did that
- L I don't recall that there was anyone before Cynthia.
- B. Were there any reactions?
- L Oh yes, there were some that advocated we should have a woman priest but they were in the minority. The majority said no. They were not against it, they just felt the type parish of Saint John's that we should have had a male
- B Do you think that Cynthia actually being here changed anybody in that way? You are in a position to catch the current of thought
- L There were some people that like Cynthia very much and grew to have respect for her. There are some that didn't like her at all. Even one of my friends that was vehement about it. I never felt that way about it. She wasn't perfect but nobody is.
- B Well, no, and I think probably women clergy are recent enough in the Episcopal church that they are prey to more criticism than a male that would do the same
- L Yes they are, and she tried to do her job I believe. There were times, I'm sure, that the whole staff got impatient as hell with her, I mean it, all of us
- B But do you think now that Cynthia has come and gone people would be, in general, more willing to accept another women priest?
- L I have no idea
- B No idea?
- L I wouldn't know. The consensus is, among some right now, is that we don't need an

assistant That is what I'm hearing and I'm sure Will doesn't agree with them. I don't say anything one way or the other because there are times when he could use a clergy type pair of hands

B It is hard with a church the size of Saint John's to be solely responsible, I'm sure

L They say we really can't afford it, to have another assistant

B I sort of lost track on whether we are actively looking or not now

L I haven't heard anything, have you?

B I know that there had been some interviews

L There were?

B I think so

L When?

B Richard (Butterworth) was here and he participated in a committee that was talking to people

L Who?

B My brother Richard I think it was before he left, he was so involved in the Youth Group

L Oh yes, Richard

B Of course, the assistant, that is one of their main functions I want to say it was last Spring

L I sort of remember hearing something about that

B I don't think anything came of it or else the one person that they had decided on chose something else and then they didn't do anything

L That was it They did decide I don't even remember who that was.

B I know it was woman and that is all I know, that is all I remember

L Was it?

- B I think so. I just thought that was kind of interesting because again Saint John's seems so traditional to me that I wondered if just Cynthia's mere presence as a woman serving communion caused shock waves to go through the building.
- L With some it wasn't particularly that she was a woman. Some of them just didn't like Cynthia for some reason, I don't know why. And others just didn't think. Felt we needed a man, a young man. I don't know how Will feels, I've never asked him. You know, whether he has any preference.
- B: I don't know either. He seems to me to be very willing either way.
- L I think he would want which the most qualified. Regardless of whether male or female and that is the way it ought to be.
- B You have seen an awful lot of acolytes come and go and grow up. I imagine girls weren't always allowed to do that either were they?
- L Years ago you never heard of girls being acolytes, no.
- B Do you remember about when that changed?
- L Oh gee, it has been a long time. I think the whole church began to take in girls.
- B Lay Readers and that kind of thing.
- L Yes, and women Lay Readers. I think it was kind of a general thing probably.
- B Maybe about the time the choir changed too.
- L Well, and then choirs changed. I suppose there are very few parishes now that have an all male choir. I don't know whether Trinity Cathedral still does or not. I'll have to ask Ron sometime.
- B I'm sure he would know if there is one.
- L Well, he might know yes. He was acquainted with the organist. I don't know who the organist is now.
- B There is nothing like the sound of a boys choir though.
- L I agree with you. There is something about a boy soprano, if he is good, above. And you can hear those maybe ten, twelve, young boy sopranos above the adult voices.

It is absolutely beautiful.

B It is such a pure sound

L It is a pure tone The problem is it takes a lot of patience, Janey, to work with the children.

B I know, I have two

L And this is what some choir masters don't have They would rather work with adults I don't know whether Ron is one of those or not. He came when we had boys and he was good with them but I think Ron's preference is adults. I wouldn't really want to say that in case that I am in error It is easier working with adults

B Oh, certainly

L I realize that If you have a boy's soprano that has a clear beautiful voice. It is tops

B That is true I wanted to finish up this segment at least, there may be other things that we think about Some of the programs in the past which you really thought were successful, for example I know at one time there was a Young Couple's Club

L I was going to say that There was a young married couple's group It was formed under Dr Kinder. We just referred to it as the young married group. In time they named it for him and they were a powerful force in the parish

B When you say named it for him, what did they ?

L He had died but he had worked so hard and built so much He had one in Saint Joseph's, Detroit, and he knew what they could be There was a need for a group like that, for all these young married to come together from, let's say October to May They would have dinner and they would have very good programs, outside speakers or whatever, and committee to plan dinner Most of those people today, of course, are grandparents It was a powerful force in that parish and they supported it financially and every other way They took in folks, say like you. You have an ex-husband, but you need the companionship of those people They even asked me to come They would stop and pick me up and could bring to the meeting Because Dr Kinder felt they were my contemporaries He thought I should come and they did too We had a lot of fun I don't know whether Will would see the need for a group like that today or not

B Cynthia really wanted to start one

- L Did she?
- B. She and I had talked about it, and then of course she left.
- L But she saw there was a need?
- B Definitely
- L Did she talk to him about it?
- B That I don't know She felt like it was something, of course, to be discussed with him, but more under her domain, kind of like the youth group
- L Oh yes, she would kind of oversee them
- B I remember she talked to Bob about it too. We decided that would be What was the other group called exactly, after Dr Kinder died You said it was referred to as the young married
- L They just kept the name
- B Called it the Kinder group?
- L Yes, the Kinder Club.
- B The Kinder Club Can you tell me if any of the people that are still at St. John's, can you name some of those people that came out of that group?
- L If I had a parish list in front of me I could pick them out
- B Were there any other groups like that? I mean the youth group seems to have come and gone and come and gone
- L Oh yes, youth groups come and go There was a time, when I started there at Saint John's, we had two groups There was the young adult group and then there was the high school group Kappa Beta Kappa was high school, to which I had belonged Then the older group, when I graduated from high school, they took me in, that was Gamma Beta Phi No, I don't think it was, Gamma something But Youth Groups, yes, they come Then, of course, there was a period when people weren't having children, very few children. I think there is a youth group now that Mary Probert works with, isn't there?
- B Last year she and Rob Ingersol and my brother Richard were the three in charge of

it.

L Those were the three young folks

B I think it was really pretty strong last year

L Yes, I'm sure it was I don't know what is going on with it now. Is she still working with it? But they are going to be leaving

B I heard a rumor that they were leaving

L Yes, I heard that Kay told me and I must remember to call them because I think it is very soon I have been trying to remember to call them for the last couple of evenings. I must do that because I think Kay said she thought they were going in November, back down to North Carolina

B That leaves poor Rob with the whole youth group. That is going to be rough

L Barbara has a position to go to and she will be better there and Mary apparently has a job too Those two have done a lot for that art's council, Mary and Barbara work from the home Little Mary has worked her tail off. She is a nice, bright girl

B She has done an awful lot for Saint John's, even in the last couple of years too She has done coffee hour and youth group and all kind of things.

L She does, she has been very active I don't know what Brewster is going to do about getting somebody to take over those kids You know, because Mary got along with them, apparently from what I have

B I think the three of them were a fabulous combination

L They were a fabulous combination They seemed to work well together and the kids all liked them and that is what is important

B And there was always a fall back Nothing was ever canceled because two out of three could almost always be there That was a good way to do it It is hard to find people who can I mean I would if my kids were just a little bit older I'm in the wrong stage

L Yes, they are

B You said that young married group was really the driving force at Saint John's at that time Do you see anything now that is comparable to that? Not that group, but I

mean is there a group of people that you see, or is it still the same group that have just carried through?

L Well, of course, there are still some of those people around and they are the ones that, you might say, really help to maintain the parish financially and otherwise. Some of them, their children are here, and belong. Some of them are away from here, this happens. Saint John's and the rectors have been very much impressed with Saint John's Altar Guild. They have never known a group, where ever they have been, as large as it is, as responsible as it is. There is a different crew every month that takes Sunday duty and weekday duty. There was a time when there was a service, communion, every Thursday. The only time they have that now is when they have the women's lunch and I forget when the Tuesday morning thing was born. They just get the same little handful at that and it seems to go on. They did draw women and people to that Thursday thing. That was, I think I'm correct Janey but I'm not real positive, that the women would have a lunch almost every week.

B I know when I moved here it was still every Thursday.

L And then it kind of slacked off and now it is a once a month thing. Which happens. It happens, you know, because the reason it happens, back in those days you didn't have all these career women. This was an outlet for the women of the parish to get together and see each other, other than maybe a Sunday. Maybe they didn't always get there on Sunday. But to get together and have lunch at church and a service. Because there wasn't apparently the need at that time, as there is today, of two incomes to maintain a home and feed kids and clothe them. You know what I am saying?