

Michael Keleher

Side 1:

[1/11] Discussion of his book, published this year - Dear Progeny...
689 pages - a value quest group. Amherst, N.H. Dedicated, "To Matilda and Raymond, who gave me life, and to Barbara, who gave my life meaning and fulfillment."

[1/22] He graduated from medical school in 1940 and became a medical officer in the Marine Corps. In 1945 he went to the University of Iowa to continue training. In 1949 he moved with his family to Asheville (see Barbara tape). [Bob Putnam, Bill Duckworth, Isaac Van Horn]

[1/119] They could have gone any place in the country but chose Asheville because of size, climate, schools and hospitals. There was no "fee splitting," which was rampant in the mid-west.

[1/176] The merger and development of the various hospitals is detailed. Several smaller hospitals combined to create Mission, St. Joseph's was a TB hospital, the Biltmore Hospital is now a nursing home, Aston Park was too small to be profitable, the colored hospital is now the Jesse Ray Funeral Home. The Mission Hospital opened in 1954. Norburn Hospital, subsidized by Champion Paper funds, became a wing of Mission, which grew from 180-190 beds to about 500. [Nathan Walmack]

[1/202] There is cooperation between St. Joseph's and Mission and MAHEC is a bridge (literally and figuratively) between them. It is necessary, following the Hill Burton Act, to get a Federal certificate of need in order to purchase a high-priced machine. As of now the two hospitals have all of them. Aston Park is now a skilled nursing home.

[1/307] He started practicing in 1936 and Sulfa was discovered in 1940. He talks about the changes in knowledge and procedures, and the loss of empathetic care given by doctors.

[1/339] Two years ago he attended the 50th anniversary of his graduation and feels that doctors are narrow specialists and not treating the total person. [Dr. William Justice S.]

[1/412] MAHEC gives 3 year post-graduate work. There are many women in the program and they become family practitioners - the "gate keepers," who are able to handle 90% of the ills.

[1/449] He feels he practiced in the "golden age" of medicine - got in and out at the right time.

[1/471] Cost of medical service today and 40 years ago is discussed. In 1949 his liability insurance premium was \$150 a year. Nine years ago, when he retired, it was \$10,000, and that is one of the lowest in the country. In New York, California, Ohio and Florida it would be 40-50,000 for a surgeon.

[1/574] One out of 50-75 suits for malpractice are brought by disgruntled patients with advertising lawyers.

Side 2:

[2/3] Hot Springs in Madison County needed medical care 20 years ago. He learned of the desperate situation through OEO and gave up his Wednesday golf game for a year. Working with two nurses, instituting a small fee, securing funds through Medicare and Medicaid, there has been growth in the medical services offered. There is a clinic with 3 satellite clinics, 7 full-time doctors, 30-40 nurses, social workers and a pharmacy. [Barbara Keleher, Ken Michalove, Linda Ocher Mashburn, Rae Gazaroski]

[2/88] MAHEC gives continuing education in anyone in health care, placing doctors in mountain areas.

[2/103] In 1965 there was rivalry between St. Joseph's and Mission Hospitals. Medicare started in 1966. Both hospitals wanted MAHEC - now it joins the two with a bridge - an auditorium on one side and a medical library on the other.

[2/125] For a while the nurses at Mission were efficient but lacked the personal touch. St. Joseph's, being a catholic hospital, always had this.

[2/142] He was chief of staff for St. Joseph's, then Mission and later president of the Buncombe County Medical Society, and then served as arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau.

[2/167] Land belonging to St. Eugene's Catholic Church was sold to Ingles on Merrimon Avenue (see Sister Winters - this is the Ingles "Flag Ship"). [Sister Winters, Bob Ingles]

[2/185] He was phoned by "the political bass and fine city manager," and asked to accept a position on the school board. He served for 12 years. [Weldon Weir]

[2/218] Integration of schools was voluntary in Asheville. There was no problem with the first several grades, but there were a few riots. His son and youngest daughter went to school as late as possible, and came home right after. The situation is better - but not good.

[2/258] Twenty years ago a "blue ribbon" \$75,000 study was made about school consolidation. It was read, filed and not looked at again. There are few Blacks in county - he considers bussing a waste of time and favors neighborhood schools.

[2/360] Several years went into the development of a Hospice program. A director from Marion County visited and advised. A certificate of need, training and insurance plans were completed around 1981. Rules were established and a free standing building on Livingston Street with 12 beds is called Solace. Medicare now pays something and found this is cheaper than stays in a hospital.

[2/521] He became involved in Red Cross through the blood program (surgeons need blood). He discusses the need for charging for blood - it is cost of processing, not blood itself - was able to bread the "bad press" in Buncombe and 17 other counties. He was on the board for 2 years and

served as an advisor for the south-eastern area. He was serving when the headquarters moved from Kenilworth to 101 Edgewood Road in 1980.

He feels the city has been good to him and his family and wants to give it back.