



Arizona Historymakers™*
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**KATHERINE "KAX"
KIERLAND HERBERGER**
1912-2003

G. ROBERT HERBERGER
1904-1999

Honored as Historymaker 1999
Volunteers and Philanthropists



G. Robert Herberger &
Katherine "Kax" Kierland
Herberger photograph by
Mike Paulson

The following is an oral history interview with Katherine "Kax" Kierland Herberger (**KH**) and G. Robert Herberger (**RH**) conducted by Reba Wells Grandrud (**RG**) for Historical League, Inc. on February 25, 1998 at the Herbergers' home in Paradise Valley, Arizona.

Transcripts for website edited by members of Historical League, Inc.

Original tapes are in the collection of the Arizona Historical Society Museum Library at Papago Park, Tempe, Arizona.

RG: Congratulations to you on being honored as Historymakers. Let's begin with you, Mr. Herberger. Would you give us your name and your birth date and something about where you were born?

RH: I was born in a little town nobody ever heard of, Osakis, Minnesota, on September 12, 1904.

RG: What is your full name?

RH: George Robert Herberger.

RG: Were you named after your father?

RH: Yes. Nobody ever called me George, always Robert, Bob.

RG: I know that your grandfather, Conrad, came from Germany.

RH: Yes.

RG: When you were born, were your grandparents still living?

RH: Yes, my grandfather and grandmother were still living. My grandfather died in 1921, my

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grandmother in 1915.

RG: What was Osakis like in your early memories of the town?

RH: Osakis was on a lake, a beautiful lake, with population of 1,200 people; and still 1,200 people today. It should change and I don't know why it doesn't. It's beautiful country, though, if you want to live there. I didn't want to live there.

RG: In what part of Minnesota?

RH: North of St. Cloud, sixty miles.

RG: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

RH: One brother, one sister, both of whom died years ago.

RG: What was your life like in this small town at the time you grew up?

RH: I finished high school and so forth. I don't know; there wasn't much to do in the town.

RG: What was your father's occupation?

RH: A merchant. He had a store, a department store. In fact, he had quite a few of them at one time.

RG: As you grew up, did you work in the stores with your dad?

RH: Yes, you bet I did. I loved it.

RG: When did you start?

RH: When I was about twelve years old.

RG: What was the first chore you had to do? What were you involved with in the store?

RH: Running errands, picking up groceries, that type of thing. At that age there wasn't much a kid of age twelve could do, but I did it. I did everything I could do.

RG: Could you describe that first store that you worked in? Did the town have one main street the store was on?



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RH: Right in the main part of town, and one main street. I have to say there were two main streets because they branched off. There isn't much to describe there.

RG: I remember the early-day department stores where I grew up in a small town in New Mexico. It was just so interesting. I believe I read somewhere about how it was all set out in sections. For instance, there was a clothing section with ready-made clothing.

RH: We had a grocery department, we had fabrics of all types and then we had a women's section. So we had three departments there, you might say.

RG: As time went on, did you do more and more in the store?

RH: Well, no, I didn't because I got the heck out of there. I worked in other stores, and enjoyed it a lot. I knew I wanted to be a merchant, so I thought along that line. When I finished college, I turned out to be a merchant as my vocation.

KH: Well, a musician, too, but that really doesn't count anymore.

RG: Well, it probably did. What type of instrument did you learn to play early on?

RH: The piano. I had a dance band when I was in high school and college, and played the piano and enjoyed it tremendously.

RG: Weren't you the organizer of your dance band?

RH: Oh, yes, *Bob Herberger's*. Well, I had several different names of the bands I had as we went along year to year.

RG: What names did you come up with?

RH: Well, *Bob Herberger's Collegians* was one name.

RG: You went to school in Hibbing, didn't you?

RH: I went to Hibbing Jr. College for nine months. I went there because a good friend of mine was there and also because he got me a job in his brother's store, Glade Lenz. So I worked there on weekends, and I had a great time. I thoroughly enjoyed it, absolutely enjoyed it.

KH: Didn't you have an orchestra at the hotel there, too?



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RH: Oh, sure, I always had one. I always had an orchestra.

RG: Has music has been a great part of your life?

RH: Oh, yes.

RG: Back to your early inclination to go into the merchandising, what was it about it that interested you as a young person?

RH: I loved candling eggs. She doesn't know what candling eggs are.

RG: Yes. I do. You put them to the light so you can see if they are good.

KH: What did you do with potatoes?

RH: We'd take care of potatoes there by the hundreds and hundreds of pounds of potatoes.

RG: Were they grown locally?

RH: Oh, yes, and we took care of them. All the farmers brought the potatoes in and we took them into our warehouse. That was it.

RG: What was the transportation system like coming into your town? How were these things coming in?

RH: Well, the railroad went through. The Great Northern went through there, and it's no longer there. After that it became fully trucking, nothing but trucking.

RG: Probably when you started as a boy, the farmers were coming in. Were they coming in with wagons?

RH: Yes.

RG: After you went to college in Hibbing, did you go to the University of Minnesota?

RH: Yes.

RG: What would you say about your college experience?



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RH: Well, I didn't stay there very long. I got so smart that I quit, went to work. I could make a great living. I did make a great living, always a great living. I never was short on money from working.

RG: In fact, I was wondering as I looked through all of the many, many things you've done, did you ever have anything that failed?

RH: Never.

RG: A good business sense. Did you have a feel for figures and working with them? Did you like that part of it, the bookkeeping, and the accounting?

RH: I had a good feel of business.

RG: Where did you meet Mrs. Herberger?

RH: I didn't meet her until a long time later. We got married in 1920.

KH: 1934.

RH: 1934? 1934. We've been married sixty-something years.

KH: Sixty-three.

RG: That is impressive.

KH: In this day and age.

RG: It certainly is. What do you attribute this success in marriage to?

RH: I don't know. I just went to work at it and I thoroughly enjoyed it, and that was it.

RG: Do you any advice for young people as to how to have such a successful marriage?

RH: Well, I don't think so, no advice to give.

RG: What about your interest in the Republican Party? That goes way back, too, I understand.

RH: Yes, it sure does. It goes way, way back.



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RG: Do you remember when you first started thinking about politics and its influence or impact?

RH: Yes. Nobody will believe it, but do you remember the name, Harold Stassen?

RG: Sure.

RH: Well, he inspired me back in about 1934, so I got active in the party, spent time nationally in the party. Well, I was very active over the years, many, many years.

RG: Why Republican rather than Democrat? Was your state a Republican state in particular?

RH: Yes, it was. I was a good Republican. I believed in it firmly.

RG: Of course. I understand you also were friendly with a well-known Democrat from your state, Hubert Humphrey.

RH: Yes.

RG: What can you tell us about Vice-President Humphrey?

RH: I knew Hubert because he was from Minnesota, mayor of Minneapolis, and a very fine gentleman. He has been to our house in Scottsdale. He and his wife vacationed here, at Senator Bill Benton's home. He never wanted to argue with anybody about politics and we didn't want to argue with him either. We had a great time together. We enjoyed Hubert Humphrey. He was a wonderful dancer. We knew Muriel, too.

RG: All this time you were working with your stores. You started your own store in South Dakota.

RH: St. Cloud, Minnesota. That was the first store I had.

RG: Oh, that's right. Is it true that you had a partner?

RH: Well, I didn't have much of a partner because I took him out of the picture right away. His name was Hart.

RG: I imagine that you just didn't need a partner.

RH: Didn't need one. He was in Parker Prairie, Minnesota, and didn't want to be very active, so I took



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him off.

RG: Then I read somewhere that you felt the same way about stockholders.

RH: Yes, didn't want them, didn't need them.

RG: Right. And would you say you were fortunate in the people who helped you, your presidents or vice-presidents or managers of the stores?

RH: Oh, yes. We had about forty stores, and that was it.

RG: Are most of those still stores today?

RH: They still have the Herberger name. They've been sold, and a year ago a firm from Nashville, Tennessee bought them and they operate them.

RG: Do you remember the name of that firm?

RH: Well, do you remember Kax?

KH: Profitts. Ask him about Butler Brothers.

RG: Okay, although there is one thing I wanted to ask you about, the Herberger Rose, the symbol that you chose. How did that come about?

RH: Well, I liked that Herberger rose symbol. We had it every place; billboards, every place. You name it. I enjoyed that.

RG: Whose idea was the rose?

RH: Mine.

KH: He was great at advertising.

RG: He must have been. Well, what happened with Butler Brothers?

RH: I got involved in that firm many, many years ago, in 1946. It was a big outfit then, and Butler Brothers had, oh Lord, hundreds and hundreds of stores. I was President and Chairman of the Board of Butler Brothers. I enjoyed it. I worked at it hard and thoroughly enjoyed it.



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RG: Their headquarters were in Chicago. Did you move there?

RH: Yes.

RG: When did you leave Butler Brothers?

RH: Well, I didn't stay there very many years because I didn't want to be working for somebody like that, because that was work for a big firm.

KH: Stockholders.

RG: When you left Butler Brothers, did you go back to your own stores?

RH: Yes, I did, and others, too, that I had. We had stores in seven states, all in the upper Midwest. We moved to Scottsdale in 1949. I had sold my stock in the stores to my top employees and remained on the board as chairman. I visited the stores during our summers when we returned to our lake home. I also went to board meetings during the year.

RG: I noticed somewhere that you had opened a store in Grand Junction, as one of your last ones.

RH: Yes, Grand Junction, Colorado.

RG: How did you choose Grand Junction?

RH: We opened a store wherever the occasion and opportunity existed.

RG: Did you do some survey and find out where a store was needed?

RH: They needed a store in that region. It's a relatively new store.

RG: In the 1980s?

RH: Yes.

RG: One of the comments I hear occasionally is how Wal-Mart, that has opened stores in so many places, has hurt the downtown areas. Now, was yours a different kind of store in that respect?

RH: Ours was a higher type store than Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart has done a good job, there's no doubt about that.



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RG: Did you come to Arizona in the late 1930s on vacations?

KH: No, in the late 1940s. We came out here starting in about 1946. We moved out here in 1949.

RG: I suppose it was the climate. Is that what brought you out?

RH: That's what brings most people out here. It brought us out here.

RG: What was Scottsdale like when you came out in 1949?

RH: It wasn't very large, a picturesque little city, small. A wonderful place to live and we thoroughly enjoyed it.

RG: Where was your first home in Scottsdale?

KH: It was the northeast corner of Scottsdale and Lincoln.

RG: Did you have some acreage?

RH: Oh, we had a lot of land. I loved land.

RG: But around the house, did you have some acreage around the house? Did you have horses?

RH: We leased the house. And, well, it ran from Scottsdale Road back to Cattletrack, and we had two guest houses and a big adobe house; we were the only people there.

RG: Then you probably knew the Ellis family?

RH: George Ellis?

RG: Yes.

KH: And the Russ Lyons.

RG: Who were some other people that you knew at that time?

KH: The Dunbars and the Jack Jennings and the Steven Palmers and other early arrivals.

RG: I noticed again in some of the reading that you used to do some square dancing. Did you go to Bud



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Brown's Barn?

KH: Oh, lots of times, but we also went to Dorothy Patterson's ranch. It was a guest ranch. It is what is now on Indian Bend, just east of Scottsdale Road. Was her husband's name Dwight? No, not Dwight; anyway, they were good friends, and it was a small guest ranch. On Friday night they would have a spare rib dinner and square dancing with a caller, so a bunch of us always went every Friday night to have dinner and dancing.

RG: Do you happen to remember any of the callers?

KH: No, I don't.

RG: What else was there to do in Scottsdale at that time?

RH: Not very much, but we thoroughly enjoyed it. Lots of horseback riding.

KH: We knew everybody.

RH: Delightful.

KH: You'd go into Scottsdale and, my heavens! You'd think you had one errand and it would take you hours because you'd see all your friends. We always dressed Western.

RG: Is that right? So Scottsdale really had a Western flavor at that time?

KH: Yes, very, very Western.

RG: I know that Scottsdale was really just starting to grow at that time after World War II.

KH: Um-hum.

RG: What was one of the main things you did? Was it to get into real estate and land when you came here?

RH: Land mostly. I bought thousands of acres of land. Thoroughly enjoyed that part of it. Made a lot of money on it.

RG: Did you ever think about opening stores here?



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RH: Never. I didn't want to get into that. Stores down here compared to stores in the upper Midwest were quite different. I would not want to have department stores from Minnesota down here.

RG: What would be the difference between here and there?

RH: The difference is the cold, the weather and everything else that goes with it.

RG: So when you first came, then, the department stores that were here were Diamond's and Goldwater's?

RH: Yes, in downtown Phoenix.

KH: Korrick's.

RG: The Boston Store, was it still around then?

RH: Yes, it was.

RG: What was Phoenix like at that time? Was it small, too?

RH: You bet it was. There wasn't much here.

RG: Did you pretty quickly get involved in Republican politics here and in the party?

RH: Oh, yes. It took me overnight.

RG: Who was governor?

KH: Well, we knew most of the governors. It would have been Howard Pyle. We worked for Jack Williams and Paul Fannin, of course.

RG: Right. Who would you characterize as some of the most influential men in Arizona since you've been here in the last forty or forty-five years, either in politics or in other fields?

RH: Politics? I'm trying to figure that one out.

RG: Is there one governor that kind of stands out above the others, or more than one?

RH: No, I don't think so. There were a lot of good men, good people. All Republicans, until later on.



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Then we got a few Democrats mixed into it.

RG: What about Democratic governors. Were there any that stand out in your mind?

RH: No, none.

RG: I liked Governor Babbitt. He was governor when I came to Arizona. I've only been here about fifteen or sixteen years.

RH: Bruce Babbitt. He's a fine man, a fine gentleman.

RG: Do you have any comments on how he's doing as the Secretary of the Interior?

RH: He's not doing very well with his own party because of this strife connected with it. If you read much about him, he's not covering bases very well.

RG: Well, it will be interesting to see what happens with all of this. It's kind of a difficult time, but then we've had difficult times before.

RH: Politics is difficult all the time.

RG: Well, if you were twenty-five again, would you do pretty much the same kinds of things you've done?

RH: Yes.

RG: Do you have any thoughts about how Phoenix has developed? How do you feel about our annexation, for example?

RH: I like it. I like everything. There isn't anything wrong with it.

RG: You don't feel that we're growing too fast?

RH: No, no. A lot of people do, but I don't because I have land and I love expansion.

RG: What about the transportation problems we have and the pollution?

RH: Transportation's a little difficult, but nothing we can do about it now. It's just going to grow naturally.



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RG: Do you think we should keep adding freeways?

RH: Well, sure, we'll have to.

RG: What about water? Has that been a problem?

RH: No problem.

RG: In any of your developments?

RH: Not here. There's plenty of water coming down from way up in the northern part of the state, the Colorado River, the Salt River, and elsewhere. So there is plenty of water.

RG: Now, I know that you were appointed to the state parks.

RH: Oh, yes. I am a great believer in parks. We had a lot of parks, and we gave something like thirty-one parks to the city, small parks, semi-large.

RG: Were you involved in the state park system?

RH: No.

KH: Slide Rock, you were involved in that.

RH: Well, in a way, but not in a big way.

RG: I believe I read that you believed in women being able to be promoted. You have managers of your stores that are women.

RH: Women were overlooked badly and sadly, and they weren't able to climb the ladder fast enough, so I always tried to promote women in my stores, in my business. I believed in them. They could do a great job. They were overlooked much of the time.

RG: Of course, you're known as a very generous giver-back to the communities that you've lived in and worked in. Are there any of your activities that you feel the most strongly about? I know you've worked with children; you've given to parks, and the theaters and the music, the cultural arts. Are any of those particularly close to your heart?

RH: Well, I don't know if any of them are closer than others. They're all close.



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RG: Are they all important?

RH: Yes.

RG: Well, in a moment, I'll talk with Mrs. Herberger.

RH: Give her a good grilling. Give her tough questions.

RG: I know you also were born in Minnesota.

KH: Yes.

RG: Could you tell me your name and the names of your parents and something about where you were born and something about your childhood?

KH: Well, I think my claims to fame are the fact that I was born on an Indian reservation, the White Earth Indian Reservation, near Mahnommen, Minnesota. My father, Dr. Peter Ernest Kierland, was the physician up there and that's where he met my mother, Elsie Mildred Ochsner. My brother and I were born in Mahnommen. My other claim to fame is that I'm just a month older than the state of Arizona.

RG: All right. I know exactly when you were born then. [January 1912] The White Earth, what Indian tribe is that?

RH: Chippewa.

KH: I'm not Indian but when I tell some people that, they ask me, "Are you Indian?"

RG: At that time, was your father a physician on the reservation? Did he work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs?

KH: He decided to go there to practice after graduating from Rush Medical School.

RG: How long did he stay there?

KH: Well, my sister was born in Harmony, Minnesota, and she's two years younger, so I guess we stayed there about eight years.

RG: What do you consider your home town?



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KH: Alexandria.

RG: Where is that? What is it close to?

KH: Well, it's a diagonal from Minneapolis to Fargo, and it's about sixty miles from St. Cloud, in very central Minnesota, in the lake area.

RG: What sort of town was Alexandria when you were growing up?

KH: It was a lovely town. You fly over it and you cannot imagine homes being built anywhere because from the air it looks like all different little lakes. Very, very beautiful and people would come there summers from Texas, Missouri, Nebraska, Alaska, Oklahoma, every place. It's a nice tourist residency in the summer, but it was not exploited. You never felt that you had tourist traps and all that sort of thing. It was a lovely town.

RG: Is Alexandria where you went to school?

KH: I went to junior high and high school there. Then I went to the University of Minnesota.

RG: Maybe you could tell us how you met Mr. Herberger.

KH: Well, that's an interesting story. My brother was studying to be a physician, a doctor, as my father was. In those days women in college were sort of expendable. It was more important to educate the sons than the daughters. So my sister and I dropped out of the University. After all, this was in the depth of the Depression. Three of us were at the university at one time, and so Edie and I dropped out and stayed home.

We took some post graduate courses in the high school, which was fun. But Bob's sister and her husband had the Herberger store there, their own Herberger store, or one of his father's Herberger stores. She was into productions, theatrical productions, and so she had a little group of people and we'd put on little plays and go to women's clubs, district conventions and do our little acts.

Well, I was working on a costume one day at home, and his sister, Ruth, called me and asked me if she could bring her brother over. Now, I knew his parents and I knew his brother and I knew his sister, Ruth, but I never had known anything about Bob. Well, it was impressive. He drove up in this big black Buick; it was a magnificent car and out came this handsome young man. Well, we didn't start dating for maybe a year but we did have a few contacts. Then we just decided to get married. In those days we got married for keeps. We toughed it out over the rough spots.



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RG: Where did you have your first home?

KH: In St. Cloud.

RG: Were you a stay-at-home mother?

KH: Oh, yes.

RG: You had three children?

KH: Three children.

RG: What did you first get involved with? Were you already interested in the Republican Party before you met Mr. Herberger?

KH: Oh, yes. Not to much of a degree, but in St. Cloud there was the League of Women Voters and I became very, very active in that. In fact, I was an alternate delegate to a Republican convention in 1944.

RG: That's early.

KH: My first real involvement.

RG: Chicago?

KH: In Chicago also. Of course, we were all for Harold Stassen and it was really quite an experience.

RG: Could you talk about that, if you remember? How many of you went from your area and how did you travel and where did you stay?

KH: We always traveled by train, of course, to conventions. I can remember one train trip when Bob was helping the publisher of the *St. Cloud Times*, who was running for governor of Minnesota. Incidentally, he was a Democrat. This was before we were married.

RH: That's right.

KH: Bob and I would go with him by tri-motor airplane around the state. Do you remember that, Bob?

RH: Yes.



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RG: What was his name, do you remember?

KH: Fred Schilplin, [owner of the St. Cloud, Minnesota American Bicycle Manufacturing]. He didn't make it, he didn't win. After we got married, we got really involved in Republican politics because of Stassen. We went to Republican conventions every four years after that, for Dewey, Eisenhower, and so forth. We were in Barry Goldwater's party in San Francisco when he was nominated. We had some great experiences.

RG: Let's talk about Senator Barry Goldwater. When did you first meet him? Do you remember your first meeting with him?

KH: Oh, yes, shortly after we moved here, we met him and his wife, Peggy, and Hank Running, who was a pediatrician in Phoenix. Barry got elected to the city council. I think that was his first real adventure into politics.

RG: I believe that was same year that Adam Diaz was elected.

KH: Oh, yes.

RG: Do you know Mr. Diaz?

KH: Well, I don't think that he would remember me, but I do remember Adam. Indeed, I do.

RG: Very nice gentleman.

KH: Oh, yes.

RG: Barry only stayed a year on the city council and then he ran for the Senate. Is that true?

KH: I believe so, yes. And then, of course, in 1964 he ran for the presidency.

RG: Did you work on that campaign?

KH: Oh, yes. Bob was his financial manager.

RG: Were there any special incidents that happened during that time that you remember particularly, any trips or anything going on with Senator Goldwater's campaign for president?

KH: Well, we would have rallies and that sort of thing.



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RG: All over the state?

KH: I didn't go, but I'm sure Bob did. He and Dan Gainey were his national financial people. Of course, Denny Kitchell was very active in Barry's campaign. There were so many very interesting, wonderful people who were for Barry. Steve Shadegg was another one, and Les Woods.

RG: Let's go back and talk a little bit about your involvement with Planned Parenthood, also something called the Cradle Society.

KH: Well, that was when we were in Chicago. Sort of a shirttail relative of mine, Florence Walrath, was the founder of the Cradle Society. As soon as we moved to Winnetka, she insisted that we go onto the board. We stayed on the board long after we moved out here but, of course, we weren't involved as much.

RG: Was that a non-profit adoption agency?

KH: It was an adoption agency, and she pretty well ran it the way she wanted to. But then the state got involved and a lot of politics and rules and regulations got into it. Bob and Delores Hope have Cradle Children. Pat O'Brien's children were Cradle children. A lot of Hollywood people had Cradle children.

(End of side 1, tape 1)

RG: This is Side 2 of Tape 1, an interview with Mr. and Mrs. G. Robert Herberger on February 25, 1998. Mrs. Herberger was talking about the Cradle Society of Evanston, Illinois.

KH: Because of Ida, her sister, and Florence Walrath's involvement with my family, the Kierlands, Ida had her first sense of what it meant to be adopted by a family. Ida was devastated by the death of her still-born baby, so Florence found a little baby girl for her. I correspond with her to this day, Jane Foster, who lives in Naples, Florida. I think the second Cradle child that Florence found lives at the Boulders in Carefree, Arizona.

RG: Now, how were children adopted before Florence started the Cradle Society?

KH: I didn't know anything about adoption before Florence and I became involved.

RG: Was this just a new idea to have?

KH: To me it was.



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RG: Then after you came out here, wasn't there an organization you were involved with?

KH: AASK. That's Aid to the Adoption of Special Kids. These are special needs children. They're either physically or mentally handicapped, or even AIDS children, who we take care of. There are families willing and wanting to adopt these unwanted children. You know, families, siblings of a family, should not be separated. AASK does a wonderful job.

RG: How did that organization start? Did it begin here in Arizona or elsewhere?

KH: Well, Bob and Dorothy DeBolt started it in California and it was called AASK America. I was on that board for many years; now we're sort of an independent offshoot of AASK America. They call themselves Adoption of Special Kids. Well, it's a little bit different, but it's still AASK.

RG: Are you currently involved with it? Is it still an ongoing program?

KH: Not the national organization, but I am here. Kent Dana and I are the founders of it.

RG: How does it operate? Do you raise money for it?

KH: We have had different fundraisers, but our most successful one is our celebrity waiters. I think we're having our fourth or fifth one this year. In fact, the next one is this coming Saturday.

RG: Do you have a staff that places children?

KH: Oh, yes, wonderful staff. Rachel Oesterle is our director and she has a wonderful staff of people.

RG: When you first arrived in Phoenix, what other groups did you become active with?

KH: Well, the Phoenix Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony Guild, and the Phoenix Art Museum when it was just a little bungalow on Coronado, and mental health.

RG: Let's talk about the Phoenix Art Museum for a minute. I don't know that I had heard of your involvement. Who was the director then when they were housed on Coronado?

KH: Well, let's see. Dorothy Burgamo was director; Ruth McGregor and Jo Randolph, Dr. Howell Randolph's wife, were both very involved. We were called the Women's Administration Board of the Art Museum. We worked under the Men's Art Museum Board. Then I got into Planned Parenthood through Peggy Goldwater.

RG: That's what I wanted to ask both of you about. Are you familiar with the Arizona Women's Hall of



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Fame Program?

KH: Yes.

RG: Did you know that about seven years ago, when Margaret Sanger was honored, the funds were cut off for Arizona's program. Do you have any thoughts about it?

KH: Why, I didn't know that. You mean the Hall of Fame didn't approve of Margaret Sanger?

RG: There were a number of legislators in the Valley who did not approve.

KH: Yes, of course.

RG: At the annual luncheon in October, there were pickets outside of the meeting place, and there were security guards everywhere. The people who attended knew that this was going on.

KH: Oh, I recall that now. It was several years ago at the Pointe.

RG: We haven't had an annual luncheon since. We have had no woman inducted into that program. We hope to get it started again.

KH: What a shame.

RG: In fact, we're hoping to make an announcement in March that we're going to have the program starting again. I just wondered if you were aware of that, because I remember that women from the Goldwater family and others were there who spoke very highly of Margaret Sanger. Of course, she was very important in Tucson because of the work she did there with the Tucson Medical Center.

Well, I know we should say this on tape. I had asked you in the beginning of our interview about having been taped by Arizona State University, and you said you had. Do you know in which department the tapes might be housed?

KH: There are archives in the University libraries.

RG: Okay. I know you have received an honorary doctorate from Arizona State University. Congratulations!

KH: Bob has, too.

RG: Oh, both of you?



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KH: Yes.

RG: When was this? Do you remember the year?

KH: Oh, golly, mine was in 1987 and Bob's was in 1991. We also received honorary doctorates from the American Graduate School of International Management (Thunderbird) in 1996.

RG: Did you mention the Phoenix Symphony? Have you been taped by the PSO?

KH: No. I think the interview was with the Scottsdale Historical Society. That was so many years ago. Good grief, it had to have been at least fifteen years ago.

RG: Do you have anything else that you think would be important to talk about? It's almost mind boggling the many things both of you have been involved in. I know there was a Miss America Pageant.

KH: Oh, Bob was very active in that.

RG: I also wanted to ask about the solar house in Scottsdale. I guess that was something that wasn't quite so successful.

KH: No, but it was such an exciting period, it truly was. Now, I gave that information that I had in my archives to ASU, I think.

RG: There are still plans to develop solar energy.

KH: It will come into its own.

RG: Yes, it has to here in the southwest. Well, I also wanted to ask about Frank Lloyd Wright. Was he someone that you knew?

KH: Oh, very well.

RG: What could you tell me about Mr. Wright in those early days when you knew him?

KH: Well, Bob was out of town. He stayed on the Butler Brothers Board for many, many years after we moved out here, and so I was here very much alone with the three children. Bob and I had mutual friends, the Ray Rubicam's. They were having a dinner party, and had invited me. Ray told me, "I'm inviting Mr. and Mrs. Wright to dinner because I think you have to meet him eventually."



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Bob had just bought a lot of property that surrounded Mr. Wright's, and he felt we were definite intruders. So I was talked into attending the party. Ray and Harry Wilder said, "All right, Kax, we're going to take you over to meet Mr. Wright." So, trembling in my boots, I walked over and I was introduced to Mr. Wright. He looked me up and down and said, "So, you're the Mrs. Herberger." Then we had a little conversation and Harry Wilder and Ray walked away and left the two of us. Mr. Wright changed almost immediately. He didn't have an audience anymore, you know, to put his wrath upon me, so we got along pretty well.

Gary, our oldest son, was very interested in architecture. He was on a program between Pomona College and MIT, and was very interested in engineering and architecture. We thought that as long as Mr. Wright were still alive, it would be a wonderful experience for Gary if he spent a year with Mr. Wright, so that's what he did, at Taliesin Fellowship.

Then after that year, he went to MIT, but he was very unhappy there, such a different situation, different type of school. He just didn't enjoy it at all, so he begged us to let him go back to the Fellowship, and he did. During that time, Mr. Wright designed a wonderful house for us and so we became quite good friends. We've had them over for dinner and we had some very, very nice occasions.

RG: Did you build the house that he designed?

KH: No, we never did.

RH: Nobody ever does.

KH: Well, no, that's not quite true. But the Wright's were up at Spring Green, Wisconsin, with the fellowship, and Mr. Wright had sent the plans to us.

In those days we thought we had given Mr. Wright a very wide range of dollars within which to work. Well, when we got the estimate, it was maybe three or four times more. So Mr. Wright asked Gary up at Spring Green, "What have your parents decided to do about building that house?" Gary said, "Well, they thought the estimates came in too high." Mr. Wright said, "Oh, these businessmen always say that." That's all Bob needed to hear. Mr. Wright said, "They always come around." Well, this one didn't, believe me.

RG: Did Gary stay with his architectural studies?

KH: Oh, yes. He was there for about five-and-a-half years, in both Spring Green and in Arizona [at Taliesin West]. The fellowship moved back and forth in those days. I still do think a lot of them. There



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was a juvenile cultural center designed by Mr. Wright being built in Wichita, Kansas, and the supervising architect died, so Mr. Wright sent Gary up there to oversee the finishing of the center. Instead of returning to the Fellowship, Gary came up to Minnesota to spend the rest of the summer with us. We always kept a summer home in Alexandria, and that was the end of his living at Taliesin.

RH: But he has remained good friends [with the Fellowship]. He was a very good friend of Wes Peters and others.

RG: Did you know Paolo Soleri during that time?

KH: Yes, we knew him. I knew his wife better than I knew Paolo. I knew his mother-in-law.

RG: Nora Woods. I'm familiar with the so-called Dome House in Cave Creek. We call it the Nora Woods house. We're hoping to get it listed in the National Registry. It's quite interesting.

Does Gary practice architecture now?

KH: No. That summer he spent with us after leaving Wichita, he applied for a position with an architectural firm in Minneapolis and got the job, and that's where he met his wife, Jeanne. Then they moved down here and he took a position with Guirey, Sirca & Arnold, an architectural firm in Phoenix.

But things became so specialized. He was working on university dormitories and medical centers, and he got to be so specialized, he wasn't too happy. About that time Bob made a proposal to him and said, "Gary, I would like you to come and work for me. Just think about it. I'm not going to coerce you into coming, but I just want you to know that there is a good position here with me." Gary decided to do that; he's in charge of architectural oversight on all of our developments.

RG: That should be useful. I know that you, yourself, have quite an interest in architecture. I understand you designed this home.

KH: Yes, I designed this house, well, until it got beyond my expertise. But I took several architectural courses at the University of Minnesota.

RG: So you had an early interest in architecture?

KH: Um-hum.

RG: What do you think about preservation and saving some of the early history of Phoenix and Scottsdale?



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KH: I think it's important, it's very important. It gives a perspective to the community, and I like the historical aspect of it.

RG: I thought we would finish our interview because I don't want to take up too much time. If it's okay, I'll come back if there are any gaps.

KH: Yes, please do.

RG: I did want to mention that I think this is a nice book that has been done. It's called *The Bob Herberger Story* by Jim Smith, and it was published in 1990. How do you like the book, Bob?

RH: I think it is fine.

RG: One of the things I noticed as I was looking through it was the fact that you had lived in Hollywood, California when were you younger.

RH: Grade school and high school.

RG: What did you think about Hollywood?

RH: Oh, I thought it was great. I thought it was wonderful.

RG: I suppose at that time it was a small town, too.

RH: Yes, it was, but very desirable, a great place to live.

RG: And the schools?

RH: Hollywood High School? Great, wonderful.

RG: Do you remember how large it was at that time?

RH: The high school, I would say, had 1,200 students.

RG: Would this have been during the 1920s?

RH: Yes.

RG: When did you graduate from high school?



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RH: 1922, I think.

RG: What were some of the things you did when you were there in Hollywood?

RH: Oh, I covered a lot of territory. And I had a dance band then.

RG: How big was the orchestra or dance band? How many pieces were in it?

RH: Usually four pieces: piano, drums, clarinet and saxophone.

RG: Did you do any writing of music?

RH: At that point, no.

KH: But he had the gift of a fine classical education in music, as well as the gift of playing the piano by ear.

RG: Well, that's quite a talent to have and it gives a lot of pleasure. Did you like the big band sound?

RH: I sure did.

RG: I'll bet Bob was a good dancer.

KH: Yes, he looks good on the dance floor. We used to have a dancing class here. We learned everything, including the samba and the rumba.

RG: I know you traveled extensively with your family both here and later on, all over the world. Were there any places you haven't been that you really thought you'd like to go?

RH: Well, we've been almost everywhere. I can't think of a single place we haven't been. Australia, New Zealand. You name it, we've been there, except for Nepal, Tibet and Turkey.

RG: I know you took a fishing trip up to the Arctic Circle. That must have been quite an expedition. I believe you also went to China.

KH: Yes, we did.

RG: That was when they were first opening China up, wasn't it? Tell us about that.



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KH: It was 1980 and we were curiosities, believe me. We sailed on a small ship, the *Lindblad Explorer*. It could go into little harbors where bigger ships could not, and the only way people could go in or out was by ship or boat. Those were wonderful experiences.

RG: I'll ask a final question here and then we will stop. What about the Arizona Historical Society? Have you always known about it? Were you familiar with it when it was in the Ellis-Shackelford House and known as the Phoenix Historical Society?

KH: Yes. In fact, I had an exhibit there of banks many, many years ago. I'm a bank collector and I had an exhibit there. And then I remember going there for a Teddy Bear exhibit. Yes, I remember that quite well.

RG: Have you been to the new Arizona Historical Society Museum in Papago Park, the Marley Center?

KH: Oh, yes, I've been there many times. I think of it as on College Avenue.

RG: Yes, it is on the corner of Curry and College in Tempe. It is in a beautiful building. However, it has been a struggle to get it open and staffed.

KH: I know and it's so sad. It really is a shame that they lost their momentum along the way.

RG: That makes me think of one more question for Mr. Herberger. Did you know Kemper Marley well?

RH: Nobody did. He was not a man that went around with a lot of people.

RG: I know he was a rancher and he had his businesses. I never got to interview Mr. Marley. I had planned to talk with him, but he put it off. So we never got to interview him.

KH: How about his wife, Ethel? I was very fond of her.

RG: I think someone else may have interviewed her; I really didn't know her. Well, shall we conclude for today?

RH: Yes.

