History

of the

U. S. Food and Drug Administration

Interviewee: Mary-Margaret Richardson

Interviewer: Robert A. Tucker

Date: March 6, 2000

Place: Rockville, MD

INTRODUCTION

This is a transcript of a taped oral history interview, one of a series conducted by the Food and Drug Administration's History Office. The transcript is prepared following the *Chicago Manual of Style* (references to names and terms are capitalized, or not, accordingly.)

The interviews are with persons, whose recollections may serve to augment the written record. It is hoped that these narratives of things past will serve as one source, along with written and pictorial source materials, for present and future researchers. The tapes and transcripts are a part of the collection of the National Library of Medicine.

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Mary-Margaret Richardson

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville MD 20857

CASSETTE NUMBERS: 1 and 2

GENERAL TOPIC OF INTERVIEW: History of the Food & Drug Administration

DATE: March 6, 2000 PLACE: Rockville, MD LENGTH: 75 minutes

INTERVIEWEE:	INTERVIEWER(S):
NAME: Mary-Margaret Richardson	NAME: Robert A. Tucker
ADDRESS: [redacted]	ADDRESS: 5600 Fishers Lane
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FDA SERVICE DATES: FROM: Nov. 15,1965 TO: March 3, 2000

TITLE: Public Affairs Officer
(Last FDA Position)

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RT: This is another in the series of FDA oral history interviews. Today, the interview is with Mary-Margaret Richardson, Public Affairs Officer, St. Louis Branch, Food and Drug Administration. The date is March 6, 2000. The interview is taking place in the Parklawn Building. Robert Tucker is conducting the interview with Ms. Richardson.

Mary-Margaret, we like to begin these interviews with a brief personal history as to where you were born, raised, educated, and any relevant experience you might have had prior to joining the Food and Drug Administration.

MMR: I was born on October 3, 1942, to Agna Benjamin Richardson and Margaret Abston Richardson, at Hotel Dieu Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana. At the time of my birth, I was the first girl in the Richardson family in forty-two years. As a breach birth, I started out life backwards and was named and baptized by a Daughter of Charity, a personal friend of family who was at the hospital. Actually, my parents had picked out another name for me. I believe it was Rebecca. I ended up being Mary-Margaret, Mary for my paternal grandmother and Margaret for my mother, who is Margaret Mary.

We lived in New Orleans until I was approximately ten years of age, at which time my parents moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where they began a business. They had a labor workroom for interior designers. In other words, they made draperies and slipcovers and fancy types of window treatments, et cetera.

I was educated in parochial schools, both in New Orleans and in Kansas City; graduated from Loretto Academy, which was a private Roman Catholic school for girls; and I graduated in 1965 from Avila College in Kansas City, Missouri, with a degree in biology--a major in biology and a minor in psychology.

About the time of graduation, I took the Federal Service Entrance Exams, and then that starts the FDA career.

RT: You came directly into federal service as a college graduate.

MMR: Came directly into service as a college graduate. Actually, I had signed a contract to teach fourth grade, and when I talked to the pastor of the neighboring parish where I was going to teach--again, a Roman Catholic parish--I showed him my transcript and told him that I was not certified yet in the State of Kansas. He looked at the transcript and said, "Ah, not a problem."

But as it turned out, I received a notice from the State of Kansas that I was three hours short in Elementary Methods. Now some thirty-four plus years later, I am still three hours short in Elementary Methods. However, because of the rules and regulations in the State of Kansas at that time, dealing with uncertified teachers on staff, the pastor and I came to a mutual agreement that it was better to tear up the contract.

So I didn't have a job and had graduated from college and very shortly around that period of time, which would have been the late summer/early fall, I received a letter of inquiry from the Food and Drug Administration that they would like to speak with me.

RT: Mary-Margaret, did I ask you what was your major in college?

MMR: My major was biology, my minor was psychology. I had some aspirations potentially of thinking of going into medicine or one of the sciences. However, I hit a major roadblock when I flunked organic chemistry. I was part of 50 percent of the class that was flunked. So that was a very traumatic experience, because I had been a decent student, if you will, and when I got my grade card, I came home and talked to my parents, and I said to my mother, "You tell Dad." And she said, "No, you tell Dad."

Well, my father was a Marine, and so we always had a home atmosphere like boot camp. And so I guess my dad knew that I had been working hard. I had dropped a couple of courses in an effort, but somehow organic chemistry with all those little bending rings and those things just were not my thing.

So I went in, and I said, "Dad, I need to talk to you," and I showed him my grades, and he looked at me and he smiled, and he said, "Congratulations, you finally found something you couldn't pass." And that was the end of the discussion. Nothing else.

RT: The degree that you had earned certainly qualified you for the entrance requirements to FDA.

MMR: It did, and apparently it put me--unbeknownst to me at that point--on a register of eligibles to be interviewed by the Food and Drug Administration at a time when they were particularly looking for women candidates for inspector jobs.

RT: Let's see, that would have been 1965?

MMR: That was '65. I probably received the letter sometime the end of August, beginning of September, was interviewed by Ted Benjamin, who was the chief inspector in Kansas City.

As a matter of fact, I went to Mr. Benjamin's home to be interviewed, which I thought was a little unusual, but he was really interested in talking to me right away.

My father at the time worked with the Social Security Administration, and I had interviewed with them, but wasn't terribly impressed. Well, Mr. Benjamin really wanted to talk with me.

So since we decided since it was in a nice area of Kansas City, it was probably okay, and one evening I went out and was shown into Mr. Benjamin's home and sat at one end of a rather long living room, and Mrs. Benjamin sat at the other end of the living room knitting. It kind of reminded me of Madam Lafarge at the moment.

But the interview was quite interesting. It was pretty, pretty negative at times. Women . . . You know, there was an emphasis on grain elevators and feed mills and getting dirty and doing food warehouses and maybe being in a rendering plant, in a silo, and all sorts of things and . . .

RT: Did Mr. Benjamin raise the question of whether physically you could handle the bags of flour?

MMR: Yes. Could I lift this, could I do that, bags of flour, bags of, you know, other kinds of things, working in different types of environments, getting into rail cars, could I carry a ladder, did I think I could run a grain trier? Of course, all of these things I knew not a whole lot about.

My previous exposure to the Food and Drug Administration had been several years earlier in my science class in college, where two chemists from the Kansas City lab had come out and talked about the Food and Drug Administration. At the time I thought, gee, that would be a nice place to work, but I promptly forgot it.

Well, here I'm confronted with all of these things, and I finally said to Mr. Benjamin, "How many women do this kind of work?" And he said to me, "If you get the job, you will be our first."

RT: So you were one of the first in the nation.

MMR: I was one . . . I think as we've talked about it, I'm somewhere between two and five, because there was a woman, Imojean Tibbits, who was hired in New York, and I believe she was hired in June of '65 and I was ultimately hired in November of '65.

Well, Mr. Benjamin did not know somehow that I have a very strong genetic background in accepting challenges. I come from a long line of very strong women, and my role model had been my great grandmother, who came from a family in Arkansas where there were three sets of twins and a set of triplets and singles to total thirteen. Her father believed in education of the boys but not of the girls, so my great grandmother essentially had a third grade education. She was married at one point in her life. It was a German marriage of convenience. When her husband said to her, "I'm going to California and look for gold," she said, "I'm going to Kansas City and raise the children." They had had two by that point, and my dear great grandmother, whose name was Minnesota Stamps, became one of the first women in the Garment Workers Union in Kansas City, and also marched up and down Grand Avenue and had things thrown at her because she asked for the right to vote.

So somewhere in my genetic makeup, you know, when Mr. Benjamin said, "If you get the job," I'm going, "Yes, okay. Right on. I'm interested."

RT: You had a pioneer spirit.

MMR: I did.

RT: Let me ask, too, during the interview, was it clear whether you were being considered for a field position or in the lab or office?

MMR: No, it was clear that I was being considered for a field position. He explained to me that there were women in the lab. Well, of course, I wasn't interested in a lab position and probably couldn't have qualified because of my dismal showing in organic chemistry. It was an investigator position, at a level of a GS-5, the salary was a little less than $5,000 a year. Of course, in those days, in 1965, I think I had told myself, gee, if I could ever make $10,000 a year, I would be burning the world up.

RT: Right. Now during the interview, was there any discussion of the requirement for travel and any complications that might ensue since you were a lady and most of the personnel were men?

MMR: Well, there was some of that. Of course, I didn't . . . I guess the things you anticipated at times didn't come to pass. It was those things you did not anticipate that proved to be the interesting ones.

Yes, there was discussion of travel. Actually, the majority of the interview, which I perceived to be fairly negative, was about the physical problems that would be involved and what I might encounter. I might add that just a couple of years ago, some thirty-something years later, I saw a memo that had been written by headquarters--I believe it was written by Mr. Allan Rayfield--and I saw in that memo the entire script that Mr. Benjamin was using during that interview. And when I read that, I went, "Holy cow! Look at this. This is exactly . . ." And he had followed the memo faithfully. The script was the same. It's like, "Oh, my goodness, I've seen this before," that is, where it came from. And it's like I'm hearing it all again, but I was hired.

RT: Good. Now did you ever learn or was there any significance to your interview being conducted at the home rather than the office of Mr. Benjamin?

MMR: I think they were under some pressure to hire some people, and that seemed to be the most expedient way to handle the situation, because I was working. At that time, I was working at an electrical supply place and I had a day job, and so it was difficult to get off. So he said, you know, "We really want to talk to you. Can you come to my house?" And that was, you know, it was completely on the up and up.

RT: I wasn't thinking that. I just wondered if rather than interviewing a candidate of the female gender at the office was there any concern on the part of this man, but it apparently wasn't.

MMR: I don't think so. No, I think it was more, gee, we really want to talk to you, and can you do it at your earliest possible convenience. Well, at that point translated to, yes, we can have an early, like 7:00 in the evening appointment.

RT: Now when you reported, I think you indicated a little earlier it was November 15, 1965. What kinds of duties were you first engaged in?

MMR: The first day was rather interesting because I was assigned to E. Pitt Smith, who was my first supervisor.

The first thing that happened, of course, was, "What do we do about your name? Mary-Margaret." Well, when I was a youngster I had been nicknamed Mike by my family, and it pretty much stuck. The only time I got called Mary-Margaret was when I was in deep trouble, if you will, and, you know, as they say, deep kimchee. Even at the girls' academy a number of the teachers had called me Mike, with the exception of Sister Mary Rose, who was the Latin teacher for whom everyone was Miss So-And-So.

So Pitt said, "What do we call you?" I said, "You can call me Mike. If Mary-Margaret's a problem, you can call me Mike." "Okay. Fine."

So in the middle of the afternoon . . . Of course you spend your first day filling out forms of which I knew little about at the time, but anyway . . . To get administered the oath of office, Pitt took a hat with Mickey Mouse ears out of his desk and blew a whistle, and there in the bull pen office of the Food and Drug Administration at 1009 Cherry in Kansas City, Missouri, I took my oath of office in front of God and everybody, if you will. Normally, the other candidates, the male candidates, went into the director's office, and the director was Al Barnard, and . . . But my swearing in was apparently a novel event.

RT: Al will admit that. He costumed himself with Mickey Mouse ears, is that right?

MMR: Yeah. "This is a little strange, but . . ." Yeah, I thought , well, maybe is that the way they do, all these folks around here? But it was just because I was me, I think.

RT: When you actually got into the work, did you go out in the field with someone for a while?

MMR: Yes. I believe the philosophy in those days, somehow, as I have come to reflect upon that time, was, you know, we have to hire these women, but we don't have to keep them. The philosophy, somewhat unstated, seemed to be take them out and get them dirty and they'll come in and say, "We quit."

So, of course, Kansas City, being smack dab in the middle of the country, did a lot of sanitation work. There were a lot of grain elevators and feed mills and food

warehouses and rendering plants and a number of things, and, of course, being it's position on the river, they had a number of terminal grain elevators.

So the early work was basic sanitation work. Well, also, I guess, the second day I was on the job, they came up to me and said, "What is your inseam size?" I said, "What? Who wants to know?" And they said, "Well, we have to get you some coveralls." You know, some of our inspectors in those days were six foot two, three, four. Well, I'm five foot three and didn't I look funny in long coveralls, so, the question was, "Well, we need to know your inseam size so we know what size coveralls to get you."

Clothing was a problem for women in those days. About the second or third day they took me to an animal feed mill. I didn't do anything. We went over to talk to management about something. But I had on a skirt, and we walked up this open grate for a couple of stories. Well, I'm sure the guys down below got, you know, got a thrill. But after that it was, we can't do this like this anymore.

So I did wear coveralls for a while. I have some wonderful pictures in my coveralls and hard hat. But those weren't terribly glamorous, so we did settle eventually on the white trousers and the shirts, and that was more suitable attire, and I wore Wellington boots simply because it was, you know, decent footwear. I had boots.

But the early work was, of course, your traditional training in sample collections. We had some food warehouses. We did a terminal grain elevator probably in the first couple of weeks, and I wasn't really prepared. I didn't think that I was upset about it, but one of the investigators told me later, they said, "Well, we kind of figured you were because you went around the building and told everybody goodbye."

We got to this elevator, and the fellow that I was with, a very tall, raw-boned, Kansan, short bur hair cut, was named Earl Stevens. We're down underneath in this leg of this elevator and the belt hasn't been used for several days and it's full of dust

and on the belt are all of these tracks, and I'm thinking, "Oh, I'd hate to meet the critter that made those tracks."

So there was a dead space under one of the legs, and some of the concrete blocks had been knocked out. Earl sticks his face in there. Well, this rat just ran right in front of his nose. Well, I'm supposed to be the one that was excited and upset when I saw my first rat. Well, Earl turns to me and his eyes were the size of saucers. "Did you see that?" We spent the next thirty minutes trying to entice that thing out of the hole so we could take its picture. We were not successful with that.

But I never did like rats. Even when I got out and did independent work I was collecting some animal feed samples one day. I'm in this country elevator and it's dark and I hear, "Chatter, chatter, chatter," and I looked up and not three feet from me sat these two little beady eyes. Mice didn't bother me; I didn't want to be in the same room with a rat. Mice were okay, but rats . . . I saw one run up a guy's coverall leg one day, and I did not . . . You know, it didn't bother me a bit that he peeled those coveralls off as fast as he did because that was not a good experience. I always stuck my coveralls in my boots when we were out so that couldn't happen to me.

RT: When did you start traveling, covering an area on your own?

MMR: I think the philosophy then was you do a type of inspection once with a trainer, you do one semi-independently with a trainer with you, and the third time you're an expert. So it wasn't too long that I had my first road trip. Of course, I had had a couple of trips with a supervisor, and then started out on my own.

RT: Did you encounter, as sort of as a new girl on the block, if you will, any problems or any resistance on the part of industry management in having a lady inspector rather than a man inspector? Was that a problem at all?

MMR: Well, in some cases we surprised a lot of them. They tell the story of the guy in the rail yard that had just apparently gotten out of the shower and was walking through the yard office naked as a jay bird. And our car pulled up out in front and I got out, and apparently this poor man dove into the nearest locker, and he had handle marks on his back for some time, and I guess after that they started dressing when they knew women might be around.

No, industry was sometimes surprised and subsequently would complain that the women were harder on sanitation than the men. I don't know whether that was so or not, because we were taught the same way. So unless it was a stereotype that we were better house cleaners and so therefore their grain elevator should be as clean as a house, I'm not sure of that.

But generally management was extremely nice and very cooperative, and sometimes would want to do things for us that we really should have been doing . . . Like sample collection, you know. They didn't want you to go and throw your torpedo probe down in the bin. They'd rather do it for you. But then when you looked at how you were going to have to talk about how that sample was collected, it was not the right thing. So I often had nightmares of the rope from the torpedo probe wrapping around my ankle and being pulled into the bin, but that never happened. But management was generally very cooperative.

There was one time that was particularly funny, and this wasn't management, but I had been inspecting a cheese plant in northeast Iowa, and it was a small plant, and the town was also small. It consisted of a grain elevator and a post office and a café that was also the bar.

So I had been in the cheese plant in the morning, and at lunchtime I needed to go to lunch. Well, of course, FDA had said, you know, never, never, never take a government car and park it where there's an alcohol sign. Well, it was the only place in town to go for lunch. I go in, and it's a long room and all the booths on the left side

of the room were filled with eating farmers and so forth, except for the booth in the back. So here I am in my white pants and shirt, and I march all the way back and have my hamburger and my fries. I left, and on the way back to the cheese plant, I stopped for gasoline. This was in the days when, of course, the government cars all said, "Official Use Only. U.S. Government," da-da-da-da, and the guy is pumping gas for me. And he can hardly get the pump in the gas tank. Finally, he looks at me and he says, "Please, lady, tell me what you do. The whole town wants to know." So I gave him a little history of what I did and why I was there, and then I wanted to go and said, "Now go back and tell all your friends." So we caused a little bit of stir at times.

RT: In terms of report writing and so on, did you at that point do most of that on the road or back at the office?

MMR: Well, it was a little bit of both, and in those days we were just starting I think to use dictaphones. We had portable typewriters, nonelectric. So it depended on how you worked your schedule. You were basically on your own. Supervisors liked to have all of your stuff done up by the time you were back so it didn't take too many days of write-up when you got back.

RT: Was that a time when the field staff were out on two-week road trips?

MMR: Right. You'd get either one-weekers or two-weekers. At one time, I think I was Kansas City's third highest mileage driver in the district, because I'd pull trips to western Kansas. Kansas City covered Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri, and so there were some fairly substantial geographical areas to cover.

Two weekers were fun though, because those were in the days also when you basically didn't come home for the weekend, and you had to find ways to amuse yourself that didn't involve use of the government car.

There was one time when I was out in Grinnell, Iowa, and I was meeting a friend in Des Moines for the weekend. So I called the supervisor on Friday, I said, "Well, I'll be in Des Moines for the weekend." He says, "Do you have a package to mail?" I said, "No." He says, "Do you have something to go to the airport?" I said, "No." And I kept saying, "No," and finally he said, "Well, you can't leave Grinnell with the government car." And I went, "Oops," and I had this friend waiting for me.

So at that time there was no car rental agency in Grinnell, and so I found the guy that owned the local taxi cab and I worked out a deal with him, could I rent his taxi cab for the weekend. I went over and parked the government car in his yard and got in his brand new cab. It was a Buick taxi cab, it had a meter on it and everything. And I drove from Grinnell to Des Moines in the taxi cab. Well, I pull up to the motel and my friend just about fell into the swimming pool. So we ran around town in the Grinnell cab for the weekend. (Laughter) Bad.

RT: Field management policy I recall in those years was rather strict about matters like that.

MMR: Yes, it was. But it also taught you to, you could go between the motel and the post office and if the restaurant was there, okay, but so you learned to mail things a sheet at a time so that, you know, and as long as you were between the lodging and the post office you were fine. But if anything happened you better be coming back from the post office or just mailing something. So it got a little challenging.

Eating wasn't considered official business. If you were there for two weeks and you were stuck on a weekend, if you wanted to go to church, that wasn't official

business. I think over the years things have become a bit more liberal, you know, as long as one used common sense.

RT: I think that's true. Reason has taken over.

MMR: I would hope so. Of course, you know, as I look back on a lot of things, you find in government many times that if there is a violation that there is an overreaction, that you have to do it this way, I mean, instead of taking the person who committed the violation and dealing with them, then you have to deal with the whole class, and that makes it, you know . . . Of course, Lord, in the days I started, you were expected to go in town and check the telegraph office to see if you had any wires from your supervisor. I never got one but, you know, you had to check.

RT: Mary-Margaret, how long was it before you had an opportunity to move ahead grade wise, that is, promoted?

MMR: Well, we went from five to seven fairly slowly. As I cleaned out my office, I have all my personnel action things in a file. But at one point, when I wanted to go from a seven to a nine, I had a supervisor tell me that, well, he'd have to get drunk enough to write me up for a promotion, and I sort of reared back and looked at him and said, "Well, sir, I think I'd buy you the bottle, but I think then you'd turn me in for giving you a gift." You know, it was very difficult.

I was in investigations for six years and came out as an eleven and didn't get a promotion to a twelve until after I had moved to St. Louis as a Consumer Affairs Officer, and then received a promotion to the twelve, and subsequently to a thirteen as a Regional Public Affairs Specialist.

RT: At that time, Mary-Margaret, is it not true that twelve was the journeyman level.

MMR: Journeyman, that's right.

RT: Unless you were a specialist or something for the thirteen.

MMR: It was tough. As you look back and you think, promotions didn't come as fast in those days either, but it was also a bit of a problem sometimes that you thought that women were held to a higher standard. I mean, there were some fellows who, if you were a fair-haired boy, somehow they seemed to get by a lot easier. Whereas, if I had done something like that in the report, then, you know, somebody would have been all over me.

But I was always happy when a supervisor had things to say about my reports because then I knew they were reading them and used those opportunities to learn better, how to do it better in the future.

RT: While you were still an investigator, did you have opportunity for some training schools?

MMR: In essence, the training schools in those days were much different from what they are now. Training was few and far between. I was scheduled in 1971 to go to basic drug school. However, I never made that because of some other things and a career change. But, yes, I had been to Bacti school in Madison, Wisconsin, and I had been to maybe a couple of other things, but not as many as they held. Training in those days was an in-house type of operation. Your supervisor, your chief investigator, and

even the district director participated in that training program, and you didn't seem to go outside the district as much.

RT: I might ask you in that regard, who was the director at the time you came in at Kansas City?

MMR: At the time I came in in Kansas City, the director was Al Barnard. We then went through a series of people. We had Leslie McMillan, we had Charlie Armstrong, we had Lloyd Claybourne, we had Jim Adamson, and then Mike Rogers. That's the history of the directors I think from the time I was in Kansas City.

RT: So you're sort of under . . .

MMR: Oh, I'm sorry. In the interim, we had Bill Hill as well.

RT: Oh, yes. And when you went over . . . Well, let's change this record now just a moment.

MMR: OK.

(Interruption)

RT: It was to a branch with the St. Louis District, is that correct?

MMR: Well, at the time I transferred in 1971, St. Louis was a resident inspection station. At one point, St. Louis had been a district and there were some administrative dealings where St. Louis was reduced from its district status.

RT: How many people were in the resident post or station?

MMR: Oh, my gosh! At that time we had probably ten or twelve. It was a large resident post.

RT: Who was the head person there?

MMR: At the time I first started traveling to St. Louis, I believe the supervisor there was Forrest Aull. Then came Richard D. Turner. And then subsequently added Charlie Bringman, who is still with us today. Turner has retired, Bringman is still with us, but I'm sure will be retiring fairly soon because he has over forty years' service to the agency.

But then subsequently, after I went into the public affairs arena, our first branch director when it was made a branch was, I think, Ronald M. Johnson. Then we had Raymond Hedblad and then Charles Breen. Both have been branch directors in St. Louis, and Mr. Breen has just been selected as the new district director in Seattle. Mr. Hedblad has or is retiring shortly. I think he has retired. And Johnson is no longer with the agency.

RT: As you went over into another arena, what were some of the things that you became engaged with in the public affairs office?

MMR: Well, there was an important thing that made me change, first of all, from regulation to education. I'd been out to a sandwich manufacturer and was working for the same supervisory investigator who was not going to write me up for a promotion. I had been out to inspect the sandwich shop, and the time before the people had not been using hand sanitizing solution, when sanitation work began to focus more on the

bacteriological problems. This time I went in the firm and I saw employees had raw skin from their elbows to their fingertips. I took the litmus paper, waved it in the air, and it turned black over the solution. I mean, this guy was using almost 100 percent, and these poor employees were not having any skin as a result.

So I showed the man how to make the solution, showed him how to use the litmus paper, and I gave him a tube of litmus paper, which was marked thirty-seven cents, that's what it cost the government. I was so happy that we had gotten a correction and the man was now doing something right or that he could do something right, and it would benefit everyone, that I put it in the report. My supervisor called me in and gave me holy hallelujah because I had given away government property.

At that point I thought let me out of here, you know. I thought I would be a better educator than I was regulator. So I began to look at the consumer affairs position, but there was a difficulty there because I was not a home economist, and all of the people at that time were home economists. It was only through a subsequent change I think in the agency when they went to Consumer Protection & Environmental Health Service or that CPEHS thing, and then when they came back to FDA that somehow the requirements had changed, and in 1971 I had put in an application for a public affairs vacancy--well, at that time it was CAO, Consumer Affairs Officer, which subsequently changed to public affairs so I use the terms interchangeably. But my predecessor in St. Louis who was Mrs. Loretta Johnson had retired in February, I think, of 1971. That was the summer of the Bon Vivant vichyssoise soup situation.

On the 12th I was out doing recall effectiveness checks and found out that my brother had become ill. I was due to go to drug school in August. I'm sorry it was July the 12th. I was due to go to drug school in August. I found out my father had a brain tumor, and I had to come home from Shenandoah, Iowa, where I was spending the night. My dad had surgery on the 21st of July, my mother had a coronary in the

surgery waiting room. Two weeks later I found out I was being transferred to St. Louis to this consumer affairs position.

Nineteen seventy-one was a very interesting time in my life, to say the least. The big change, of course, going from regulation to education is in regulation you tell no one anything in those days. You know, you couldn't divulge work plans, you couldn't do this, you couldn't do that, etc. Now you're talking about who we are, what we do, why we do it, when we're going to do it, why we need to change the way, and so forth. So my learning curve was very steep because I became the first Consumer Affairs Officer who had been an investigator. I figured that my background in investigations gave me some unique qualifications to go out and talk to the public about FDA, and that proved true, although I didn't have a whole lot of preparation. I mean, there was in essence no training.

When I went to see Mrs. Johnson in St. Louis . . . She had retired in February or so and the mail had kept coming in all of that time, and by the time I walked in in November, the mail was crawling up the walls, all four walls around this little tiny office, and it was just like, oh, this is an overwhelming task.

Well, I got into St. Louis around November 1971. Actually I took up residence--although I was selected in July . . . By the way I didn't ever get to drug school, okay, because when I was selected, they just said, "No, now you can't go to drug school."

So I got into St. Louis, the moving guy lost my furniture. He was supposed to take two right turns, hit Interstate 70, take another right turn in St. Ann, and a left turn into my apartment complex. He went the other way, parked the truck in Topeka and went out on a monumental drunk. I'm camping at this apartment. In the meantime, my dad's on the critical list. He was at the veteran's hospital in Leavenworth, Kansas, because the brain tumor was very malignant, they didn't get all of it, and it was continuing to grow.

Well, my dad died the 21st of December, and so I had to get several adults and a body on an airplane going to New Orleans. The funeral was Christmas Eve and done by our Jesuit cousin, and he had to hurry up with the service because the ladies needed to get in and decorate the church.

Well, going into consumer affairs, my learning curve for the first year was exquisitely steep. I would take files home every night and read and read and read and just try to get myself together into what I could talk about.

RT: At that time as far as Washington direction or Washington guidance, who was heading up the consumer affairs' function? Do you recall? I think Carla Williams started it.

MMR: Carla Williams had started it, but I think Carla Williams was on her way out. Ted . . . Let's see, Ted Kron?

RT: Larry Trawick perhaps?

MMR: Well, at that point Larry Pilot was in public affairs. That's information I could probably get, but I don't remember that person. That's one I don't recall.

But I did come to my first meeting and some of the ladies looked at me like, we don't think you're going to make it; you're not a home economist. And then that was buttressed by the fact that the first morning the discussion at the breakfast table was on the merits of buttered versus unbuttered wheat toast, and I'm going, "How'd I get in here?"

RT: Well, you were able and required I guess to be rather self sufficient out there in your new job.

MMR: Yes, yes. And it was kind of make your own way, you know. We had some general guidelines. When I went to see my predecessor, I went to her home in St. Louis, she lived on Westminster Place, and I commuted there one fall day, and I got out of the car, and I could hear these large hounds baying in the background. It was kind of a cold, gray day, and I thought, oh, my goodness, and I go in and Mrs. Johnson was a bourbon drinker, and, of course, we had several fingers of bourbon, and we sat there and talked about the program. It's like, how do I do this? Well, blah-blah-blah. And I'm thinking, I don't know where to start. Well, I was so glad that she had not left any shoes under her desk, because I couldn't fill them. She was an institution in St. Louis. She was an attorney who had been with the Works Progress Administration (WPA), she was very well connected politically with congresswoman Leanore Sullivan, who was a giant in the area of consumer protection and had a lot to say and do in the early days of the consumer protection movement.

And so here I was following Mrs. Johnson, and I was like, oh, my goodness. But there was a link. We had a wonderful clerk in St. Louis named Catherine Mayer who provided me some training, and essentially I went from there.

My first television interview I think I white-knuckled. I was doing the workshop a little later at the county library on how to buy an OTC drug or something, and this woman came up to me at the break and she says, "You know, you should do yourself a favor." And I said, "What is that?" She said, "You should never be on television." "Excuse me." "Well," she says, "I saw you on the Julian Bell Show, and you just looked like you didn't have any personality at all." I thought, hmmmm, my dear woman, let me tell you, I will do things in this room with fifty people that I wouldn't dare do on TV.

Well, I must have really sat there during the whole interview and just white-knuckled, just grabbed onto the chair, because, you know, you sit still, you do this . . .

But after that I decided, okay, know your subject and then relax and enjoy.

RT: Well, in a way that was a constructive criticism that helped you.

MMR: It was. It was. But it really brought me up short, you know. It was one of those things that, what? I thought I did a good job. Well, hmmmm.

So after that, it's like, okay, just know your stuff and do your thing.

RT: To go back for a moment to the inspectional part of your career, were there any particular unique or elaborate types of problems or issues that you were involved with at that time? Apparently you did a cross section of work.

MMR: I did a cross section, and there weren't any, you know, any ones that stand out. I think probably the most interesting and intriguing one was inspecting an onion ring manufacturing operation. That was pretty unusual. I also smelled like onions for the two weeks. Every time I'd get in the shower I'd smell onions again. It was like, oh, my goodness.

Surprised them because we had some indication that they were not doing cleaning properly, and I went back in the firm at 1:30 in the morning when the cleaning crew was there, and we found what the problem was. But management at that point was extremely surprised that here I would show back up at 1:30 in the morning. But that was the only time because the in-line tubs were showing something, and, you know, it was like we had to put it together, so we started doing that.

RT: Did you have any experiences in the hazardous substances program that were unique?

MMR: Well, hazardous substances was a very interesting area to work in. Of course, FDA had that work before the creation of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. One inspection particularly sticks out in my mind.

I had been going to inspect a fairly small firm, but they made a dry fire extinguisher, and many times the firm would refuse to give FDA a formulation. So in preparing for the inspection, I had come across a formula for the dry type of fire extinguisher in a reference book in the library, and I happened to note that down in my diary. During the inspection I got to the formula part and, of course, the guy refused, and he said, "No, I'm not going to give you my formula." I said, "Okay. Well, how much of this do you put in?," and I named the first ingredient, and he looked at me. "How much of that do you put in?" By the time I got to the third ingredient his wig was about to come off of his head. He said, "Where did you get my formula?" I said, "Sir, okay. I got this out of a book in the public library," but at that point I was just convinced that it was pretty darn close to what he was using in his product so that took care of the formula issue.

RT: That was good thinking.

MMR: But you didn't know sometimes what management was going to do.

There was another time when I was in an ice cream manufacturing plant. Of course, there's always been the problem in FDA of can you have a formula or can you not have a formula. In the area of food products, of course, FDA is not allowed to have formulas, but you can enter and inspect anything in the manufacturing area.

So this first day at this multi-flavor ice cream plant, the manager stuck to me like glue, and I think he wrote down more things than I did about my inspection. Those were also in the days when you copied down every ingredient of every color and

everything in the place. But I had noticed out in the production area a lovely book that had apparently all the formulas for all the ice cream.

So the second morning of the inspection, he must have figured I was fairly innocuous so he left me alone, and I go out in the manufacturing area and I start copying these formulas.

Well, I see him come out from the side by his office, and the man is not walking on the ground. He's buzzing over to me and he says, "You can't have those. You can't leave here." And I didn't know what he could do, because I had not been faced with that during my training. They didn't tell us what they could do to you.

So he went in to call his attorney, and when he did I ripped the formulas out of my book and stuck them down in the front of my bra and thought, "Okay. Now if you want these, you'll have to come get them, and then perhaps we can get you for assaulting a federal officer."

But after a while, he said, "My competitors would pay thousands of dollars for those formulas." I said, "That's absolutely correct, but you have a book right out here in plain view of everyone." I said, "What's to prohibit any of your employees from taking this information and going down the street to your competitor." I said, "I'm only here because I need to see if you're complying with the law, and we need to check your labels, and without formulas we can't check your labels."

So we parted as friends, but it was one of those days when you went, okay.

Then there was the thing where you never ate or drank anything during an inspection, and the first time I did a potato chip manufacturer, and the manager would go through and periodically select a very nice looking chip off the edge of the belt and chomp on it, and I watched him do that all day. At the close of the day, I couldn't stand it anymore. I went to the store and I bought the biggest bag of potato chips I could find, and I sat in my motel room, and I ate them, every one of them.

Or in another town, the warehouse was so bad in these days. This was in the days before video cameras. This place was just absolutely walking alive with mice. The exterminator was doing somewhat of a job. You couldn't put your foot down in the basement that you didn't step on a carcass, but they were also running all over the . . . I was just absolutely hysterical.

And so this was a fairly small town in southern Missouri, and one of the first things I found out was this man supplied almost every restaurant in town. So at the close of the inspection day I went to the store and I bought packaged cheese and mustard and a loaf of bread, something I knew that didn't come from his warehouse, and that's what I ate for my supper that night at the motel.

RT: When you were in the field as an inspector, did you work with state and local people, and if so, did you have any experiences or impressions of any kind, as a federal person?

MMR: Yes, we worked with state and local people. Of course, there were times, since FDA does not have any kind of embargo authority where you get in a situation that would need instant remedy and you get the state people in, and the grain people were always really nice. I mean they were nice working relationships. I can't remember any that were particularly contentious or whatever, but you'd also, of course, cozy up to the sanitarians, if you will. If you were in a town and find out which one of the restaurants were the best and which ones you didn't want to eat in or if they wouldn't eat there, then, you know, that was a pretty good clue that you didn't want to eat there either.

RT: Well, I kind of brought us back, but I just thought some of the accounts of your experiences that we didn't cover might be of value.

MMR: You know, one of the things that I've done over the years and it's really kind of fun, I've kept a journal over most of my adult life. So I have some food and drug type of remembrances that are tucked in those journals, and one of these days I keep saying I'm going to get them all out and lay them out and write my book, because I think there are a number of experiences that would be just, well, they were hysterical.

But some were also challenging. That was the thing you asked a question about previously, with regard to travel. It wasn't the situation of, you know, the co-habitation or whatever; it was what did you do when you were alone with yourself?

The first time I went in a hotel room and closed the door and I was alone with me, what did that mean? I didn't know who I was, and when I began to find out I sort of didn't like me. But then you began to use the time more constructively. I had wonderful time to correspond with friends. On weekends I'd sit and write letters and do all kinds of things.

I subsequently found out I'm, believe it or not, a very shy person. Everybody goes, no, no, no. Well, really so, because I've learned to work in the extroverted world. But my inner world is the world of ideas and so forth, and I came to value that travel time, that time for being by myself as really good, good time, and traveling provided that.

But in the early days, you couldn't anticipate what would happen. As I said, it was the things you didn't think about. If you wanted a drink at the end of the day, and you walked into the bar at the hotel, it was like raising a red flag. Almost saying to every guy in there, hey, guys look, I'm available, when you really weren't. All you were doing was sitting in there. So if you wanted to drink, what you did was buy a bottle in broad daylight and take it back to your room and have a drink or two. Well, that wasn't very good socially, you know.

Per diem when I started was something like thirteen dollars a day, room and board, and you didn't earn a lot so you had to watch where you stayed. Well, some

guys were perfectly happy to stay at the Y; I never did. When we stayed in some of these little sleaze bags, you'd buy a bug bomb or you'd buy Lysol or whatever.

I remember writing a memo--I was just thinking about raising the per diem--as to why you could use more money, and I wrote about buying bug bombs and Lysol. But then there was one hotel in St. Louis that we subsequently found the place rented by the hour. So you check in then you'd be here for a week, and they'd look at you like, how many towels do you want? You know. You mean you're here for a whole week?

RT: That's probably the experience you had as a woman that was different than a man.

MMR: That guys didn't have. That guys didn't have.

RT: They didn't have to contend with that.

MMR: That's right. That's right.

RT: So that was unique.

MMR: Yes.

RT: When you were in the public affairs office or the consumer office, were there any particular situations there that were kind of unique or outstanding?

MMR: One of the things, and I think it was more of a personal decision I made before taking the job, well, my father was in the hospital; we came smack up against a

bureaucracy that was just awful. I made the decision that when I went into consumer affairs that I would go the extra mile for the consumer, that I would not just kind of shrug somebody off, that I would attempt to provide good customer service, because I knew how it felt to be up against a bureaucracy.

So as a Consumer Affairs Officer and later a Public Affairs Specialist, it's always been my goal to provide very good service to people. And to be straight and up front with people and say, "Look, I don't have all the answers, but I serve as your door into this bureaucracy. If I don't know something, I will attempt to help you find an answer." So I don't know whether that's been unique or not, but that's been my goal during the time that I've served as a Public Affairs Specialist. To try and be an enabler to people, and I think that's what the position really needs, it needs to be.

We've had lots of experiences. I'm known in St. Louis as the FDA lady, in terms of being the voice of the community. When I retired on the 3rd of March, one of the local papers essentially wrote the headline, "FDA's Local Voice Graduates to Retirement." There were times when the St. Louis community didn't know there was a whole other FDA office in St. Louis, because I was the Food and Drug Administration. I was the most visible person, and consumers had often remarked, "Oh, my gosh, when things rough, Mary-Margaret will get on television and tell us what we should do, you know, what we should do about this situation, what we should believe." That was a tremendous vote of confidence from the public.

But this happens, of course, with Public Affairs Officers all across the country. Because we work in the local communities and can have the confidence, we build up confidence and trusting relationship working with the media.

You know, there was a time when this agency considered the media to be the enemy. Well, I have to say myself the media happens to be my best friend and my worst enemy. But when you work with somebody and you develop trust and

confidence, and you know that each of you has a job to do and let's see if we can, you know, let's see if we can work it out.

I had four rules for media. One was I'll always return your phone calls. Second was I will provide you what information I can. If you get into freedom of information, I will tell you how you should submit that. The third is you may print or broadcast anything I say, because I never speak off the record. And the fourth is if you call me Mary you won't get any interview at all, because my name is Mary-Margaret.

RT: Well, certainly the function of the Public Affairs Officers have brought the agency into the awareness of every home, which, years ago, we really didn't have that.

MMR: Well, as an investigator, you could do your whole career and people would never hear of you, and that would mean that everything was going right. But on the other side of the coin, the issues that the Public Affairs Specialists deal with . . . I mean, when you look at the number of mentions that Food and Drug gets in local media, particularly as the regulatory responsibilities of the agencies have grown, you'd have to live on a rock never to have heard of FDA. But then sometimes what the people have heard is a different issue.

Now I always looked at the same time it's important to be able to provide information to people. I didn't start out to change anybody's mind, but I will provide you information and you may change your own mind, you know. Everybody comes to FDA with an expectation of who we are. Sometimes it's very far from the truth, and a lot of our work in public affairs is getting the folks to have the proper kind of information, but I can't change your mind.

RT: While you were at the field, of course, you weren't necessarily directly impacted by the changes in management of the agency, the commissioners, et al.,

except perhaps in terms of programs. Were there any periods of time that you recall where the top leadership of the agency might have either led us into new grounds or not led us as far as your work was concerned?

MMR: I think that the public affairs people were fairly fortunate in that we had pretty close contact with the commissioners, and in a sense, our program priorities changed with commissioners.

I had the good fortune to work with Commissioner Kennedy when he came to St. Louis and dealt with the medical community in a grands round situation with the medical society. When the folks would come out from headquarters and come to the field, that was a really big event. It's kind of like, that was nice and we'd like to see more of that.

Of course, now with the stakeholder and the leveraging meetings and so forth, it's happened, okay. But, yes, a change of commissioners often will dictate a change in programs, a change in focus, a change in emphasis, where we're going. A couple of signal events, whether it was commissioners or conditions in society, AIDS changed the way everybody did business and tobacco changed the focus of the agency for a while. In some things, the public affairs people lost a certain sense of autonomy in local control, being able to respond to the demographics of your own community.

Sometimes what is very important and very topical in Washington doesn't wash in a local community. They could care less. In the days when we had the consumer exchange meetings, the Office of Consumer Affairs would set the topics, that might have been an important topic to my community and it might not have been. So it takes, you know, it takes kind of both. It's not an either/or situation, it's a both/and.

RT: You were given enough autonomy, though, to work in areas of local interest, were you not?

MMR: Yes, that's true. And in one sense, that's how the program grew in the early days. It wasn't an autonomist type of thing. Later, trying to bring that back into the mainstream of the agency because of our historical, you know, give us a goal, give us a target, and we'll go out. I know in the "Take Time to Care" Program, I think eventually in starting out the Office of Women's Health, it was expected that we would all walk alike and talk alike and sound alike, and that's not true. The public affairs people are exquisitely talented individuals that given a goal will go out and accomplish that goal in ways that are incredibly efficient, incredibly inventive, and, you know, the Office of Women's Health would end up with a program that was even much more than they envisioned when they first started. But trying to make all of us walk, look, and talk alike, that's an impossibility.

RT: I think it was Commissioner Goddard that gave the field much more freedom to operate out of a straight-line management mode that the agency had followed so long, and I'm sure that reflected to all personnel like your profession.

MMR: That's true.

(Interruption)

RT: We've had a little break now.

Other experiences that you had traveling or making inspections. Do any come to mind that we might add here? As you went to small towns, I guess there were sometimes different experiences than in metropolitan areas. What circumstances of that kind did you run into?

MMR: Having women around at times surprised people. I went to a grain elevator, it was fairly small, out in the middle of Kansas, and I know the manager called all of his friends and said, "Come see what I've got."

So I'm going up to check these butler bins which are what, forty-foot bins, and I climb up the side with my grain cloth and my grain probe, and I got to the top and had forgotten that the bin had been sitting out in the Kansas sun for all day, and I sat down. The first thing I thought was, I have scorched the back out of my trousers, you know. So I stood straight up in the air, and looked down and I realized I didn't want to be up there either. So I opened the port on the bin, and dropped down in there. The temperature was about 150°, and finally I just sat there for a minute. I got up and made some scratching noises like I was doing something. That place could have been running over with rats at that point, but I wouldn't have seen any of them. So I get out of the bin, closed the top, climbed down the ladder, and said to the manager, "See ya," and I left. That was wild. But that didn't happen too many times.

Some of these feed mills were rather complicated systems, and I always would ask people to explain the process. One guy one time . . . Well, in this feed mill, he says it goes from here to here to here to here. He had reversed two steps in the process, and I think he thought, dumb woman, she won't know the difference. So I said to him, "Let me see if I have that correct." I went through the process, but I reversed the steps, and he looked at me like, you got me. I looked at him and I said, "Now, Sir, please don't ever do that again."

You know. I was like, okay, because we were women, it was sometimes thought that we didn't quite know what was going on here, and that was an unfair assumption on the part of some people.

RT: Now, of course, the work that you and your peers, other ladies, that might have been early in the field, really laid the groundwork for a lot of advances that have been made in the agency for women. Do you want to elaborate on that?

MMR: I'd like to think so. You know, I look at women today who are regional directors and district directors and branch directors and so forth and think in some ways I have a connection to these women as my spiritual goddaughters, because I think, you know, had all of us quit early on, they wouldn't have gotten a chance. And I don't think too many of the early people that started as the pioneers, if you will, are still around. I might be one of the only ones that stayed to retirement with the agency. I mean, thirty-four years plus later here I am. But it's like we were the pioneers. We were the people who put up with this stuff, and later when I became and served the agency as an EEO counselor, as a trainer for sexual harassment, and finally for workplace diversity awareness and related to the office of personnel management some of the things that happened in the early days, they just were aghast at some of these circumstances.

And, yet, there was an inspector with FDA in Kansas City when I started who said, "You know, you're going to be watched very carefully," and he said, "and a lot of people will expect that you respond in a particular way." In other words, stereotypically how a woman would respond.

The other piece of advice was that you have to know what issues are important to go to the mat about. Don't yell about everything, because then you'll dilute your effectiveness. With those two pieces of advice, I've tried to forge out an FDA career that will have some meaning to those who came behind us. It never made me a regional director, but again I feel a real kinship to those women who are now in those positions.

Early on, we had two investigators who were hired the same day with the agency, one male and one female, and, of course, in the early days they used to tell us

you're taking some guy's job. I said, "Baloney. We took the Federal Service Entrance Exam just as you did."

But these two people were trained the same way, they had the same advantages and so forth, they became romantically involved with each other, and left. Now no one said anything about his leaving, but a lot of people said, "Oh, we wasted our resources training her." At that point FDA's turnover rate was extremely high. I said, "The issue is how do you recruit and train qualified people, not necessarily qualified men, qualified women. How do you recruit and train qualified people and keep them with the agency for a period of time."

RT: That was a good point and might have been missed if it hadn't been brought up, because I think traditionally judgments of that kind were commonplace.

MMR: Well, Mary-Margaret has never been afraid to stand up and say what I think is true. Now sometimes people did not like to hear that. You know, when we went through the Bon Vivant vichyssoise soup incident, we had one white male Republican banker I think it was that died. Congress gave us Project Hire, Congress gave us money, Congress did a number of things for us.

When we had the listeria monocytogenes breaking upon the horizon and thirty-eight women and children died, Congress didn't give us anything else. Now what does that say in the political arena as to where power is and who the powerful people are in our society? You look at that and you go, but, you know, we, as the Food and Drug Administration, are in business to protect everyone, not just certain segments of that population.

RT: Well, stated.

You said earlier that this is the first day of your retirement. So that's not far enough away maybe to have a distant view, but perhaps you have some reflections or thoughts on how the agency is or might be in terms of where you started and through which you have progressed to where you are today.

MMR: In reflecting--and I've done a lot of that as I've thought about retirement--I was still enjoying what I was doing and committed to the Food and Drug Administration. I still subscribe to that philosophy that someone else has stated before me that if we didn't have a Food and Drug Administration it would be necessary to invent one.

However, the Food and Drug Administration that I knew in 1965 is markedly different from the Food and Drug Administration that I know in 2000. I look back on my career. Just simply because some of the problems have changed, the industries have changed, technology has burst upon the scene, there are a number of things that, you know, not the least of which of course is the increased regulatory responsibility of the agency and so on and so on and so on.

But when I first started doing programs for the public in 1971, my philosophy kind of went, gee, because we're there you are safe. And I have found increasingly I could not say that to consumers anymore, because no one--be it government, be it industry, or any other group that's involved--can promise us total safety.

Number one, I'm glad that the agency is beginning to assess risk identification and risk management. I think those are two important things. I mean, to tell a consumer, "Look, no drug is totally safe period. We know that every one of them has a problem. Anything that is pharmacologically active capable of causing something to happen is also capable of causing something you don't want to have happen."

And so as you look at the concept of safety, we realize that what I would say to people now is, "Because we are there, you know more about the risks that you may face and potentially how to deal with that risk." Or if the risk becomes unacceptable,

then it is the function of an agency to help you deal with that risk, perhaps by taking the product away or by providing you better information, and certainly one of the strongest links in this whole chain is an informed consumer.

RT: Well, that certainly is true.

We've covered quite a wide range of experiences you've had, and now that you're retiring, I'm sure you'll still have an interest in these affairs even on your own.

MMR: I'm sure that I will. I look at my own use of technology. I have a computer at home. I may have to declare Internet-free days so that I can get something done. I will visit the FDA Home Page. I hope to keep in touch with a number of colleagues, both past and present, and certainly I will not lose interest.

Just the other day, even though retired, somebody sent me something that falls into the category of an urban legend, and I really felt obligated at that point to flip over to the FDA Home Page, get the correct information, and send it out.

You know, when the Food and Drug Administration or when any organization has been a part of one's life, as the Food and Drug Administration has been a part of my life for the last thirty-four years, you just don't sign on a form that says I'm out of here and forget all of those things.

I'm doing an interview, and the reporter said to me, "Well, what are you going to do now that you're retired?" And I said, "Hey, look, I've done for thirty-four years. I'm now going to learn to be." And part of that being is an appreciation of those friends who have made you who you are, who have contributed to your life in ways they never knew or never understood. And I can also look back with pride on the fact that I have done service to the American public, but I've also done a bit of service to my colleagues in the Food and Drug Administration. I knew it was time to leave the day somebody called me an institution. I said, "Hey, that's a computer." But I've been

called an institution, a pillar, a matriarch, a mentor, and seven or eight other names. But the institution was, okay, that was time to go.

But I can look back with pride and great satisfaction upon my service with the Food and Drug Administration, and who knows what the future will bring.

RT: Mary-Margaret, we're especially pleased for the history program information that we've been able to get from you, these experiences and views, and we certainly wish you well in your retirement ahead.

MMR: Thank you. And I think it's important that as an agency we continue to tell our story, because those stories make us who we are and they make us stronger. There are some organizations now, for instance the Nike Corporation, has a corporate storyteller. The history project will contribute to our getting folks together and telling our story, because it's certainly one that's worth telling, both from an individual and a corporate standpoint.

RT: We would agree with that and thank you very much.

MMR: You're welcome. Thank you.