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# Goodbody, Barbara oral history interview

Paula Craighead

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## **Interview with Barbara Goodbody by Paula Craighead**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Goodbody, Barbara

### **Interviewer**

Craighead, Paula

### **Date**

December 4, 2003

### **Place**

South Freeport, Maine

### **ID Number**

MOH 423

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### **Biographical Note**

Barbara (Morris) Goodbody was born in Muncie, Indiana in 1936. Her father, Robert Melvin Morris, was from a Democratic Kentucky family, and a career naval officer. Her mother, Adelia Ball Morris, was from a Republican Indiana family. Barbara attended many schools growing up, as the family moved often. She attended Mt. Vernon College for one year, then graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in Literature. She worked in the press office during Muskie's 1972 presidential run.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: family background and education; working in Muskie's press office in 1972; Washington Hilton Hotel fund raiser; Nixon dirty tricks; how Madeleine Albright came to work for Muskie; and Jim Goodbody.

### **Indexed Names**

Albright, Joseph Patterson  
Albright, Madeleine Korbelt

Craighead, Paula  
Evans, Jane  
Goodbody, Barbara  
Goodbody, Jim  
Harriman, Averell  
Harriman, Pamela  
Humphrey, Hubert H. (Hubert Horatio), 1911-1978  
McGovern, George S. (George Stanley), 1922-  
Morris, Adelia Ball  
Morris, Robert Melvin  
Muskie, Edmund S., 1914-1996  
Nixon, Richard M. (Richard Milhous), 1913-1994  
Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945  
Schuman, Ed  
Segretti, Donald  
Stewart, Dick  
Walker, Diane

## **Transcript**

**Paula Craighead:** . . . 4th, a Thursday, 2003 to interview Barbara Goodbody. Barbara, would you say your full name and where you born and the year you were born, if you're willing?

**Barbara Goodbody:** Barbara Goodbody; I was born in Muncie, Indiana in 1936.

**PC:** And your parents, how long have they been there and what were their names, or are their names?

**BG:** My father was a career naval officer, he came from Kentucky, a Democratic family, and my mother was born in Indiana and was a Republican, industrial family background.

**PC:** So there might have been some good and interesting political conversations in your household?

**BG:** I recall my father being very supportive of Roosevelt and his policies when I was a little girl. And I remember the moment of his death because my father was very sad about that. There wasn't a lot of dialogue between mother and father about politics at the time.

**PC:** And you grew up in Indiana?

**BG:** I grew up as a Navy, Navy junior, and traveled from Connecticut to California, back to Maryland, and grew up mostly during the war years in Annapolis, Maryland.

**PC:** And your schooling, where did you go to school and what did you study?

**BG:** I went to twelve different schools before I graduated from high school.

**PC:** Oh, my goodness.

**BG:** And that was because my early years were in Annapolis during the war, and then mother would take us to be with father wherever he was going to be. So we went from Annapolis to Florida, and then he was stationed out in Hawaii and California. And I ended up graduating from Mt. Vernon Seminary in Washington, D.C.

**PC:** Their names, do you mind saying your parents' names?

**BG:** My father was Robert Melvin Morris, he retired as rear admiral, U.S. Navy, and my mother was Adelia Ball Morris.

**PC:** Is that M-O-R-R-I-S?

**BG:** Yes.

**PC:** Thank you. And then college, where did you have further schooling?

**BG:** I went to a year of Mt. Vernon College, and then went on to the University of Colorado where I graduated with a B.A. in literature, and then went on to Columbia and got my masters degree in education.

**PC:** And your family life?

**BG:** I have three children, I'm divorced, three grown children. Two of them are married and I have three grandchildren.

**PC:** So we're going to talk a little bit about your first meeting with Ed Muskie and how you remember that contact, in what context, and then also about Madeleine Albright.

**BG:** My husband graduated from Michigan Law School. When we were early married he went through law school, and took a job in Washington, D.C. with a law firm there. It was the time when Richard Nixon was campaigning for the presidency against Hubert Humphrey, and I had come from a Republican background and was not particularly thinking about politics, but certainly with coming to Washington you can't help but be involved and interested in what's going on. And when I saw Richard Nixon on television and he looked so isolated and so pompous, and Hubert Humphrey on television, running up and down the stairs with such great humanity and enthusiasm. And I said, "I'm shifting parties."

**PC:** Do you remember the year [1968]?

**BG:** It was probably about, we moved to Washington in about 1965, and Humphrey was running for president and he had chosen Ed Muskie as his vice presidential running mate. And the two together were formidable, a formidable team, and so I decided to support them.

**PC:** And what nature of your, what was the form of your support?

**BG:** I can't remember. Well, at that time I certainly voted for Hubert Humphrey, and that was the first time I had really voted my conscience, or even thought I had a conscience about politics.

**PC:** And then, do you remember the first time you saw Ed Muskie in person?

**BG:** When Ed Muskie decided to become the presidential candidate, my husband had some contacts with Ed Schuman and a lawyer I think in his firm, who encouraged him at the time to get involved in the campaign. And Jim asked me if I wouldn't want to take some time, so I decided to volunteer part time at the campaign headquarters.

**PC:** Jim, meaning your ex-husband Jim Goodbody.

**BG:** Jim Goodbody, my ex-husband. And he had just left the Goodbody company firm in Washington and decided to take some time in this political campaign. So I decided to do that, and volunteered, volunteered my time with Dick Stewart who was the campaign press secretary.

**PC:** What were sort of the things that Dick had you do?

**BG:** Well, you had asked me when I first met Muskie. I hadn't met Muskie when I decided to volunteer in the campaign, I had only admired him through the television and the press, etcetera, etcetera, and so I was pleased to be able to be part of the campaign team. And pretty much, there were five of us in the press office and we were responsible for getting out press releases and, and I'm not, I can't remember what we did, it seemed a lot of envelopes and things like that, the nitty gritty that take up time. But there was a wonderful group of people in the press office. And Dick Stewart was a magnificent man, he came from the *Boston Globe*, so it was wonderful to work with him.

I met Ed Muskie at a special social event that Pamela and Averell Harriman had at their home in Georgetown. And I had known Madeleine Albright through, our children had gone, were going to the same school, and then Madeleine and Jim, my ex-husband, were co-chairing a fund raising event for Ed Muskie. So Madeleine and Joe Albright and Jim and I had a number of dinners together talking about the campaign. And I helped Madeleine a little bit with the dinner, but she pretty much was, she and Jim were pretty much running the fund raising dinner. The event at Averell Harriman's was fascinating because of course their home was, is beautiful, was beautiful. Pamela was a vibrant hostess. And Senator Muskie was there at the event. And I recall, Madeleine I don't think had really met Ed Muskie until that event, or at least briefly, because I remember her introducing herself and telling him that she was a candidate for a doctorate degree at I believe Columbia in Middle Eastern, not Middle Eastern, but Slavic studies. And then of course when she went on to become his assistant in the Senate, I recall that sort of played out for me.

**PC:** In terms of played out for you, you mean you felt that you were there sort of at the beginning of their relationship?

**BG:** Well, it was just, it was a social evening, and yet looking back, having now seen the, what transpired later, it was a moment when she was making herself known to the senator. And although I can't say that I was at all aware of what she had in thoughts for herself, it certainly was her way of introducing herself to the senator, and she had a very impressive background at that time. She was raising her two little girls, who were in elementary school with my children, and yet I admired her for commuting to New York City to work on this doctorate.

**PC:** Is there more about that evening you recall, even if it's just personal details? How Ed was dressed, how people looked, what kind of (*unintelligible word*)?

**BG:** Well, for me, having a love for art, to walk into their home and have a Degas statue in the foyer, and a magnificent Van Gogh in their living room I recall, I think it was one of his paintings of white flowers. And the living room was, appeared to be decorated around the arts, and yet it was a political event. And I recall one person there was smoking and burned a hole in Mrs. Harriman's velvet chair, which was a, you know, very human thing that can happen but I cringed when I saw it. But that, meeting Ed Muskie that evening, feeling very comfortable with Madeleine as a colleague and parent, those were the most vivid memories I really have of that evening.

**PC:** Then subsequent meetings that you saw him, how did you relate in the campaign?

**BG:** I really, Ed Muskie didn't really come to the campaign offices. I don't think he really liked campaigning that much. And, although I wasn't there in the offices twenty-four hours a day, because I was raising three children, too, so, basically he very rarely if ever came to the campaign office. And in retrospect I think that there may have been that element about him that, he, it was, he was busy doing other things. Jane, on the other hand, popped in a couple of times. She was the really, the outgoing one, wonderful, generous spirit, and although I put both of them up on a pedestal, Jane always made me feel very comfortable. She always, she was really a very, very generous, warm, wonderful Maine woman. And still is, I think.

**PC:** What, can you talk a little bit about how your work in the campaign office progressed during the campaign, did you stay with it right to the bitter end, where were you on the, as the campaign unfolded?

**BG:** Well, we were, at the time we were all just busy getting, getting press packets out, I think that's pretty much what we spent most of our time on was putting together press packages. And my husband and Madeleine were organizing a big fund raising dinner at the Hilton Hotel and they were immersed in that. Madeleine had the social contacts and was pretty much focusing on bringing the contributions into the campaign from the broad Washington community, but as I understand it my husband was working more behind the scenes and brought in the larger gifts which made the fund raising event successful. I think they raised almost a hundred thousand dollars, which was a lot of money at that time.

What we didn't know, during that period of time while they were organizing the dinner, a telephone call came in to the press office when I was there busily putting press packages

together. And Dick Stewart looked up at, there were five, three or four or five of us in the office, and he said, "The campaign's over." And I looked at him and I said, "What do you mean? How can the campaign be over?" We were so immersed in the campaign. And he said, "The president cried in Manchester; presidential candidates don't cry." So I said, "So what. Why couldn't he cry?" And Dick Stewart says, "No, presidential candidates don't cry."

**PC:** So that, you were there when he got the word and that was it.

**BG:** That was it. It was, I thought it was stupid, I thought 'how can it possibly be over?' But the, Madeleine and Jim decided to go ahead with the fund raising dinner, and it was held at the Hilton Hotel, Washington Hilton Hotel. And we got there for the dinner and all these limousines started arriving at the door of the Hilton, and diplomats from Third World countries started getting out of the limousines. And they were dressed in their native African costumes, their native dress, and very beautiful people from Africa mostly. And my husband got a call and said the chauffeurs are wanting to be paid. And he went out to talk to the chauffeurs and he said, "But diplomats are not invited to political events, it's not protocol." And I don't know how that played out.

But we, at that time the campaign was basically over so we had those people who had bought seats, we had a number of seats available, so we sat all the diplomats and they had a wonderful evening, and Ed Muskie gave a wonderful speech. And I forget who else gave some talks, but. And the evening itself was bittersweet because, because we knew that his, Muskie's star was falling, but the evening itself was a success. Later on we discovered that Nixon's committee to reelect the president, Segretti had this little group, had done this little dirty trick and sent invitations to all the Third World country diplomats, and that, they thought, and that's why they had come.

**PC:** Very interesting.

**BG:** Nobody at that time knew what was going on in the Nixon campaign. But we all felt Muskie was the far more formidable candidate for Nixon; he certainly had a wonderful Lincolnesque, was thought of as having a Lincolnesque persona, which he certainly did. And he was a great statesman with a great deal of integrity and a real threat to Richard Nixon.

**PC:** Were you there to help close down the office as well? How long did you stay?

**BG:** No, no, I can't remember but I think after the dinner, things pretty much folded and McGovern became the running Democratic candidate, and that's history.

**PC:** Did, in terms of where we are today in 2003 and your life in Washington, seeing Madeleine Albright's career in some ways tracking Muskie's, have you had any contact over the years?

**BG:** I had a little bit of contact with Madeleine when I was a trustee at Mt. Vernon College. She was very supportive of the college, and the women's programs there, at the time it was a women's college. And she was a good friend of Jane Evans, the president at the time whom I

had the great privilege of serving with, serving as a trustee with Jane as the head of the college. And that was, oh, I can't remember how many, our children were grown and Madeleine at the time was teaching at Georgetown University, she was a professor there. And I called her and asked her if she would be able to give us some time at the college. And she said she would help as much as she could but that very exciting things were happening for her at Georgetown and she really couldn't make a full time commitment to the college.

**PC:** And you are a recognized artist now in photography, you've had some exhibitions, and did you take any photographs during the campaign, were you doing photography then?

**BG:** I wasn't. It was, I was busy raising three children and it wasn't until, that was, when, 1965, '68, '70 I guess, 1970, and it wasn't until 1986 that I started, immersed myself in photography. I'd always loved photography, and I had the good, the great opportunity to meet Diane Walker who has been a White House photographer for many years, and I rather envied her career because I think it would have been a wonderful, wonderful thing to have done. But I really took up photography later in life.

**PC:** Were there other artists in the Muskie campaign that you related to? Do you have any sense of Ed Muskie's interest in art of any kind?

**BG:** I'm sure there were, I'm sure there were, but at the time I really was fascinated with how the press office ran, and communications has always been another one of my interests. I worked early, before I married I worked in a public relations firm, and so that was where my focus was. I did a research project for the campaign, I recall, on pulling together statistics, and that was published in the *Washington Post* which was fun at the time.

**PC:** Are there any other images or memories you have that you'd like to share?

**BG:** I was speaking to my husband about his memory of the campaign and, my ex-husband, and he, one of the things he said was that Madeleine I guess had given him credit for becoming involved in Muskie's campaign. That it was really, and I think it's in her book; it was really Jim Goodbody who brought her to the Muskie campaign. As far as my intersecting, of course we're here in Maine now, or I'm here in Maine now because of Ed Muskie. We met some very wonderful people from Maine, and we decided, my husband at the time decided that he would like to move to Maine and raise our children here. So, it was because of the Muskie campaign that we came to Maine.

**PC:** Thank you very much for your time today, I appreciate it.

**BG:** Oh, you're welcome, Paula.

*End of Interview*