

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Julie Ann Dirksen

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Historic Preservation Legacy Oral History project

Interview # HP-A-L-2009-015

Julie Ann Dirksen, a retired Public Service Administrator with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the *Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Legacy* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 14, 2009 Location: 2123 South Park, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Newlyn Hosea, ALPL Volunteer

Transcription by: Kay Smith, ALPL Volunteer

Edited by: Rosie Camille

Total Pages: 16 pages Total Time: 1 hour

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Julie Ann Dirksen, IHPA Legacy, HP-A-L-2009-015

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Julie Ann Dirksen was born in Springfield, Illinois on January 27, 1942. She was the daughter of a first generation Italian American father, James Bucari and her mother Doris Payne. After graduating from Lanphier High School in 1960, she attended Western Illinois University for two years. She transferred to Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and graduated in 1964 with an education degree. After teaching at the elementary level for 6 years she became the Director of Community Services for Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, Illinois. After serving in that position for 25 years, she then became the first Director of Guest Services at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, a part of the Illinois Historical Preservation Agency. In addition to her employment, Julie has served almost continuously as a volunteer in the Springfield community. This has included organizing the first “Festival of Trees” at Memorial Medical Center, head of the Springfield International Visitors Organization, part of Springfield groups seeking to bring the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum to Springfield, and a member of the Illinois and Springfield Bicentennial Commissions.

This interview includes discussion of Julie’s volunteering at Memorial Hospital and then accepting a position there. It includes discussion of her role at Memorial Hospital in continuing and expanding their volunteer support and educational outreach. Julie reviews her participation in numerous civic groups and in particular relates discussions involving Senator Dick Durbin and IHPA Board of Director member Julie Cellini about establishing the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum in Springfield. She details her approach to the job of Director of Guest Services for the ALPLM. There is extensive discussion of the preparation in the Springfield community for the formal dedication and opening of the ALPLM, especially her activities in a state/community group called “Company is Coming”. Julie reviews the process of establishing the volunteer support for ALPLM and the budgeting and planning process. Finally she reviews her retirement and work with the state and local Bicentennial commissions.

Topics Covered: Childhood and Education; Memorial Medical Center community outreach; Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum’s grand opening; Sen. Richard Durbin reference establishing ALPLM; Julie Cellini reference establishing ALPLM; “Company is Coming” committee reference ALPLM; coordination of volunteer activities; hiring of staff; budgeting concerns; Formal opening of ALPLM; Richard Norton Smith; Employee education; Illinois State and Springfield Bicentennial Commissions;

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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