

OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW

WITH

*Tyra T. Hutchens, M.D.*

Interview conducted November 1, 2007

by

Donald Houghton, M.D.

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Interview with Tyra T. Hutchens, M.D.  
Interviewed by Donald Houghton, M.D.  
November 1, 2007  
Site: Portland, Oregon  
Begin Tape 1, Side 1

HOUGHTON: This is an interview of Dr. Tyra Hutchens. It was taken on November 1, 2007, at one p.m. in the CROET Building at OHSU. This interview is part of the OHSU Oral History Program. The interviewer is Dr. Donald Houghton. This is tape number one. Ty, first of all, it's a pleasure to get together with you again after all these years.

HUTCHENS: It is a pleasure.

HOUGHTON: Our purpose, among other things, is to learn a little bit about you, and to find out more about some of the people and events on the campus during your tenure here. You're a native Oregonian, I understand.

HUTCHENS: That's right.

HOUGHTON: And I think your family has early roots in Oregon. Maybe we can start out by you telling us a little bit about your family and your background.

HUTCHENS: Yes. My great-great grandparents, the Everests, came from England and ended up in, first in Ohio, then later they came across the Oregon Trail in four ox-drawn covered wagons to Oregon in 1847. And settled, seemed to be east of what is now Newberg, Oregon. My great-great grandfather came from Bavaria. And he allegedly came on a French ship to New York and then went to St. Louis and got his first naturalization papers. And then in 1849, he crossed the plains, Oregon Trail, with a regiment of mounted riflemen. He wasn't enlisted; he was hired for the commissary. So when they reached Oregon City, he left the commissary service and ended up settling, getting a land grant adjacent to the Everests. And he married one of the Everest daughters. And then one of his daughters—his name was Sebastian Brutscher, one of his daughters married my grandfather. So that's the ancestry.

HOUGHTON: And you grew up, then in—

HUTCHENS: Grew up there.

HOUGHTON: And went to, and then from there you went to—

HUTCHENS: University of Oregon.

HOUGHTON: University of Oregon.

HUTCHENS: I was in pre-med for three years, and got admitted to medical school. Started medical school in 1942. That was during the war, so we went year round and did four years work in three years.

HOUGHTON: Hard work. Why did you choose medicine?

HUTCHENS: Oh, when I was in high school, I got interested first in microbiology, and then that led to an interest in medicine.

HOUGHTON: Were there people who were important mentors for you during that time? People you looked up to, or physicians?

HUTCHENS: There was my cousin, who was the first board-certified psychiatrist in Portland. And we had, in Newberg we had some hometown physicians. One was Dr. Romig, who had retired, was very kind to me. He gave me his old microscope and some volumes of the *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*. And Dr. Edmundson, who was a general practitioner in Newberg for a while before he moved to Hood River.

HOUGHTON: So not only was medical school a relatively quick trip, so was your undergraduate education, as I understand it.

HUTCHENS: Yes. Three years pre-med.

HOUGHTON: Three years of pre-med and three years of medicine. Do you have anything you want to share about your recollections of that time and the events of that time?

HUTCHENS: Well, in my second year of medical school, the V-12 program came in, so I was part of that. And of course that paid for our tuition and a small stipend. We lived just within a short distance of campus. Made it easier to get back and forth. When I was in school, the clinical departments were chaired by volunteers, mostly from the Portland Clinic. And of course later they got full time faculty.

HOUGHTON: Do you remember some of those people from the Portland Clinic?

HUTCHENS: Oh, yes.

HOUGHTON: Were there particularly memorable teachers at that time?

HUTCHENS: There was Howard Stearns in OB/GYN. Who was it in Neurology? Gosh, I can't remember his name. The first full time faculty I remember coming was Ken Swan. He came during my junior year. He was a pretty dynamic guy and persuaded quite a few of the class to go into ophthalmology. Laurence Selling was the neurologist. Tom Joyce was in surgery. And Bilderback was in pediatrics. Internal medicine. Oh, gosh, I can't remember his name.

HOUGHTON: The V-12 program had a service commitment associated with that. What did you do when you finished medical school?

HUTCHENS: I had an internship in Minneapolis General Hospital for a year after that. I wasn't sure whether I'd be going into the service or not. I was called into active service. And was to report at the Bremerton Naval Station. At that time, some of the doctors who were reporting were sent out on oilers. I got my orders to a Veterans Administration hospital just outside of Tacoma. It was the American Lake Veterans Administration Hospital, which is a domiciliary neuropsychiatric hospital. My cousin, the psychiatrist, wanted me to go into practice with him, but after the two years at American Lake, I decided I didn't want to do that.

HOUGHTON: It may not have been the best sample of that discipline.

HUTCHENS: I just couldn't see myself spending the rest of my life talking to people. [laughter] While at American Lake, I was the only Navy doctor there. There were about six or seven Army doctors. The Veterans Administration already had staff doctors who were able to take care of everything that needed to be taken care of, so we had a very light load, a lot of time on our hands. One of the other Army doctors and I got together and did some research, published one paper and did a lot of work in another area.

HOUGHTON: What was your research in at that time?

HUTCHENS: We wanted to study lymphocyte response to stress. In stress the lymphocytes dropped sharply. We chose patients who were getting electro-shock, and we did the lymphocyte counts before and after they got their shock and found that drop in lymphocytes. Then we did controls, where the juice wasn't turned on and still flipped the switch. There was no similar drop. That was the basis of our paper.

Then after that, we studied the reaction in rabbits after the intradermal serum injections. We found the initial flair, and later reddening. When we had done all we could and were going to leave, we discussed the results with the professor of immunology at the University of Washington. He was interested. I don't know what happened to it.

HOUGHTON: In one way or another, those kinds of studies have been confirmed pretty extensively, I think. Did anything happen during that time that gave you some clues where you were heading after the service?

HUTCHENS: While I was there I saw an announcement of a National Research Council-Atomic Energy Commission post-doctorate research fellowship program. So I applied for that and got it. They had set up regional centers. The one here was at the University of Oregon Medical School, Reed, and in Corvallis. And I spent the year at Reed studying basic nuclear sciences, then came to the Medical School and opened up the isotope lab that was built in the back of Mackenzie Hall as you first enter. If you continued on, it was built back there. I opened that up and equipped it and so forth. Dr.

Van Bruggen was the research director, under the direction of Ed West, chairman of the Department of Biochemistry. I did that for five years.

HOUGHTON: So you were, in essence you were in the Department of Biochemistry at that time.

HUTCHENS: Yes. I taught in physiology, also, with Dr. Youmans.

HOUGHTON: And at that time, were these isotopes primarily used for research, as opposed to anything on the clinical side?

HUTCHENS: In the isotope lab, we studied the formation of lipids from C-14. Sodium acetate. Later I started doing some clinical work, blood volumes in children and adults. When I got through with the fellowships, Dean Baird asked me if I'd like to set up a nuclear medicine service at the Medical School. I said yes. He said, "Well, do you want your own department?"

I said, "No, I prefer to be in the clinical pathology division."

And he said, "That's fine." Because my general interest was in the overall laboratory.

About a year or two before that, I had set up a nuclear medicine service at Providence Hospital, which had just opened. Later, I also set one up at St. Vincent, and continued to supervise them for a number of years. I had a bag that I'd carry with me that had a soldering iron and other tools because there was no one who could repair that equipment. [laughs]

HOUGHTON: Did you bring a union card with you?

HUTCHENS: [laughs]

HOUGHTON: So you were practicing more or less throughout the city with the application of these new methods. And you joined the faculty, if I read your CV correctly, in about 1953.

HUTCHENS: Correct.

HOUGHTON: And at that time, it sounds like you were splitting your time extensively throughout the city, as were other members of the faculty.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: When did that, when did you finally become a full-time member of the faculty at the university?

HUTCHENS: In '53.

HOUGHTON: When you joined in '53, that was in a division of the Department of Pathology, is that right? Initially?

HUTCHENS: It was a separate division and later became a department.

HOUGHTON: I see.

HUTCHENS: At the executive faculty meeting, Warren Hunter, had proposed that we set it up separate from anatomic pathology.

HOUGHTON: I see. Okay. And were you the chair at that time?

HUTCHENS: Oh, no. I became chair in 1962.

HOUGHTON: Okay. And the chair of the department initially, was that Ray Grondahl.

HUTCHENS: Ray Grondahl. And then when I became chair of the department, I had to get someone else to operate the nuclear medicine service. So Jim Haines took over. Harry [Shaik?] was the physicist.

HOUGHTON: So tell me a little bit about the department of clinical pathology at the beginning. Who was in it, and how did it grow, and what were its origins?

HUTCHENS: There were two other faculty members, Jim Lium and Frank Bocek. And the lab was in the Outpatient Clinic, second floor. Miss Maxwell, Marge Maxwell was head technologist. And then they remodeled the children's hospital building for the lab, and moved there when the new hospital was built. At that time, let's see, originally the nuclear medicine service was in the basement or ground floor of Multnomah County Hospital. When Doernbecher was remodeled, nuclear medicine moved to the second floor.

HOUGHTON: I think I remember it there. And so you when did you have to give up your research for administrative and clinical duties all together?

HUTCHENS: At the time I became chairman.

HOUGHTON: Early '60s, then. '62. The members of the department of clinical pathology at that time, were they full-time faculty? Or were there people who were splitting their time initially—

HUTCHENS: They were full-time faculty.

HOUGHTON: Okay. Now I understood that Matt Riddle had, he was in internal medicine, as I understand.

HUTCHENS: Yes. That's right. He was the one that was head of Internal Medicine early on.

HOUGHTON: Okay. And were there laboratories that were developed outside of Pathology by Matt and others, perhaps, that were brought together in an organized way? Or did that just gradually happen?

HUTCHENS: Well, rather gradual process. But it ended up with everything together.

HOUGHTON: So the clinical laboratories that he put together were run in the Department of Medicine, up until that time. Presumably up until the time of about 1953. I don't want to put words in your mouth.

HUTCHENS: No. That's right. And of course Ed Osgood was in charge of that after Matt Riddle left.

HOUGHTON: Ray Grondahl seemed like he left relatively early in this evolution of the department.

HUTCHENS: Well, he left just before I became chairman of the department in '62. Went to Butte, Montana.

HOUGHTON: Where he has lived now all these years until very recently.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: When was it—you have always been a champion of the Medical Technology Educational programs here. Can you tell us a little bit about the origins of that?

HUTCHENS: Originally it was in the lab on the second or third floor of the Outpatient Clinic. They were cramped quarters. It was a small lab to begin with. A pathologist from downtown gave a series of lectures, which were on and off. Sometimes she'd show up, sometimes she wouldn't. It wasn't very satisfactory.

When we got our new space, the old Doernbecher, we developed some teaching labs. First we had a hematology teaching lab in a CDRC room. We had a chemistry teaching lab and the parasitology lab under Betsy Baptist in Gaines Hall, and a blood bank teaching lab. We later developed a full-time medical technology faculty. And that went very well. The faculty of the clinical pathology department gave lectures.

HOUGHTON: They still do.

HUTCHENS: I guess some of them do. Not all.

HOUGHTON: Yes. How would you, how would you characterize the responsibilities of a chairman in the department after they changed over, what, almost thirty years you were the chair? These days, that's a long tenure for a chair.

HUTCHENS: About twenty-five years as chair.

HOUGHTON: How did things—did it change over that time?

HUTCHENS: We added some faculty. It was difficult to add faculty because our pay scale was so low compared to other places. We did get some good people.

HOUGHTON: Was blood bank always part of the clinical pathology program?

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: The separation of anatomical and clinical pathology was a common practice, particularly on the West Coast. I think it's a little less common now, probably more for administrative reasons than—

HUTCHENS: That's right.

HOUGHTON: Was there something about the West Coast that you know about that led to that tendency?

HUTCHENS: No. I'm unaware of anything.

HOUGHTON: Okay. [laughs] That's always been my observation.

HUTCHENS: As far as resident training is concerned, the separation really made sense. Because that way the residents on clinical pathology got clinical pathology, and that wasn't common.

HOUGHTON: Okay. In the '80s, the federal government in their wisdom passed some laws that were known as TEFRA, which changed the way that billing for services could occur, particularly in the clinical laboratory. Did that have an impact on the lab?

HUTCHENS: Not significantly.

HOUGHTON: My impression as an outsider, in a sense, about the faculty and the campus at the time that you started on the faculty, was that it was a much more cohesive, small, family-like group of people. Can you tell me about that? Can you tell me about the people and the way you got together? What the day was like in that setting? It must have been quite different.

HUTCHENS: Sears was chairman of Microbiology. I think at that time, it was before Bill Youmans became chair of Physiology. Hance Haney preceded him. The head of Biochemistry was Ed West. Olof Larsell was head of the Anatomy then.

HOUGHTON: How did you get together? For example, what was lunch like? To me, lunch is the time when people get together and get to know each other.

HUTCHENS: Well, I used to eat in the Multnomah Hospital cafeteria on the first floor, as did a number of other faculty, including Bill Snell, Sam Niles, Jarv Gould, and a number of others. And again, that was a good time to talk, get acquainted.

HOUGHTON: Much in the way of political battles?

HUTCHENS: Not really.

HOUGHTON: Who were the colorful personalities of that era? Who were popular as teachers?

HUTCHENS: Bill Krippaehne was a very popular teacher.

[End Tape 1, Side 1/Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

HOUGHTON: You were elected president of the CAP in 1977. And I think shortly after that, you were named the CAP pathologist of the year. I was just sort of starting out in pathology at that time. It was sort of a heady business to be that close to the seat of power. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

HUTCHENS: In '75, I was elected vice president. The next year I was elected president-elect. I was president from '77-'79.

HOUGHTON: You must have been active in the CAP, though, to be well known.

HUTCHENS: I was on the Board of Governors for six years; then I was off the board for a year and then was elected president.

HOUGHTON: How would you, what contributions do you think you made to the CAP during that time?

HUTCHENS: I laid out goals for my term. And ended up meeting all of them.  
[laughs]

HOUGHTON: That sounds pretty good. Was it a time of change?

HUTCHENS: Not too much change. We were battling legislation from Congress, the Talmadge Bill and clinical laboratory improvement act, and various other bits of legislation. I had to testify to congressional committees quite a few times, which I was never comfortable doing. At that time, the policy was that the president testified at all committee hearings. They've changed that now, thank goodness; the person most knowledgeable testifies, usually the chairman of the council or committee, will do it now. That makes a lot more sense to me.

HOUGHTON: I can imagine that would have been the hot seat on occasion.

HUTCHENS: I would go to D.C. the night before, about three people would fire questions at me that they thought the committee was likely to ask, and go over my answers and make suggestions. Next morning, away we'd go. Sometimes, I'd get a phone call that there was going to be a committee hearing the next morning. So I had to get the red-eye flight to Washington, D.C. and have the question-answer period after I got there.

HOUGHTON: Doesn't sound like my cup of tea. Do you, were you involved with curricular development, or the changes in the curriculum over the years?

HUTCHENS: No.

HOUGHTON: But there certainly were a number of changes.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: How did they affect the Department of Clinical Pathology?

HUTCHENS: Over the years it significantly reduced the number of hours we had of teaching.

HOUGHTON: I think every department probably can say the same thing. I'm not sure the students are sorry about that. Which deans did you serve under, then?

HUTCHENS: Well, I served mainly under Dave Baird and later, Charles Holman.

HOUGHTON: And Dr. Baird was probably the one who was principally responsible for hiring you in the first place.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: And how would you characterize the transition through the school of medicine administrations during that time? Was—I mean, at this point of course we have a very different organization to the institution. But there must have been some gradual changes in the way people related to each other at the administrative levels.

HUTCHENS: The change from Baird to Holman went smoothly. At that time, the School of Nursing was under the School of Medicine.

HOUGHTON: And had there been—you suggested that maybe other transitions hadn't been quite as smooth. Were there other administrative transitions that were more difficult?

HUTCHENS: I think the major transition was when it became OHSU. That was a very major change, and it didn't go very smoothly at first.

HOUGHTON: What kinds of problems were there?

HUTCHENS: It was just a matter of administrative integration and an understanding what the policies were.

[brief interruption]

HOUGHTON: We were talking a little bit about the transitions among administrations in the school, and you suggested that the big one was going from a medical school campus to a university campus. Do you have examples of where the problems occurred initially and how they were dealt with? And who were the key opinion leaders in that process?

HUTCHENS: The first president of the university was Bluemle. The dean that came in with him was Robert Stone. He was a pathologist. Things didn't go too well. Stone was unhappy. He felt like he was in a mire. He tried to get something done and he just couldn't. Bluemle was not very popular.

After Bluemle came Leonard Laster. He was kind of a strange guy. He wouldn't listen and he wouldn't read. To get a decision from him was about impossible. He was very well liked on the outside, but the faculty certainly didn't agree. Of course he got, I think he was influential in getting the Vollum research building. Peter Kohler came later.

HOUGHTON: Dick Jones had an interim role for a while.

HUTCHENS: That's right. He was interim president. Yes.

HOUGHTON: The relationship between the university and Salem, the legislature, became, in some respects, more important over time. How would you characterize those relationships over these administrative years?

HUTCHENS: They were contentious. The university always wanted more money from the state. I think it was a good move to take it out of the state system.

HOUGHTON: Well, speaking of tensions, we alluded to but didn't get into some of the tensions that inevitably exist between a university campus and the physicians in town.

HUTCHENS: It was very contentious.

HOUGHTON: Well, can you give us some ideas about how that evolved? It didn't start out that way, I presume, because the entire faculty were physicians in town. Did you have some thoughts about that?

HUTCHENS: There were definitely tensions. I can remember that Dean Holman asked me to chair a committee to look into admitting private patients of the faculty into the hospitals and clinics, and for the faculty to get fees for their medical care. And he said it's to be a secret committee. He didn't want anyone to know about it. We met for a couple of years, and finally gave a report to the executive faculty where it got, as I had expected, torn apart. They didn't like a lot of things about it, like this split between their take and what would go into the university fund. It was finally battled out and approved.

When it was finally okayed, the faculty downtown was upset about it. Before, there were a lot of faculty physicians who were taking their patients to private hospitals. That was the only way they could practice. So it drew the university faculty back to the hill, and their patients with them.

HOUGHTON: So prior to that time, these were patients who were cared for without physicians' bills at all, then?

HUTCHENS: I think the hospital was operating it on a per diem basis, so much a day.

HOUGHTON: And that went to the institution, not to the individual.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: And is that, of course, that's been a given now for quite a long time. Were there other, were there tensions that related to other aspects of people's responsibilities on the campus and off the campus? And was it strictly over money, or were there other elements of tension that were part of that that you know of?

HUTCHENS: It was mainly over money.

HOUGHTON: And were there notable rifts among particular groups of physicians at that time?

HUTCHENS: No. I think the faculty was united.

HOUGHTON: The university faculty.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: In favor of the plan.

HUTCHENS: Yes, after it was settled.

HOUGHTON: Sorted out. Interesting. Currently we have, our medical students are comprised of roughly 65 percent women, 35 percent men. This is a huge change from the time that I was a student. Can you describe, at least in your tenure on the campus, what changes along the lines of gender differences and racial differences there might have been among students and faculty? And anything else you want to add.

HUTCHENS: That shift toward women students is remarkable. As far as race is concerned, I can only remember one black student. That was Walt Reynolds from the University of Oregon. As far as women faculty are concerned, I remember there was Dr. Veazie in microbiology.

HOUGHTON: Uh huh. I remember her.

HUTCHENS: And then there was a lady in pathology for a while. I can't remember her name.

HOUGHTON: Martha Hamilton, she was in clinical pathology, wasn't she?

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: She was in charge of blood bank. And when did she start? Do you remember, roughly? Was she one of the first women faculty members?

HUTCHENS: She certainly would have been one of the early ones, and was the first woman.

HOUGHTON: So the fact that if we think real hard, we can think of one or two women on the faculty—

HUTCHENS: Margaret Berroth.

HOUGHTON: So it was a man's world, then.

HUTCHENS: That's changed quite a lot, too.

HOUGHTON: It surely has. Did you want to talk more about your research in nuclear medicine? How that changed? That's certainly an area that's grown exponentially in the time that you've been working on it.

HUTCHENS: It has changed remarkably. When nuclear medicine first started, it mainly involved radioactive iodine and diagnosis and therapy. Thyroid uptakes, and treatment of hyperthyroidism and thyroid cancer. Of course that is, the technology has changed considerably, with the introduction of new radio-pharmaceuticals. Now it's a huge, diversified field with, for instance, PET imaging and positron emission tomography.

I was a founding member of the Society of Nuclear Medicine in '53. Early on, I went to meetings fairly frequently. Later, after I got out of nuclear medicine, I didn't go as often. When they had the fiftieth anniversary of the Society of Nuclear Medicine, they asked me to attend. At that time, I was the only living founding member. One other, who was about my age, had died just a few months before that. They paid my way to the meeting in New Orleans. And next year, to the one in Philadelphia.

HOUGHTON: What was your role as an early, a pioneer in the application of clinical use of these agents?

HUTCHENS: I say I was a founding member of the society. And we made two good decisions setting that up. One was that it would be open to all scientists who were interested in nuclear medicine. And that it was called the Society of Nuclear Medicine. That jelled the term "nuclear medicine." Before that, it had been called all sorts of things: atomic medicine, clinical radio isotopes, and etc.

HOUGHTON: And where did your research, your early work in research, fit into the use of these agents?

HUTCHENS: Well, I really didn't do much research. Mainly clinical applications.

HOUGHTON: Any particular applications that you helped to develop?

HUTCHENS: For one thing, I correlated radioactive uptakes with protein-bound iodine levels.

HOUGHTON: You mentioned Bob Stone, who was a dean here. And Bob's original area of research was, I think it had to do with a disease associated with radiation injury.

HUTCHENS: That's right.

HOUGHTON: Had you dealt with Bob, or had anything in common with him prior to his coming to OHSU?

HUTCHENS: No. I was in the Navy at a veterans' hospital, and had applied for one of the NRC-AEC postdoctoral research fellowships. I was having trouble getting discharged, because I had developed a hearing loss after I went into the Navy. I came to

the university, and talked to Warren Shields, from Boston. He was a pathologist studying radiation injury. He sent a telegram to the Navy. When I returned to Bremerton, they said, "You're discharged." [laughs]

I went up to Seattle and took care of the discharge. Came back to American Lake and arranged for movers to come and move our things. And moved to Portland in 1948, just in time for a nuclear science conference at Reed. I stayed at Reed for about a year.

HOUGHTON: What did you do at Reed?

HUTCHENS: I just learned basic nuclear science. Worked with Geiger counters and various other detection instrumentation. Took some courses, math, physics.

HOUGHTON: Did you have fun?

HUTCHENS: Yes. It was enjoyable.

HOUGHTON: I can imagine. And so you were there for a year, and then you came back up to campus. What prompted the move? You were finished with a course of—

HUTCHENS: As I said, they had built an isotope lab behind Mackenzie Hall. I set that up, put the supplies, everything in, set up the equipment.

HOUGHTON: I certainly have known pathologists, anatomic pathologists. But I bet you've known some of them better that came along during the time that you joined the faculty. Who were the sort of the important ones? Warren Hunter certainly had to be one of those, can you tell us something about—

HUTCHENS: And Menne was before Warren.

HOUGHTON: Menne?

HUTCHENS: Frank Menne.

HOUGHTON: Okay. And then there was Dr. Jackson was there for a while, too. Did you know him?

HUTCHENS: No.

HOUGHTON: Can you tell me a little bit about Warren Hunter in those days? He was a long time faculty member, and had been a graduate of the school as well, I recall.

HUTCHENS: Warren was very hardworking. He'd get up early, do a couple of autopsies elsewhere, come up here and do some more autopsies. He had three internship positions he could fill at Minneapolis General Hospital. So when I was in my third year, before anyone was even thinking about internships, he asked me if I would like an

internship in Minneapolis General Hospital. I said, “Well, I’ll have to talk to my wife about it. When do you need to know?”

He said, “Tomorrow.” [laughter] So Betty Lou and I talked it over and decided that it would be kind of fun. Go back to Minneapolis. So that’s what we did.

HOUGHTON: How was it that he was filling internships for Minneapolis?

HUTCHENS: I never figured that out. Some way or another, he had an arrangement. It was myself and Bud Stier and Robert Maris.

HOUGHTON: This was, this would have been the early ‘50s, then, that we’re talking about?

HUTCHENS: Got through it in ’46.

HOUGHTON: Sam Niles came along somewhere in that time frame, didn’t he? In the early ‘50s? Sam Niles?

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: So there must have been a fairly small group of people in the department at that time.

HUTCHENS: That’s right.

HOUGHTON: I’m trying to remember other names. Peter Dawson, I suppose he came along a little later.

HUTCHENS: Then he went to the University of Chicago.

HOUGHTON: Bob Cooper. Do you know anything about Bob Cooper? What comes to mind when you think about Bob?

HUTCHENS: I remember him coming over to my office with one of the other pathology faculty, proposing that we combine departments.

HOUGHTON: Oh!

HUTCHENS: That didn’t fly.

HOUGHTON: Didn’t happen. [laughs]

HUTCHENS: Not until after I retired.

HOUGHTON: Yeah. He went to Rochester, I think.

HUTCHENS: Yes.

HOUGHTON: What do you remember about Peter Dawson? Do you remember Peter very well?

HUTCHENS: I remember him. He had me come back to the University of Chicago and meet with the pathology faculty. They were thinking of setting up a clinical pathology department. So I was talking to them about that. Then the same thing happened at Johns Hopkins. They asked me to come and consult with them.

HOUGHTON: As a medical student, it was certainly my perception a little later than that time, but not a lot later than that time, that there were tremendous tensions that had developed between Pathology and Internal Medicine. And I wasn't quite sure what the origins of those might have been. Do you have any insights about that?

HUTCHENS: No, I don't. I guess I was unaware of that.

HOUGHTON: Blissfully unaware of it.

[brief interruption]

HUTCHENS: Professor Scott asked me if I would talk to the Dean here to see if he'd have any interest in that. He said yes. I relayed that on to Dr. Scott. Partly based on our interest, they got the reactor.

SIMEK: Reed has a reactor?

HUTCHENS: Yes. Not many people realize there's a nuclear reactor there.

HOUGHTON: Well, the first one was at Chicago, University of Chicago. It wasn't a big school there then, either.

HUTCHENS: No.

PIASECKI: Do you mind if we talk a little bit about your medical school years? For a couple of reasons. You were married, which prior to that had not been allowed at a lot of medical schools. Medical students could not be married. And that was maybe a little bit different. And also could you talk about how the war impacted medical education? We know it was just speeded up. So we've had other interviewees who talked about Japanese internment, and that there were some Japanese students at the time who had to leave school. And the impact on the community here of wartime events.

[End Tape 1, Side 2/Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

HUTCHENS: Let's see. What impact did the war have on medical school? During the war an airplane crashed and the pilot landed on the roof of the Veterans' Hospital.

Most of the Japanese were put in internment camps. I think most people were in favor of that. Some objected. As far as the impact of the war on medical school and on our marriage, we had to have ration stamps to get sugar and meat and canned goods. When we went to Minneapolis for internship, we lost our ration stamps. It was kind of rough for a while. I'd have Betty Lou to Sunday dinner at the hospital every Sunday. We were supposed to have one guest a month, but there was always someone else to have her as their guest, so it worked out.

HOUGHTON: Were there medical students who were Japanese who had to leave school because of internment?

HUTCHENS: I'm not aware of any. There were some at the University of Oregon. I remember one in particular had to leave.

SIMEK: It wasn't Kormatsu, was it? Kormatsu, was that his name?

HUTCHENS: I don't think so, but I'm not sure.

HOUGHTON: You were married before you came to medical school.

HUTCHENS: Two weeks before.

HOUGHTON: Two weeks before. Were you in the minority, then, among your classmates?

HUTCHENS: I think when we started, there were three of us married.

HOUGHTON: And were there difficulties for you as a medical student that related to you being a married student?

HUTCHENS: Not at all. My wife and I had a routine worked out. After dinner we stacked the dishes in the sink and she would get ready for work the next day and I would study. I'd come home between classes at noon and fix myself some lunch and do the dishes. After she got home, we would fix dinner. At that time, there were no stores on the hill, so everything had to be hauled by bus up the hill. She would occasionally do some light shopping during the week. And then Saturdays we'd both go down on the bus and shop for the next week. We had no car.

HOUGHTON: Where did you live?

HUTCHENS: Right down the road from the Medical School. About a ten minute walk.

HOUGHTON: On which street? Do you remember?

HUTCHENS: U.S. Veterans Hospital Road.

HOUGHTON: What was she working at at that time?

HUTCHENS: She started working at the Portland Council of Churches, downtown. And then she later worked for two otolaryngologists, keeping books, receptionist, and so forth.

HOUGHTON: Were there any campus activities for the two of you?

HUTCHENS: No.

HOUGHTON: And were all your friends students?

HUTCHENS: Primarily.

HOUGHTON: Not a big social circle outside the campus. You're pretty busy, I imagine, three years in medical school. No breaks.

HUTCHENS: That's right. We did have one week between semesters. Betty Lou and I took the train down to Sacramento, met her sister and brother-in-law and we drove up to Lake Tahoe for a few days. Then back on the train.

HOUGHTON: You were telling us on the break a little bit about when you met your wife. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

HUTCHENS: Yes. I was born and grew up in Newberg, and was a member of the Friends church there. In 1932, Betty moved with her family from Salem to Newberg. And I first saw her in the basement at a young people's party, playing table tennis with another boy. I saw this vivacious, freckle-faced girl, and said, "That's for me."

We were good friends all through high school. We always sat together at church, Junior Endeavor, and so forth. If one of us got there first, they'd save a place for the other one. We dated other classmates. And then when I was a senior and she was a junior, her mother gave a Valentine's Day party. We ended up sitting across from each other playing Chinese checkers. And I was looking at her and she looked down, looked back up, and I was still looking at her. I'd say that's when everything came together. We've been going together ever since. We were married in 1942.

HOUGHTON: Did she go to the University of Oregon, too?

HUTCHENS: No. She went to what is now George Fox University, just two years.

HOUGHTON: And you have a pretty good sized family now?

HUTCHENS: We have three children. Our daughter is in Beaverton and has retired from teaching in the Hillsboro school district. Our son lives in Portland, and is just finishing a computer science program at PSU. We have a son and family in Australia. We have two grandchildren and one great-grandson there.

HOUGHTON: Your son in Australia, what does he do?

HUTCHENS: He was arts master, head of the arts department at a Catholic boys' prep school. He's no longer head of the department, but still teaches. He paints, curates, and has exhibits. He has his master's degree. His wife is a well known silversmith, goldsmith. She goes all over the world giving talks, workshops, and exhibits.

HOUGHTON: So we're going to jump around just a little bit. We were talking earlier about your involvement in organizations that relate to nuclear medicine, science and the clinical aspects. Would you like to elaborate a little bit more on that?

HUTCHENS: In 1971, the American Board of Nuclear Medicine was formed. The American Board certifies competence for practitioners. There are four organizations represented on that, pathology, internal medicine, radiology, the Society of Nuclear Medicine. I was one of the three pathology representatives. And we gave our first certifying exam in 1972. I was president of the World Association of Societies of Pathology for 1989-1991. And I was also president of the World Pathology Foundation for a year. I was instrumental in the formation of the American College of Nuclear Physicians, and, of course, the Society of Nuclear Medicine.

HOUGHTON: As a result of your involvement in these groups, did you ever find yourself involved in the political side of issues that related to the use of nuclear materials or the Atomic Energy Commission?

HUTCHENS: No. My only involvement in politics was when I was president of the CAP.

HOUGHTON: The College of American Pathologists.

HUTCHENS: College of American Pathologists. CAP.

HOUGHTON: Okay. Anything else?

SIMEK: One of our standard closing questions. Since you've seen so many changes in medicine, first of all, would you do it over again?

HUTCHENS: Absolutely. Yes.

SIMEK: Where do you think it's going?

HUTCHENS: It's unfortunate that it's depending so much on technology. I think the old arts of history-taking and physical examination have gone by the wayside. I don't think that's good. When I was seeing patients in nuclear medicine, I would examine patients and find things that others had missed because they either didn't take a good history or do a good physical examination.

HOUGHTON: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

HUTCHENS: It's been a pleasure.

[End Tape 2, Side 1/End Interview.]

75 minutes

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