

Oral History Interview
with
Bernadine Abbott Hoduski

Interview Conducted by
Larry Romans
January 25, 2009

Government Information Living Indexes
Oral History Project

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Interview History

Interviewer: Larry Romans
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The recording and transcript of this interview were processed at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Project Detail

The oral histories collected as a result of this project will preserve the voices and experiences of government information workers who have invested a good portion of their careers to providing and insuring access to government information.

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on February 15, 2007.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Bernadine Abbott Hoduski is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on January 25, 2009.

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About Bernadine Abbott Hoduski...

Bernadine E. Abbott Hoduski was born in New Deal, Montana. She retired in 1995 after serving as a professional staff member for Library and Distribution Services, U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Printing for nearly 21 years. One of her primary missions was oversight of the public access programs of the Government Printing Office (GPO), including the Depository Library Program, sales program, by-laws, and international exchange as well as cataloging of government documents. Lobbying and communicating with policymakers represent two of her many talents. These skills were called into action when she founded the American Library Association's Government Documents Round Table (GODORT) in 1972. She also was a charter member of the Advisory Council to the Public Printer on Depository Libraries, 1973-1975 and she organized the first Federal depository regional seminar in Kansas City in 1973.

Ms. Abbott Hoduski earned a M.A. in Librarianship in 1965 from the University of Denver, Colorado. Early in her career she was the Head Librarian for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Kansas City, Missouri. She was a guest lecturer at Central Missouri State University Library School and taught at Catholic University Library School in the 1980s.

Ms. Abbott Hoduski has received several awards spanning the length of her career. In 1973 she was awarded the EPA Bronze Medal for Commendable Service. In 1977 she was awarded the James Bennett Childs Award for distinguished contributions to documents librarianship. The American Library Association Government Documents Round Table honored her by establishing the Bernadine Abbott Hoduski Founders Award in 1993. In 1995 she was awarded the Public Printer's Distinguished Service Award.

In addition to service Ms. Abbott Hoduski has made, and continues to make contributions to the library literature as author and editor. She has served as co-editor of the *Documents to the People*, and has been a member of editorial boards of *Government Publications Review* and *Index to U.S. Government Periodicals*. She has authored several monographs such as *Cataloguing Government Documents: A Manual of Interpretation for AACR2* (1985) and more recently *Lobbying for Libraries and the Public's Access to Government Information: An Insider's View* (2003). She is also a regular columnist for the *Unabashed Librarian*.

Ms. Abbott Hoduski has served as chair of GODORT and has been chair of the ALA Committee on Legislation. After retirement she has been a member of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Revising Title 44 and in 1999 she was elected GODORT's first Councilor to the American Library Association. Involvement with ALA, the government and the library community have been constant themes in her very successful and highly respected career.

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Interviewed by Larry Romans
January 25, 2009
Denver, Colorado



Romans *Today is January 25, 2009 and I'm Larry Romans, a long time member of GODORT [Government Documents Roundtable, American Library Association (ALA)]. I'm here to interview Bernadine Abbott Hoduski who probably more than any other person has contributed to the great success of GODORT as an organization. She was a founder of GODORT. She was the first GODORT Councilor to ALA Council, and she has been involved in all parts of GODORT. Welcome.*

Abbott Hoduski Thank you.

Romans *I'd like to start actually with how did GODORT get started? You're known as a founder of GODORT. How many of you got together and how did it happen? Who initiated it and how many of you were in the initial group?*

Abbott Hoduski Well, GODORT started as a task force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table, and it started as the Task Force on Government Documents and Cataloging In Publication (CIP) because we wanted CIP in government documents. We were quite successful. We had buttons and so on, and we had a special exhibit. After we convinced the Library of Congress that they should do that, then we decided that we would become the Task Force on Government Publications, which didn't really set well with the Inter-Divisional Committee on Government Documents who didn't appreciate our setting up a rival group. Ours was a membership group and theirs was an inter-divisional committee. Some of the people that worked on the CIP task force and people like Maryellen Trautman and Lois Mills and others talked about needing a round table. We decided to send out a one-page flyer to every depository library with just a few questions asking, "Are you concerned about these issues? And if you are, sign this petition asking ALA to establish a

roundtable.”

Romans *Now did GPO send this out for you ...*

Abbott Hoduski No.

Romans *... or did you have to do it yourself?*

Abbott Hoduski GPO had nothing to do with this. This was entirely a Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) endeavor. Lois Mills was a member of SRRT, and I worked with Lois Mills, Candy Morgan, Mary Redmond, Geneva Finn, Deanne Holzberlein, and St. Louis Public Library documents librarians . We were the core group that decided we wanted a round table. Then Mary Ellen Trautman in Oklahoma was involved, but we’re the ones that put the flyer together, mailed it out. All of the petitions came to my house. I got to be good friends with the postman because we got a lot of response, including money. There were—\$50 from University of Hawaii saying, “I can’t come to the meetings, but here’s \$50 to get this group going.”

So we had 500 signatures right off the bat, and you really don’t need that many. We are the only round table that was established in one meeting. It was a mid-winter meeting in Chicago, and we went to COO (Committee on Organization) and to the Executive Board and to the Council, you know, through all of the hoops in one meeting. We were established at the end of that meeting. Then we had our first meeting the following Annual, and we’d reserved a room for 100 people. They had to move us across the hall because 500 people showed up ...

Romans *Wow.*

Abbott Hoduski ... including the head of the NTIS (National Technical Information Service) people from the Library of Congress, people from the National Archives, publishers who were interested in government information. It was an incredible outpouring of interest.

Romans *Did you have a steering committee that organized the meeting?*

Abbott Hoduski We set up an organizing committee and, before the annual meeting we met at the St. Louis Public Library and wrote a Constitution based on SRRT’s Constitution. We wanted a simple Constitution. We wanted a way for people to be easily involved. You belonged to everything in the organization. You didn’t have to choose between task forces. At the St. Louis meeting, we assigned people. We decided we’d do the state and local documents, international, federal—the three major areas. We wrote the Constitution at that meeting. Lois Mills kept insisting that Maryellen

Trautman was not involved in the Constitution. She was. She helped us write it, but she didn't go on to the formal Constitution Committee. We set up a formal Constitution Committee. So other people took over, but we basically wrote the Constitution in St. Louis at the St. Louis Public Library.

Romans *And so at that first meeting, did you hold elections or was that later?*

Abbott Hoduski At the very first meeting, we decided how we would hold the elections at the next formal ALA election process. And we got people to agree to run for the offices that we set up.

Romans *So you ran for chair ...*

Abbott Hoduski For our first Coordinator. We called it Coordinator because we did not believe in chairs. We figured that this was a democratic organization and that documents librarians are very independent people and they would be coordinated. They would not be told what to do. (Laughs)

Romans *Did somebody run against you or were you the only candidate?*

Abbott Hoduski No one ran against me the first time. The second time, Geneva Finn ran against me.

Romans *But you won anyway.*

Abbott Hoduski I won. So she was not happy. Actually she disappeared. She was a wonderful, wonderful librarian, but she went off to get her PhD and we never saw her again. So if anybody knows where Geneva Finn is ... (Laughter)

Romans *Well that must have been quite an organizational challenge to be the first Coordinator. Who were the other people who were elected at that time? Who was on the Steering Committee?*

Abbott Hoduski Well, Tony Miele actually became the second Coordinator. He was at Illinois State Library. We had a treasurer and the different chairs of the task forces—people like Candy Morgan and Clare Beck. A variety of people held the offices. Maryellen Trautman was the first secretary for the Federal Documents Task Force and Mina Pease, who's now come back to be part of GODORT, was chair of the International Documents Task Force. It was just a wonderful variety of people from different kinds of libraries. Arne Richards agreed to be the editor of Documents to the People, which we started almost immediately. We were just like a family actually with all of the task force chairs and the officers.

We also worked it out so that we would meet all day long. So we had what we called “breakfast-less breakfast meetings” and “lunch-less lunch meetings” and “dinner-less dinner meetings.” We just met continually, and it was really like a big family meeting with everybody bringing every grievance they had ever had to discuss it with all these other people that cared about their issues. So everything we’re talking about now, we were talking about then—whether you’re going to have a separate Documents department or whether it was going to be part of Reference. Back then, most Document departments were part of something else. They weren’t separate, but they were pushing to become separate. Now it’s the other way around. They’re going back.

Romans *Now what were you doing to make money at this point? I mean you as a person, what was your job?*

Abbott Hoduski Well we got Al Trezza, who was State Librarian of Illinois and had been Executive Director of the Catholic Library Association before. He paid for printing *Documents to the People* part of the time. Then Jim Leathers, Director of the Mid-Continent Library in Jackson County, Missouri, paid for printing it. They both had their own printing presses. They took turns printing the newsletters for us. So we didn’t have to pay. I used the graphics people at the Environmental Protection Agency who helped me put the graphics together and my assistant, Connie McKenzie, would type up the newsletter. Arne Richards was my co-editor, and he worked on it. He was in Kansas.

Romans *So you were an editor of Documents to the People ...*

Abbott Hoduski I was co-editor ...

Romans *... at the same time ...*

Abbott Hoduski ... with Arne, yes ...

Romans *... that you were chairing the ...*

Abbott Hoduski Yes. Arne was a wonderful man. He was a marathon runner. He was a master, an expert in military history and military documents and in fact ran with the first integrated team in South Africa. He was very proud of that. I just loved him. He died a couple of years after we started. He was running, and he died. He was only in his forties.

He came to visit me at EPA and he was working on the newsletter. He went to the bathroom and, he didn’t know who he was talking to, but it was the regional administrator for the Kansas City region. He was telling him all about the newsletter and what the two of us were doing. So the

regional administrator comes into the library and says, “I want every issue of *Documents to the People* delivered to my office immediately.” And I’m going, “Oh, my god. What’s going on?” (Laughs) and Arne comes in and says, “I was talking to the nicest man in the bathroom.” (Laughter) So I’m waiting to see what my boss, Jerry Svore, says. So he calls me back and he says, “Wonderful newsletter. Now are the other EPA librarians helping you with this?” I said, “Well, no sir, they’re not.” “Well you should get them to help you with this.” (Laughs)

Romans

Well that’s great.

Abbott Hoduski

Yes. So he was very, very supportive. Both my first regional administrator, he was very supportive of my starting GODORT, and the second one, the deputy regional administrator, were supportive. They paid for my way to all the meetings and sent me to the EPA workshops and stuff. Actually I got a bronze medal at EPA for part of my work, not only as a librarian but for starting GODORT and editing the newsletter. They were so proud of the work that we were doing.

We had the first national special workshop—two-day workshop—at the EPA library. People came in like the Superintendent of Documents, the head of NTIS, the Census librarian, Bill Buchanan who had Carrollton Press, DTIC (Defense Technical Information Center), and ERIC. We had everybody. DTIC called and said, “Why haven’t we been invited to speak at this workshop?” I said, “I didn’t know that you cared,” and he said, “Well, we do.” They came out. So I have a lot of fabulous photos of those first agency people who were so happy that a group of librarians cared enough about what they were doing to form an organization and work with them.

So GODORT’s always been a home for not only librarians but for publishers, both in the government and out of the government. Like Jim and Estee Adler who started Congressional Information Service. They were charter members of GODORT and came. They helped fund our cocktail parties. We never paid for a cocktail party as long as I was chair of GODORT. Bill Buchanan paid for it and Jim Adler did—a lot of other companies that came in.

Romans

So what direction did GODORT go in the first, say, decade? What kinds of things happened after you were chair?

Abbott Hoduski

Well the most important issues were that we wanted a computerized monthly catalog. We wanted them to adopt AACR-2, MARC format, LC Subject Headings. We wanted the records to be part of the regular library catalogs. That was one of our major issues. Arne Richards pushed committee prints, Congressional Committee prints, to be part of

the program because they were not part of the program before GODORT started. We wanted the Library of Congress to do better cataloging. They did atrocious cataloging for documents, and so we figured if they were going to spend some resources cataloging, some documents would be better. We wanted government agencies to comply with the law, and they weren't—the majority of them were not. The USGS maps weren't in the program. The Corps of Engineers maps weren't in the program. CIA documents weren't in the program. A lot of census things weren't. National Aeronautics and Space Administration—their things weren't in it.

Romans *Well this must have felt really good to you that so many things are now just commonly accepted that you were really having to push for at that time.*

Abbott Hoduski Yes. I think that a lot of people don't really realize how far we've come from when the 1962 Depository Act was passed. I became a depository librarian in 1965. I became head of my department three months after I got out of library school, and I was ...

Romans *Where was this?*

Abbott Hoduski Central Missouri State University (CMSU) in Warrensburg, Missouri. I was part of the Reference department and then it just so happened that Dr. Ford, our library director, had been a documents librarian. He decided to separate out the Documents department and called me down to his office and said, "I'm going to make you head of the Documents department," and I said, "Have you told Miss Kibby, my boss?" He was dating her. They went to operas together. He said, "Well, you tell her." I said, "I'm not going to tell her." (Laughter) He said, "Okay, well send her down to my office." So I sent her down to the office, and she came back and I really felt terrible for her. She said, "Well, I'm still going to get the box that the books come in and go through them," and I said, "No, you're not. I'm going to be the head of the department and I am going to get the books and I will put the numbers on them and I will do the shelf lists and then I'll make sure that you see them because you're still head of Reference." So that was it.

Romans *So how long did you stay in that job?*

Abbott Hoduski I was there from 1965 through 1969.

Romans *And is that when you moved over to the EPA?*

Abbott Hoduski No. I went to the University of Missouri in Kansas City to be the serials cataloger, and I was there for nine months and then I was born again. It

was the most horrible job I've ever had, not because I don't like cataloging because when I was a depository librarian, I cataloged all the serials at CMSU. We were changing from Dewey to LC, but I convinced them to put everything back in SuDoc and use the SuDoc class number on the catalog card. She, head of cataloging at University of Missouri at Kansas City, was a stereotypical librarian who would not allow you to talk to anybody. So I wasn't allowed to talk to the people in Periodicals or Reference, but I was supposed to be doing a serials catalog. It just was not a good place to be.

I saw an ad in the paper for a job at the Department of Interior, Federal Water Quality Administration, and I went down and I interviewed and they offered me the job that day. I said, "Well, I have a contract with the University of Missouri and I need to work another month," and they said, "You are hired and you are on leave for a month." The guy that interviewed me had been a former CIA agent and he told me later, "The reason I hired you is you came into my office. Within minutes you knew every book I had," because I told him all of his water supply papers were upside down and out of order. (Laughter) He said, "and you had red hair and I knew you could handle this agency." (Laughter)

Romans *That's great.*

Abbott Hoduski I had to start it from an empty room and take the collections away from all of the engineers and the lawyers and so on. So I went back to the University of Missouri and told them that I was leaving, and Mr. LeBudde said, "Oh, you can leave right now." I said, "Oh, no. I wouldn't dream of leaving right now." The next month was the best month. I got the union organizer to come in and organize the technical staff because I rode back and forth to work with him. Unfortunately they didn't follow through and actually become unionized, but put the fear of the Lord into the library director. (Laughter) So it was a good experience.

Romans *So how did the Interior job morph into the EPA?*

Abbott Hoduski Well, Federal Water Quality Administration became part of EPA. There were about 14 different parts of agencies that were combined to become EPA. Interior was kind of the dominant agency in Kansas City, in that region.

Romans *When was this that this happened?*

Abbott Hoduski June of 1970 and that was the same year that I went to ALA to try and get CIP for Government Documents. They had a big meeting and the head of technical processing at the Library of Congress, Bill Welsh, was

making a presentation. I knew that I wanted to get them to do CIP for Documents so I wore a white dress and held red roses and sat in the front row. I was the first person up to ask a question. Bill said, “There, the lovely lady in the white dress with the red roses has the first question,” and then I said, “What are you going to do for Documents?” Well then afterwards I talked to Bill Welsh. I followed him into an elevator up to his floor (Laughs) and saying, “What can I do?” and he said, “Well, you’re part of SRRT, why don’t you do something within SRRT?” So I went back to the SRRT meeting that night and said, “I want to start a task force on CIP,” and they said, “Sure, Bernadine. You do whatever you want to.”

Romans *That’s great.*

Abbott Hoduski The way I got introduced to Mr. Welsh was that George Caldwell, who had been the documents librarian at University of Kansas (KU), was the first person I visited when I started my job at CMSU. My director said, “KU has a very good documents collection and they have a wonderful documents librarian, George Caldwell. You go spend a day with George.” So I went and spent a day with George. So then when I was at ALA, he came and sat by me and he said, “Now you need to meet Bill Welsh if this is what you really want to do.” So he introduced me. I still communicate with George Caldwell. He was a federal documents specialist at the Library of Congress after he left KU. He’s retired now, but he’s one of the very earliest members of GODORT, as well as Nathan Einhorn, who was the head of the Exchange and Gift department at the Library of Congress and Agnes Ferruso, who was the State Documents person at the Library of Congress. They all joined GODORT the very first meeting.

Romans *How long did you end up staying at EPA?*

Abbott Hoduski I was there from 1970 through the end of 1974. EPA was very good about sending us to training sessions. That is why I came to DC often, and when I came I would go to the Library of Congress and lobby them about cataloging. I would go to the Government Printing Office and I’d go to the Joint Committee on Printing to lobby them about the depository program. So I met with Congressman Hayes’ staff director, Rosemary Cribben. I met with Senator Cannon’s staff director, Denver Dickerson—because they alternated chairmanships and staff directors. Then I persuaded Rosemary to come to the very first meeting of the Depository Library Council. Maryellen Trautman and I were charter members, and she really is the one who got me on the Depository Library Council. She’d come to GPO to do a kind of a short sabbatical and the Superintendent of Documents at that time—although I can’t think of his name—said, “We’re going to reactivate the Depository

Library Council, and I want somebody on the Council that's not your typical librarian." She said, "I have exactly the person for you."
(Laughter)

Romans *And she did.*

Abbott Hoduski And she did. So she got on and I got on. So I suggested to Rosemary, she was staff director of the JCP (Joint Committee on Printing), that she should come to the Council meeting. She came and then she wrote a memo to Mr. Hayes, Congressman Hayes, and said, "There's this young librarian who is a member of the Council and she asks the best questions. She makes the public printer blush because he can't answer them." (Laughs) She said, "I think we should hire some new staff to look into the services from the Government Printing Office." So I went to lobby her in October of 1974, and she said, "Well the chairman has gotten the money for three positions"—which was really a miracle because it's 17 staffers and he got money for three additional staffers. She said, "We're looking for somebody who knows about library programs and stuff like this," and she looked at me and she said, "Do you know somebody that fits that bill?" I said, "Well, I do," and she said, "You're hired ..."

Romans *Well great.*

Abbott Hoduski ... and can you start December 9th?" I didn't even really talk to anybody at home. I just took the job and then I went back to Missouri. EPA kept my job open for two years for me because I said, "I'm just gonna be gone for two years," but I was gone for 21. So if you lobby enough, you can get your own job created.

Romans *Now what year was this?*

Abbott Hoduski This was December of 1974 that I started, and I started with two other people. One was Barbara Jones, and she had been a Senator Mansfield staffer. And of course I'm a native of Montana. Senator Mansfield's always been one of my heroes. She had worked for him, so she came to work. Then there was a guy from Encyclopedia Britannica—no, wait a minute—yeah, and he had also worked for Playboy—he came and was supposedly going to look into the sales operation. We were looking into depository and bylaw and cataloging and things like that. So three of us started together. What we didn't realize is that they had to hire us before the chairmanship turned over because then Senator Cannon would have been able to hire three people. Wayne L. Hayes was adamant that the House should have the chairmanship and that they should be able to hire some staff because the Senate had controlled the chairmanship of the JCP for many, many years and the House was not very happy about that.

I didn't know that until later that that's why the urgency of starting in December.

Romans *Well I remember that Wayne Hayes was an extremely powerful representative. So was he chair of JCP before he was a Ways and Means Committee chair?*

Abbott Hoduski No, he was the chair of Committee on House Administration ...

Romans *Oh, okay.*

Abbott Hoduski ... which is a parent committee of the JCP and ...

Romans *Oh, okay.*

Abbott Hoduski ... and then Senate Rules is a Senate parent committee. House Administration also is a parent committee for the Joint Committee on the Library (JCL). So one year the House would chair JCP, the Senate would chair JCL, then they would exchange roles and then the staff directors would also change. He was a big supporter of the Depository Library Program. He introduced the first bill in 1958 which ended up being the 1962 Depository law. He was really the driving force of getting the 1962 Depository law, and that's why I went to work for him because he really loved the Depository Library Program and so did Rosemary, his staff director. They were very much committed to public access and improving services. They had been getting so many letters of complaint, not just about the depository program but about the sales program, that he said, "We just have to do something about all of GPO."

Romans *Be nice if we had advocates like that right now.*

Abbott Hoduski It would be.

Romans *Yeah.*

Abbott Hoduski We really need somebody.

Romans *Well ... the James Bennett Childs Award—how is it that it was named after him and that he got the first award? And how is it that you got the second award?*

Abbott Hoduski James Bennett Childs was a mentor to many of us in GODORT. He wrote hundreds of letters to us. He wrote a lot of letters to Geneva Finn, and I still have his letters. I have a big pile of letters. He was ...

Romans *Who was he?*

Abbott Hoduski He had a variety of jobs at the Library of Congress. When he was mentoring me, he was kind of retired but coming in every day and volunteering. He worked every day up until when he died in his 90s. He had been the head of Exchange and Gift. He had set up the exchange agreements with Russia and other countries to bring in government documents, and then we sent government documents to the Lenin State Library. He had also run Cataloging at one point. He was very much for improving cataloging for government documents. He sent me an incredible number of LC proof sheets with little notes on it showing me what was missing or what was wrong with it. He encouraged me to serve on the ALA/AACR-2 Catalog Code Revision Committee.

He called me every Sunday morning at 9:00 and I'm not an early morning person on Sunday morning but I would get up and talk to Mr. Childs and tell him what was going on the Cataloging Committee. I said, "Dr. Childs, they think I'm nothing but a troublemaker." He said, "That's exactly what you need to be. Keep being a troublemaker and sooner or later you will get what we want. I'm depending on you to get them to straighten out this cataloging problem with government documents." So he called me a couple of weeks before he died. He was a wonderful man. He'd written so many letters to so many people in—the GODORT founders, that small group of people—that we decided that he should be honored for all the encouragement and work he'd done. There was a committee set up. We set up an awards committee and they decided who should get the first one and he got it. Then there was an awards committee and they honored me with the second one. So I wasn't involved in deciding who should get the award.

Romans *Was he still alive when he got the first award?*

Abbott Hoduski Yes, he was and he agreed to his likeness being on the award. He was extremely happy that we had honored him that way. He was such a wonderful man.

Romans *I think it was a great recognition of him and I certainly was pleased when I got the award.*

Abbott Hoduski Well, it's a wonderful group of people that have received the award, as well as the other GODORT awards but that was the very first one that we established.

Romans *And how was it that there was a Bernadine Abbott Hoduski Award established?*

Abbott Hoduski Well Jeanne Isacco was behind that one. I had nothing to do with it. I didn't even know they were going to do it. She did all the organizing on

it and then let me know when they decided, when they did it.

Romans *That's wonderful.*

Abbott Hoduski Yes. Jeanne was at the Government Printing Office, she ran the sales catalog. She was the person who had the creative ideas about how to automate the sales catalog and other things. She didn't get the credit, really, that she deserved. I worked with her almost every day. When I went to work for the Joint Committee on Printing, one of the first projects that we did was to set up a working group to automate the monthly catalog, and she was part of it as well as, you know, Jay Young and Jim Livesey and a bunch of people like that.

Carl LaBarre wasn't the Superintendent of Documents when I started, but he soon became the Superintendent of Documents. Carl LaBarre, I think, other than maybe perhaps my friend, Francis Buckley, was the greatest Superintendent of Documents, I think. He was a visionary, saw that to serve the public we needed to automate the monthly catalog, we needed to go after publications, and we needed to talk to librarians and listen to their advice. He's another Montanan. He grew up in Forsythe, Montana—very tall man, about 6 foot five. He said it was great being tall because he could walk and look into everybody's cubicle and see if they were working. (Laughs)

Romans *During your tenure on the Joint Committee on Printing staff, what are some of the highlights of things that happened?*

Abbott Hoduski Well my very first project was to visit all 55 committees on the House and Senate side to convince them to allow the Congressional Committee prints to become depository. I visited every one of them, and they had to sign off because those committee prints belonged to the committees. I knew every underground tunnel between, you know, all the Senate and House buildings, the Capitol. My office was in the Capitol. I spent a lot of time visiting all 55 committees. It was a wonderful education. I met the staff director of every committee. I met the printing officer and the publishing officer of every committee. I had to convince each one of them to do this. Now they had been sending the committee prints to the Library of Congress and they'd been providing them to Congressional Information Service because Estee Adler had gone around to every committee and was getting the committee prints. This is what made Arne Richards so happy. That had been his dream.

The other project that I enjoyed incredibly was chairing the Serial Set Committee, and that was my idea to set it up. Representative Frank Thompson, Jr. agreed to set this advisory committee up and I chaired it. In fact, I'm probably still the chair because they've never abolished the

committee even though it hasn't met since 1995 when I left. I'm assuming you could still think that it still exists. Our goal was to, first of all, make the serial set archival because it wasn't being printed on archival paper, didn't have archival binding. Nobody knew what the process was except Virginia Saunders and our printing officers. So we started out by having her document all of the steps of putting the Serial Set together, including the indexing to it. Then we set up this committee [which] had representation from the Senate and House libraries, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court, the Depository Library Council, GPO, the binding people, the printing people, the library side, Virginia Saunders. We went over to GPO and followed the Serial Set from when it was created, followed it all the way through the printing, the binding process, the marbelizing on it, the gold lettering, the indexing operation, and educated the people within GPO about the importance of the Serial Set. It's an extraordinarily valuable resource.

Then we also worked on the plan for having it microfiched so that more libraries could get it. I kind of actually regret doing the microfiche. I think it gave the Appropriations Committee the window to come in and say, "We'll save money by forcing people to take the microfiche," and so that is sad. I mean I don't really consider the microfiche to be the Serial Set. I consider it to be the fiche of the reports and documents. It's not the Serial Set. The Serial Set is very clearly defined in the law. I think the Serial Set Committee was quite a courageous committee. Our final act was writing a letter to the Appropriations Committee asking them not to destroy the serial set.

Romans *When did microfiche start being a major way that GPO distributed material?*

Abbott Hoduski Well it started in the late 1970s and Mr. Hayes did not intend it to be a money-saving thing. His intention was those contract reports and field reports weren't getting into the program where they printed less than 100 copies. This would be a way to get that kind of scientific and technical information into the program and that we would film those. It would expand the program, whereas Appropriations Committee and a subsequent JCP chair saw it as a way to save money. So it really kind of got captured from the original people as to how it would work.

Romans *Were you doing much with GODORT in the 1980s?*

Abbott Hoduski I attended the majority of the GODORT programs. I couldn't hold an office because I was a congressional staffer, but the committee sent me. I only missed the ALA GODORT meeting when we were snowed in in Chicago and that was because Senator Canon's staff director wouldn't send me to that meeting. But I was an honorary member of ALAP

anyway because it was the Missourians that were drinking at the Palmer House and I would have been right with them. (Laughs)

Romans *I first saw you when you were giving a report during the Saturday Updates, and I know you did that for quite a period of time. During what years, more or less, did you provide that update?*

Abbott Hoduski Well I started providing updates shortly after I started at the Joint Committee on Printing. My committee chairs were very happy to have me participate and keep the library community informed and also to get feedback from the library community as to how the program was working. I think the Joint Committee on Printing staff and chairs really did have a lot of affection for the library community, really respected the community.

I remember Carl LaBarre at one point, Superintendent of Documents, saying—we'd always kind of recap at night about what had happened during the day at Depository Library Council or at ALA—he'd say, "They're not asking enough questions this time. They're not raising enough trouble. What's the matter with them? Don't they realize that that's their responsibility? They're supposed to be giving me a hard time," and I said, "Well, you know, sometimes they don't do that." The Joint Committee on Printing has always been very, very supportive because this is their program. The Depository Library Program is the Congress' program and is specifically the Joint Committee on Printing's program. They've always been very protective of it.

Romans *Now if I remember correctly, you stopped working for the Joint Committee on Printing in less than a happy situation. Is that right?*

Abbott Hoduski Well, Representative Newt Gingrich—I mean the republicans won in 1994 and Newt had basically let the staff know that if he won he was going to try to abolish the Joint Committee on Printing. Now I was the only staffer that believed him. His staff director had a desk next to mine, Linda Kemp, and she basically told me that when Newt won that all the professional staff should resign. I said, "I'm not going to resign. They'll have to fire me because I'm a professional staffer. You can only fire me for just cause or politically."

He put Mr. Thomas from California in as the chair of the Joint Committee on Printing and Linda became the staff director. We were all issued termination papers—the entire staff, even Senator Stevens' staffer who was a political staffer. Senator Stevens basically went ballistic and Senator Ford. He said, "You can't fire our staff. You can fire the professional staff and the administrative staff, but you can't fire the political staff." Speaker Gingrich wanted to abolish the Joint Committee

on Printing entirely, but Senator Ford and Senator Stevens said, “No. You have to have Senate agreement, and we do not agree. You need a joint panel to arbitrate certain issues, and this is a support committee, oversight committee, so we do not agree. You have the authority to fire staff because it just so happens you have the chairmanship this year and that’s the way the rules were written.” They regretted then that they had written the rules that way. So they did attempt to totally abolish the Joint Committee on Printing. Later they did eliminate the separate office and the separate staff, so there’s a staffer on House Administration and on Senate Rules. The JCP still exists, still has their meetings, still sets the policies for GPO, still reviews their budgets, still decides on any waivers to the law. JCP is still there.

Romans *I know that Senator—was it Wendell Ford?*

Abbott Hoduski Yes.

Romans *... was one of the great government document supporters. Were there others after Representative Hayes who are particularly memorable to you?*

Abbott Hoduski Yes. Frank Thompson, Jr. tried to revise Title 44. He was the first one to write a bill to provide electronic government information to depository libraries, and unfortunately Chairman Thompson was ensnared in the ABSCAM. It was an undercover operation, which I am still convinced that the chairman did not do what they said that he did. I mean, they said he took \$25,000 which never showed up. I don’t believe that he did. I think he was entrapped and that he was not guilty. We had worked for four years on revising Title 44. We had an excellent bill and it went down the tubes because there was no way that you could take a bill to the floor when your chairman is going to jail.

When Gus Hawkins, Congressman Hawkins, came on board he said, “What we’ll do is we will change the regulations and enforce the law until they scream,” meaning the government agencies to comply with the depository program and bring their stuff to the GPO. So Congressman Hawkins was a very good chairman. Charlie Rose—he was a wonderful chairman. He’s the one who got *GPO Access* and Newt Gingrich helped with *GPO Access*. He was very much for electronic information going to depository libraries, but he unfortunately went to the extreme of saying it should be only electronic and not any paper. Senator Ford and Senator Stevens were great champions of the program. So you had to have all four of them, the republicans and the democrats on both sides. You really cannot pass an effective bill without both republicans and the democrats working together. We were fortunate that we had four members of Congress who really supported the program and public

access.

Romans *After 1994, when did you start getting re-involved in GODORT?*

Abbott Hoduski I never stopped.

Romans *Sure, but you couldn't hold any office or ...*

Abbott Hoduski Well, that's right. I don't really remember when I ran for office again. I just kept going to the GODORT meetings and attending everything. You learn as a congressional staffer that the best way is to do things in the background. You don't necessarily try to hold an office or something. You try to educate other people to see your point of view and then let them carry forward what you'd like to see happen. The secret to getting anything done is to convince people that it's their idea not yours.

Starting GODORT and going through the whole ALA process, I have always been a lover of the ALA Council. From the very beginning, I attended all ALA Council meetings. I attended a lot of other meetings, too, within ALA. I learned that there are people who are not elected who are the real powers. Within ALA, within the Congress, in any organization there's always a few people that are the key people that you want to persuade because they have influence over a lot of other people whether elected or not elected. And of course I could always speak up at a GODORT meeting.

Romans *When GODORT got a councilor, what made you decide to run?*

Abbott Hoduski Well because I loved Council and I know that that is a seat of power in ALA and that it would be a good opportunity to influence other councilors and the president and the incoming president and all the officers of the association. I've always gone to all of the presidential activities. I worked on a lot of ALA presidents' campaigns giving them ideas about what they should do. Then I'm always going to their suite, to their parties, and I thoroughly believe that without the parties we would have never gotten GODORT. I did more lobbying at parties than anywhere else—to get to the then-president of ALA, the former president of ALA, and executive director—everybody who had anything to do with getting GODORT established, I talked to them.

Romans *It's kind of interesting because I kind of thought of you as a veteran, an old-timer, when I first met you. I think that when you ran, a lot of people thought of you as, you know, an old-timer. I'm not sure that people thought that you were gonna win. I thought it was really interesting that you managed to put together a good coalition to win that post. How did that go?*

Abbott Hoduski Well the thing is that there are a lot of people that belong to GODORT that don't come to the meetings but they're still members. They were the original GODORT people, and I simply called them all and asked them if they would vote for me. I also had been an active member of the Social Responsibilities Round Table. Of course that didn't have anything to do with the GODORT thing ...

Romans *It's overlapping ...*

Abbott Hoduski ... but there is an overlapping, people like Al Kagan and others that belong to both groups. I like people basically. I like interacting. I like politics, the pure form of politics of convincing other people to do something they never thought that they would even consider doing, and so I always continue to have a lot of interaction. I also have always tried at each ALA meeting to meet new documents people, to encourage new people to participate, to stand up at a meeting. For a long time Jim Veatch and I would organize a dinner in which we would invite new Documents people to join us and get to know each other.

Also, we had a Friday night dinner with all the former GODORT coordinators and so that was a tradition. So I kept in touch with all of the people within GODORT, the long-timers and the new people. One doesn't win every election. Eric Moon convinced me to run at large for ALA Council and I agreed. I thought I was leaving the Joint Committee on Printing. When I realized that I had survived once again—because at JCP I handed my resume in at least 21 times—21 years. Each year I handed my resume in and waited to see if I still had a job. When I realized I still had a job, I asked people ...

Romans *Turned in your resume or your resignation?*

Abbott Hoduski No, my resume.

Romans *What does that mean?*

Abbott Hoduski That means you had to give them all of your qualifications; who was it that hired you initially, a democrat or republican; who was the chair; what had I done on the committee. So as each new chair came in and each new staff director, every staff person had to give them an updated resume and work history. Then you would wait to see if you were going to continue to be employed or not because they could fire you for no reason.

Romans *So you were a political appointee rather than ...*

Abbott Hoduski Everyone's a political appointee on the hill, no matter. I was changed

from administrative assistant to professional staffer, which is a little safer designation because supposedly you're hired for your qualifications, not for your political connections. But the truth of it is that everyone's a political staffer and everyone is subject to termin—they used the term "termination." You were "terminated." I survived 21 years, and I attribute it to the fact that I'm a librarian and I never let them forget I'm a librarian. Very hard for a politician to fire a librarian, except for Newt Gingrich. He had no problem with firing a librarian. (Laughs)

Romans

Tell me a little bit about your friendship with Fran Buckley and how you two managed to work together to make things happen.

Abbott Hoduski

Well Francis and Lois Mills, they were involved in the GODORT Legislation Committee and, of course, I went to all of those meetings as a JCP staffer. Then when we decided—the Joint Committee on Printing set up the ad hoc committee revising Title 44—we decided that we wanted representation from ALA and Depository Library Council and so on. So Fran and Lois became the representatives, and because ALA didn't have a lot of money—I lived on Capitol Hill in a Victorian townhouse and I had an extra room and bathroom, so I invited Fran to stay with us, and we met every week for two days for almost a year. So he came and stayed with me, and when somebody comes and stays with you every week, you get to be pretty good friends and so we developed a wonderful friendship. Fran is such a wonderful professional person, and his wife Victoria. We've become like a family.

I also made sure that Fran met all the right people. Being on that ad hoc committee he met Michael DiMario when Michael was the general counsel. He met all the other people from House Administration and Senate Rules, so he made a big impression on them and obviously a really big impression on Mike DiMario when he named him Superintendent of Documents. Then Fran went on to chair another committee that ALA set up after I retired to try and revise Title 44, which of course did not end up doing what we wanted.

So Fran and I have always been plotters together on the things that we'd like to see happen in the program, and having someone on the outside, not only Fran but people like Jim Veatch and Lois Mills and others, really helps you keep on the straight and narrow because they bring such a different perspective. If you're working on a congressional committee, you get isolated. You start to think in a certain way. You start to want to do what the other people on the committee want you to do. If you don't have somebody from the outside who's constantly bringing you information about what's really going on out there in those libraries—

Richard Leacey was another one, from Georgia Tech. He's really responsible for the Advisory Committee on Providing Automated Information to depository libraries even being established. When the JCP—we did our dog and pony show around the country—we went to Atlanta. Richard was patent librarian and I had met him when the patent librarians were trying to get a bill passed and I told them, "Don't wait for us to revise Title 44. You'll be dead before it happens, so go ahead. You have a sponsor. You have somebody who'll introduce the bill." He did and he got it passed, so when we went for the JCP, I arranged for a luncheon and Richard was there. He said, "You don't remember me," and I said, "Well I'm sorry, Richard. I don't." He said, "I was the patent librarian and you gave me this advice" and so he said, "I'm going to take you and Faye Padgett, who was our political staffer, to dinner, and after I take you to this special dinner, you'll remember who I am." So we went to this former Catholic church and we're both Catholics, Faye and I. I said, "Oh, this is horrifying. You're taking us to a restaurant in a former Catholic church?" He said, "Oh yeah." So we went and we had a wonderful time, and I remember we had a wonderful soufflé. He charmed Faye so much, so I said, "Well your job is to come to town and charm the political staff into setting up this committee." So he did. He's one of the best lobbyists I've ever met in my life, Richard Leacey.

Romans

Both of us have been involved in the Committee on Legislation and in lots of dealings with the Washington office. What can you tell me about that?

Abbott Hoduski

When GODORT was set up and we did resolutions, they would go to the Washington office and they would never be sent to anybody. They just disappeared and so I talked to Bob Wedgeworth, who was executive director of ALA. I said, "This is just not acceptable. GODORT wants its resolutions to go to the Congress or go to the President or whoever." He said, "Well, we'll fix that. We'll make the Washington office be the liaison to GODORT." So that was Eileen Cooke.

I had known Germaine Krettick, who was the first director. She, in fact, recommended me to be on the Depository Library Council. She was a wonderful director—the very first one. Eileen was a very good director also. We had some differences of opinion on some very important issues, but that was a very effective strategy to have them be our liaison. GODORT realized very soon that we—most of what we did was pertaining to legislation and regulations, that we had to have a good working relationship with the Committee on Legislation (COL). So we had our own GODORT committee and eventually COL Government Information Services was set up. I really never was a supporter of that subcommittee because I really felt that GODORT was perfectly capable of having its own legislation committee and going directly to COL, but

there are some people at the Washington office that thought that GODORT was too narrowly-focused, but I disagree. We're concerned about all kinds of government information.

Anyway we managed to take over GIS most of the time, GODORT members. As a JCP staffer, I had a unique relationship with the Washington office in that Anne Heanue was hired as the lobbyist to deal with government information issues, and before that it was Sarah Case. I had a wonderful relationship with the key staffers from the very beginning who dealt with government information issues. ALA was tremendously respected by the Joint Committee on Printing, and I did a lot of conferring with the people at the Washington office, probably more than my committee realized. (Laughs) For example, when we would write statements about appropriations, I would advise them on the kinds of things they needed to include in such a statement in order to get the Appropriations Committee to support the funding, and that wasn't something that we let be known. I mean JCP didn't have a problem with my giving advice to the Washington office to do that because we wanted the Appropriations Committee to give GPO a lot of money. The Appropriations Committee didn't want to give any money. So there was a constant tension there between JCP and Appropriations.

When Senator Mathias was the chair, his staff director, Tom Kleis, was a very wonderful staff director, one of the best that we ever had, a real scholar and a real publisher. He took on the Government Printing Office and said, "You will bring your budget to us. We will go over your budget line by line, and if we don't like the amount of money you're asking for for public access programs, we're gonna tell you to change it," and he did. That Senator Mathias said, "You will ask for more money for the Depository Library Program. You will ask for more money for the Serial Set" or whatever. So it was a really interesting behind-the-scenes kind of thing.

Most people don't really realize the relationship between authorizing committees and appropriating committees and legislating committees. The JCP was a very unique animal. There are only four joint committees, and to work for both the House and the Senate and to try to balance both sides. I was one of the staffers that worked with the Appropriations Committee, and they were constantly trying to do JCP in because they also approved our budget, which was rather delicate.

Romans *Well now, to get back to the Washington office ...*

Abbott Hoduski Yes.

Romans *... the goals of the Washington office and the goals of GODORT are not*

always the same ...

Abbott Hoduski No, they're not.

Romans *... and also you've had great service on the Committee on Legislation. What is your experience from GODORT and from the Committee on Legislation relative to the Washington office?*

Abbott Hoduski Well GODORT has always had to be very vigilant, very aggressive, in getting the Washington office to follow through to support that. I think that GODORT is the most effective unit within ALA in getting the Washington office to do what they want to do. Now some years have been less effective than other years, but I think GODORT spent a lot of time educating the Washington office staff, working with them, providing them with back-up information that they really needed to do their job. I think that it became more effective when you managed to get a Councilor, a GODORT Councilor—I mean, I think that was a great step forward and really helped get things through Council, to have somebody on the Council who could ask the Committee on Legislation or follow-up on things if they didn't deliver the way they should. I mean, you need those balances back and forth.

There's always a tension between the staff of an association and the members. I know that from being a JCP staffer, that I worked for 10 members of Congress. I was a staffer. I was not a member of Congress. So there was a balance there of trying to keep 10 members of Congress happy, work with 10 members of Congress' staff. I was very well prepared for that from working with ALA. The greatest training ground in the world for going to Congress is to be a member of ALA and to work through the multiple units. It's just like Congress, all kinds of committees and units and all kinds of different people competing for what money there is.

Now I don't think the Washington office frankly is giving the attention to bread-and-butter issues. To me, the Depository Library Program is a bread-and-butter program. It's \$30 million or more appropriated each year and it's too much taken for granted. They're too focused on library services, the Technology Act. They're too focused on "No Child Left Behind"—these kind of issues. Of course we did a lot with the Patriot Act which was very important. So oftentimes their attention is not on GODORT's issues, and that's why GODORT can't be totally dependent on the Washington office to carry forward their wishes and their issues and their programs. GODORT has to be aggressive in doing its own lobbying and education, no matter what you call it. We have a lot of new Congressional members now that don't even know what the Depository Library Program is. We've got a lot of new staffers that have no idea,

including Senator Schumer from New York who's gonna be the chair of JCP. He has a new general counsel who doesn't know anything about libraries, and he definitely doesn't know anything about depository libraries. We have to get in there and educate them.

The reason I like documents librarians is they are much more rounded people. When you had the separate documents departments, documents librarians learned everything from acquisition to cataloging to reference to budgeting. They understand better the process of who's controlling what, and so they understand better how the process works in government, that you have an appropriations process, you have a budgeting process, you have an authorizing process. They're so much better equipped to talk to congressional staff and members of Congress. Documents people tend to have a lot more guts than other kinds of librarians, I think. I don't know why. I don't know why they're attracted to documents, but I found that the majority of documents librarians are pretty courageous people.

Romans *You were talking about a kind of inherent conflict between staff members in ALA and the volunteer members who were ...*

Abbott Hoduski Right.

Romans *... who were in GODORT and in other organizations. That we don't always understand each other. There is certainly a difference in viewpoints about what GODORT wants and what GPO wants. What insight do you have into the other kinds of things that GPO does that make them maybe less responsive to GODORT's issues than they might be otherwise.*

Abbott Hoduski At the Government Printing Office?

Romans Yes.

Abbott Hoduski Well the Government Printing Office has many masters, but the primary masters are members of Congress. Their primary responsibility is to serve the publishing needs of the Congress, so the congressional record, the hearings, reports and documents—that's their primary job. The executive branch is oftentimes very unhappy because they say they're secondary. The Supreme Court is unhappy because they are secondary, though the Supreme Court gets pretty good treatment because they can overturn legislation. I mean, it's all political. The public really, even though they say that they're there to serve the public, Government Printing Office says that and JCP says that. The Congress says that. That's really not their priority. Their priority is somebody like Senator Byrd, when they trashed his history book and the Superintendent of

Documents lost his job as a result. That's their primary customer, and you keep them happy.

If you get a senator or a representative who is in love with the Depository Library Program, then that becomes important to the Government Printing Office. That's why I loved Wayne L. Hayes, because it was a very important program to Mr. Hayes. That was one of his primary programs that he supported. So even though he went down in history as having to resign over a sexual escapade, I still have immense respect for Mr. Hayes because he really did care about the public's interest.

Now the Government Printing Office within it has various programs so you've got separate appropriations. Congressional Printing and Binding has their own appropriation. Superintendent of Documents has their appropriation. There's an appropriation for bylaw distribution. There's also the money that comes in from customers, from the executive branch and the Supreme Court. So they have a lot of people to serve, and it all depends on who's yelling the loudest at the time. Now you've had some public printers like Mike DiMario, who loved documents librarians. He loved the program. He believed in open communication. He wanted feedback and so on. Carl LaBarre, Superintendent of Documents, was very, very supportive of the public but you've had some public printers who were more interested in the agency making a profit or of financing their trips to Europe and other places. So they might say they support the program, but they really don't give it the attention that it deserves.

The Superintendent of Documents is, according to some former Superintendent of Documents, a "cash cow." It's got appropriated funds coming in. That's guaranteed. So one year there wasn't enough money in Congressional Printing and Binding so they increased the price to the Depository Library Program for the *Record* and the *Register*. They just charged them more money. That's how they got more money into the public printer's office. So that was one of the things, as a staffer I was the one who was supposed to analyze the Superintendent of Documents' budget and appropriations. Then I would argue, "Well, at GPO they're taking the money away from the program and they're using it for something else."

Well in the past the Serial Set was paid for out of Congressional Printing and Binding money. Bylaw distribution came out of Congressional Printing. That all got shifted over to the Superintendent of Documents' budget, but they didn't get an increase in funding. So even though it looked like they were getting more money, they weren't because they were absorbing two very expensive programs into the budget and that wasn't acknowledged. That was done so that they could spend less

money on Congressional Printing and Binding and make them look like they were spending less money than the White House. They used to compare just the cost of running the White House to the cost of running the whole legislative branch. I never could understand that way of thinking, but it was a political thing. Whereas the executive branch is the Defense Department and the Department of Energy and, you know, they have billions of dollars. The legislative branch is a very small budget.

Romans *You've had a 40-year career in the American Library Association. What are probably the one or two or three highest high points for you in that career? What are you most proud of or how do you think you have helped?*

Abbott Hoduski Helped the association or helped ...

Romans *Yes. GODORT or the association?*

Abbott Hoduski Well of course starting GODORT would be my highest joy. I helped provide a place for documents librarians to come together and to make life better for their libraries, for the public, and for themselves. It's been like a family to me. My other is the Social Responsibilities Round Table. I'm still a member. I was a charter member of SRRT, and I think that SRRT is a very key part of our association. Those two things, I think, are probably the most important. Then working with ALA to get the GPO Access Act passed which I think for the documents community really was the vehicle for transforming the Depository Library Program. It has everything in it that we needed, you know. It allowed for the provision of electronic publications to the libraries, for the storage of it so you have your *GPO Access*. It gave GPO really all the authorization that they need to go forward in the electronic world. It's a very, very simple bill or a law, but it has a lot of ramifications.

People still do not realize how effective that law has been in transforming—and sometimes you really don't want to go in and pass another law that has unintended consequences. You really have to think through, "What will this law do?" When we put that bill together with ALA, we wanted it to be very, very simple and very straightforward. Wayne Kelly, former Superintendent of Documents, says that he thinks it was one of the best bills ever passed because it really enabled GPO to do all the things they needed to do, the things they're doing right now. They're all possible under that bill.

Now I've had a lot of personal relationships among ALA members, and there are a lot of former documents librarians like those who worked on the 1962 Depository Act—you know, Roger McDonough, New Jersey state librarian—Joe Anderson from Nevada was a state librarian. So the

relationships I've had with directors of libraries. ALA is a place where you can come and you can talk and work with anybody—Librarian of Congress, the head of the National Library of Medicine—we're all equal when you come to ALA, as far as I'm concerned. There are no restrictions on your interacting with all kinds of other librarians. There's just this common love of libraries that brings us all together. So even though I should have been intimidated when I started, I never have been because I've always loved librarians and I've always thought that they were the most wonderful people. I'm so glad I chose to be a librarian over any other profession.

I really wanted to be an ambassador, but I have become an ambassador because I chaired the IFLA Official Publications Committee. I was on that committee for 20 years. I helped people in other countries initiate Freedom of Information Acts and depository library programs, public access programs and so on. So I really did become an ambassador. I think being a librarian can lead to such amazing things that you never thought of. When I was in library school, I never dreamed I'd be working for Congress. Never occurred to me to even go east of the Mississippi River let alone work in D.C. because I'm a westerner. All I ever wanted to do was go back to Montana, live in Montana.

Romans

Let me shift gears entirely and go back to what were your first library experiences as a child?

Abbott Hoduski

Well my father went to the university, my mother only went to sixth grade. They both grew up on the prairies of eastern Montana, but libraries have always been extremely important in my family, very much library lovers. I was born in New Deal, Montana, and when the second world war started, my father was with the Corps of Engineers. We lived up and down the Missouri River. Every new town we went to—St. Joe, Washington, Missouri, Kansas City—the first thing my mother would do would take us kids to the library and to the museum. They'd be the first places. I learned to read because I sat on my mother's lap and she followed the letters and by the time I was three I knew how to read.

They sent me to school when I was four. I persuaded them to take me out because I could already read and I was bored out of my mind. I hated school. I always hated school. So I went home and had a glorious year of not going to school. When we moved to Kansas City, we went to the library every week and we'd check out as many books as possible. I had read everything in the children's department by the second grade. So I told my mother, "I want to go into the adult." She said, "Okay, go into the adult section and get your books." We came and the librarian said, "No, she can't check these books out. She's a child and she couldn't possibly be reading these books." My mother said, "Well yes she is.

She's reading them to me, and she can read any books she wants to in this library. You are not to restrict her to any area." Here my little mother from eastern Montana stood up to this librarian, and I think that's—and then I worked my way through high school. I worked in the high school library. I worked my way through college at Avila and then at Kansas City Public Library. I was the reader services page. They had closed stacks. You have a reader services librarian. You go to that librarian and they advise you on books, and then I was the person that went to find the books in the stacks. I never gave up. They always sent me because I could find all the books.

Romans *So you did this while you were a student?*

Abbott Hoduski While I was a student at Avila, I worked my way through college at the Kansas City Public Library and also working at the college library.

Romans *When did you decide you wanted to be a librarian?*

Abbott Hoduski When I graduated from Avila, my mother said, "You need to get a job," (Laughs) and so I went down to the public library and they hired me as a children's librarian.

Romans *What made you decide to go to a library to get a job?*

Abbott Hoduski I always loved public libraries. They had the most incredibly interesting people that come to public libraries. They had the street people. You've got the genealogists, you've got the psychos. You just have an incredible variety of people, and I've always loved fiction. They hired me as a children's librarian at Central branch because all they asked me—all the library director asked me was, "What do you think about black people?" and I said, "I don't understand what you mean." "What do you think about black people?" I said, "I love black people. I live in a black neighborhood. I grew up in a black neighborhood." "You're hired. We need a children's librarian at Central and it's a changing dynamic there. There are a lot of black children coming." So I went over to be the children's librarian at Central, and I had a wonderful experience.

Then I got married and had a couple of children, and after my second one I decided I was gonna go back to graduate school. So I went down to see Miss Gooch, who I had worked for as a reader services page, and I said, "I want to figure out what masters I'm going to get," and she said, "When are you going to realize you were born to be a librarian? Don't even think about anything except library school." So my husband at the time—we had some friends that we always played cards with every Saturday night, and they were gonna go to Denver to move and go to school. I said, "There's a library school there, and I can go to library

school there and then you can get your education.” He was not happy because we’d been married for a few years and he didn’t have a red car or whatever else he wanted. So I went down to Miss Gooch and she said, “You go out to the University of Denver and do an interview.” I know that they greased the skids for me because you don’t get into library school by going out in July and getting admitted for August, with no testing, no paperwork, no nothing.

Romans

When was this?

Abbott Hoduski

This was in 1964, and so I started library school in 1964. It’s a year-long program there and I took Government Documents from Dr. Frost. He was the most incredible documents librarian. I loved him, and I decided I wanted to be a documents librarian. I had dealt with documents in college and all, but the main reason, not only was he a wonderful documents teacher, but that was the most difficult area that you could go into at that time. That was before there was a lot of automation and so on, and I thought, “I really need a challenge,” and government documents are a challenge.

The dean of Central Missouri State was getting his PhD in drama at the University of Denver. He looked at my resume. He interviewed me in the hall and hired me, and we went back to Missouri and my husband went to school at CMSU. So I was a faculty member and my husband, who is the same age as me, was a student—freshman. It was a very interesting library because there were several libraries on campus and C.B. was the director of all of them. When we came, he hired four new librarians who had ALA-accredited degrees. So the first week we just went around and looked at all the different departments and then sat down at a table and he said, “Well what do you want to do?” He didn’t say, “We’re gonna assign you to this.” The other three pointed at me and said, “She wants Documents,” (Laughter) and so I got Documents. It was part of Reference, and then three months later I was the head of my own Documents department, and it was a wonderful experience.

Central Missouri State University (CMSU) taught me a tremendous amount, not only because it had a wonderful Documents collection and I cataloged all of the serials and so on, but because American Association of University Professors (AAUP)—we had a chapter. One of the librarians was on the board, and he left and got another job. He said, “Oh, Bernadine, you go on to the board. It’s not much of a deal.” It did turn out to be much of a deal because we had a revolution on campus, 120 faculty ended up losing their jobs, including me. I was not fired. I was leaving anyway, but if I hadn’t have left, I probably would have been fired. I became the sponsor for the Black Student Union and for the first black sorority on campus. I was on the board when AAUP bailed 16

students out of jail who were thrown in the jail for meeting with the Black Panthers, and it was an incredible experience.

What I learned from it is that you can say that you believe in something, but only when you're faced with losing your job do you know if you really believe in it. I'd grown up in a black neighborhood and I believed in black people's rights. I had never been tested, and I was tested, as were so many of my colleagues. It taught me a lot about other people and who has courage and who doesn't have courage and what you're willing to risk. So I learned a lot more than just about government documents at CMSU.

Romans *Well so many people have learned a lot from you. Are there people that you have thought of as mentors?*

Abbott Hoduski I've had a lot of mentors. At the beginning, Bill DeJohn, who was at the Missouri State Library and was the first coordinator of Social Responsibilities Round Table, was a mentor to me. Joan Budger, who was a children's librarian at the state library, was fired for writing a letter to the Jefferson newspaper that she would put University of Missouri student newspaper in the collection at the state library. It had a drawing of the Statue of Liberty being raped by a policeman on the cover. Well this was not a library that was open to children. It was a library for librarians, and she said, "This is an example of what our children are writing. Students at the university are still children," and she was fired. So I am the one who persuaded a group of librarians to come to our annual Missouri Library Association conference and protest her firing. Bill DeJohn and Joan Goddard and Nancy Bolt and Barrett Wilkins and a number of other people, we spent the entire conference meeting and then we forced the Missouri state library commissioners to stand up in front of the final meeting of the entire association and defend why they fired Joan Budger, and we taped them and gave the tape to Joan Budger, and she sued them.

The reason I came to ALA then was to get the Intellectual Freedom Committee to censor the state library, the Missouri State Library, which they did. I was the SRRT person that went to the Intellectual Freedom Committee and all the meetings and persuaded them to do that. That was the meeting where the Chicago Seven were on trial and there was a guy, I'm sorry I can't remember his name, but he was the publisher of the underground newspapers that were on microfilm, a very unusual guy. He came to an Intellectual Freedom Committee meeting to tell us about the underground newspapers project, but what he really wanted to do was to get us to leave Chicago, to boycott—for ALA to boycott Chicago. So he jumped up literally on the table and made this appeal. The chair of the committee was this courtly librarian from some southern state and he

didn't know what to do. (Laughs) So he said to me, "Well, you're his generation. Why don't you answer?" and I said, "I'm not leaving town until I get this committee to censor the Missouri State Library." I said, "As far as I'm concerned, we should ask Mayor Daley to leave town. Chicago belongs to us. This is ALA headquarters. I'm not leaving town until I get done what I came here to do." Then he went down the hall to try and get SRRT to leave town, and they said, "No. We came to town to get something done. We're not leaving town." (Laughs)

So Bill Dejohn told me, "If you come to ALA, I will introduce you to every mover and shaker in ALA. You'll meet the President. You'll meet the Executive Board. You'll meet the chair of COO. You'll meet John Berry, the editor of LJ (Library Journal). You'll meet everybody you need to meet to do what you want to do, which is to get the Missouri State Library censored." At that point, I hadn't even thought about starting GODORT. MLA had sent me to get this state library censored, and that's what I was gonna do. In the process of Bill taking me to all of these meetings, Executive Board meeting, Council, all the backroom parties, and introducing me to everyone that I would need to know, he truly was a mentor and helped me. In the process, I met wonderful people who were the ones who got the 1962 Depository Act passed. So they became my mentors to help me get GODORT.

So there were so many people behind the scenes that supported the establishment of GODORT. If I had not have done that, you know, like—Roger Mc Dounough, the state librarian of New Jersey, the state librarian of Nevada, Mr. Anderson Childs, Bill Welsh of the Library of Congress, Nathan Einhorn, and Al Trezza, state librarian of Illinois—they all became my mentors. I learned so much from every one of them. Dick Dougherty, who was the head of the library school, and he kept trying to persuade me to go for my PhD. I'd been accepted at Indiana to get my PhD, but then I got the JCP job and I decided I preferred action over further studying. He kept saying, "You need to get a PhD." I said, "No, I'm getting a PhD right now from all the people that I'm interacting with at the American Library Association." I kind of had my life structured—Social Responsibilities Round Table, but I also had GODORT for part of the day, SRRT for the evening, and the automaters for late at night. I learned from people like John Kountz and others who were the LITA, the ones who started LITA. They taught me so much about automation. If I didn't know a subject area that I needed for my library at EPA, I'd go find an ALA member who was an expert, and I would hang out with them and get them to teach me. So ALA is like constantly going to graduate school. You can learn so much.

Romans

I know you've written books. Do you want to tell us a little about that?

Abbott Hoduski Well I wrote the book, “Lobbying for Libraries and Access to Public Information,” and Norman Horrocks, who was a charter member of GODORT, called me up as soon as he found out that I had left the Joint Committee on Printing and said, “You no longer have an excuse not to write a book for Scarecrow Press. He was the president of Scarecrow. Eric Moon had been the president before then and so I agreed to write the book. Mary Redmond invited me to come and speak to the New York librarians, so I tried out my idea for the book which would be that no matter how well you had prepared to lobby and to get a bill passed, you know, you could do all the research, you could write the best bill ever, but if the chairman went to jail, forget it—or if the chairman had resigned, forget it—or if they changed, you know, they got a better assignment, another committee. So I tried it out on them and I talked about Mr. Hayes hiring me and all the different things.

Then when I went back to Norman, I said, “Well how about a book based on my experiences of lobbying and being lobbied?” So it’s partially a history of getting electronic information to the depository libraries from the very beginning because even Mr. Hayes was looking at getting electronic information to depository libraries from the very beginning, not just microfiche. Now I’m writing a book called, “New Deal Babies.” I was born in New Deal, Montana and I’m a New Deal baby generation. I’m using all the documents that I helped—it’s really been fun because the electronic catalogs and all of the things that we worked so hard to get established, I’m using those as tools to research the New Deal. I’m doing oral interviews of people involved in the New Deal in Montana and going to all the museums and so on. So that’s my latest project. I also write a quarterly column for *Unabashed Librarian* on lobbying for Mitch Freedman. I am part owner of a newspaper, the *Queen City News of Helena*, and once in awhile I write a travel column or do a photograph for the *Queen City News*. I photographed our Montana tree that was in back of the Capitol for the paper.

Romans *Is there anything that I haven’t asked you about that you’d like to mention?*

Abbott Hoduski (Laughs) Well I think that my special memory of you is when a group of people within GODORT wanted us to merge with the Division of the State Librarians, and you were very courageous and fought that, as did other people. I remember you asking me how did I deal with it. Well what I did was call every founder of GODORT and just said, “What do you think about this idea of GODORT merging with the state librarians’ thing?” They said, “Have they lost their minds?” (Laughs) “Don’t they understand how state librarians operate? They will lose all of their power if they merge.” So even though it was a very divisive time, that really brought out, I think, a lot of the characters of a lot of the people that

were involved in that. It probably was not the best time for GODORT. There was a lot of divisiveness, but I think GODORT came out stronger as a result of it. I had a lot of respect for you standing up and taking all that flack from people.

I have a special relationship with everyone in GODORT because I'm the mother of GODORT, basically. They all forgive me a lot, but they won't forgive other people. They'll just say, you know, "That's Bernadine. She's the mother of GODORT so we have to tolerate some of the things she does." That's not necessarily the way I think about it. I mean, I'm not going to change what I believe in, but I believe that documents librarians are all basically wonderful people who care about the public's interest and that's why I love documents librarians. They are the best people, and I'm very happy that I chose to be a documents librarian and to work with such wonderful people.

Romans *Well thank you.*

Abbott Hoduski You're welcome.

----- *End of interview* -----