

An Interview with
Maggie Hales

at *The Historical Society of Missouri* St. Louis
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Oral History Program

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PREFACE

The interview was taped on a placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets []. Any use of parentheses () indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks [""] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [(??)] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Josephine Sporleder.

Blanche Touhill: Would you talk about your childhood: who were your parents; your grandparents; your cousins. How did you play? Did you play with boys and girls? Did you play with dolls? Did you have a dollhouse? Do you have any of your friends from childhood? I'm particularly interested in who in your family encouraged you to be what you wanted to be. Talk about that.

Maggie Hales: So, I was born in St. Louis, lived in Kirkwood, Missouri my entire period of growing up and I was the youngest of six children. My mom and dad were Irish Catholic. They had moved here from Minnesota, both of them left their families behind and settled here in St. Louis. I had a wonderful family. I had five older brothers and sisters. My mom and dad worked hard and I had friends in the neighborhood so back in the '50s and '60s, we would go out and play every day, every night, play Kick the Can and Hide-and-Seek and I had wonderful friendships. In terms of encouragement, I would say both of my parents encouraged me and I felt especially from my father, that I had a great deal of potential. Being the youngest, he really, really encouraged me and I felt always that if I studied hard and worked hard, that I had a wonderful life ahead. My parents didn't specifically talk about career options to me or really to the girls in the family. It wasn't something that was spoken about so much then, back in the '50s and '60s. Both of my parents did have college degrees, which they had obtained in St. Paul, Minnesota. My mom was a homemaker. There were other adults in my life though in addition to my parents because my parents had lots of friends. So there were neighbors up the street and I had teachers who influenced me and encouraged me.

Blanche Touhill: How did they encourage you and influence you?

Maggie Hales: Yeah, sure. So we had one particular neighbor, three doors up, Lucy Hogan, who had been a war bride in World War II. She was German. Her husband fell in love with her in Germany and brought her home and, as a youngster, I really had no idea what that meant. I only learned it later but she was a close friend of the family and my father actually passed away when I was eight years old and that was a terrible, terrible loss and blow to our family and to me and Lucy and her husband stepped in and really helped and I actually stayed with them for some time. Later, when I was in grade school, 4th grade, Lucy was teaching German to children at Tillman Elementary School where I went to school and I was a high

achiever. I really felt it was important to do everything, do the new math and I thought, I should study German. So I took German from Lucy after school and I made a terrible mistake, terrible mistake, that I did not understand at the time. I drew on the cover of my German notebook the swastika. No one had told me what it meant and it broke her heart and I had no idea. Well, I did get a quick lesson after that, what it meant and I made amends with her. It's a lesson I'll never forget about how the past can come rushing forward and affect people today. It really did break her heart. I had no idea. But she remained a dear, dear friend and continued to encourage me. And I had a 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Elschlager, who was very tough-minded and very loving and expected a lot from us. I suppose I remember her, in addition to being such a wonderful teacher, an award-winning teacher, she was my teacher when my father passed away and she was very, very kind, didn't make a big to-do out of it but was very, very compassionate through that process. So she influenced me.

Blanche Touhill: So you learned something from both those lessons?

Maggie Hales: I did.

Blanche Touhill: Did anybody in your grade school, any teacher or some other person or religious leader or somebody, neighbor, say to you you can go to college or you have ability?

Maggie Hales: So, I always felt that I had ability. Somehow my father communicated that to me and I was aspiring to write my letters and know my numbers and show him and impress him that I was going to be a success in school. I think even before I went to kindergarten I was practicing letters. Somehow that was communicated to us through our parents, both of whom had college degrees, of course, and there was always an expectation that all of us would go to college. That was never a question. So when my father passed away, I was the youngest at home at eight, but that was the driving force, I think, behind my mother obtaining a career, to ensure that all of us would receive our college education.

Blanche Touhill: Did your mother go to work then?

Maggie Hales: Yes, she did. I learned later that my mom, who had been a homemaker, really was not all that happy being a homemaker and would have preferred to be outside in the world but she had six children at home and the understanding, I think, between her and my father was that she

would do that, she would take care of the family. But she was really chaffing at that, which I learned later. So initially she took over his insurance business. That wasn't a good fit and she landed this amazing job as executive director of the St. Louis Council on World Affairs.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Maggie Hales: In the mid '60s. Now, it didn't pay much but it was a glorious, wonderful, fun...

Blanche Touhill: Did she travel?

Maggie Hales: Yes, she traveled to Brazil, in fact, more than once. There was a federal program at the time, I think started by John Kennedy, the president, called Partners of the Alliance. So my mom traveled to San Paola, Brazil more than once and in her mid to late 40's, learned Portuguese and she just thrived in that job and we used to receive visitors from all over the world: dignitaries, and when I was a pre-teenager and teenager, I remember going to the Chase Park Plaza to these big fancy dinners.

Blanche Touhill: Of course.

Maggie Hales: So my mom really blossomed after that terrible, terrible loss to our family. She was able to build this wonderful and rewarding career and what I learned from that...so many things...was the importance of picking yourself up and moving forward. My mom was resilient through that and I learned resilience, really just by living it with her and watching her. But that career she had gave me an appreciation for world culture, that I'm so, so glad that she passed that on to me and that translated also to her grandchildren, one of whom, when he was in middle school, announced to his parents, "I can't go to the public school. You have to send me to St. Louis U High because I need to learn Russian and I've researched the schools in St. Louis and this is the one where I can learn Russian," and he later told us that my mom influenced him in that way. He wanted to know more about the whole world because of her travels and her constant...just appreciation of world culture and I think that's one of the reasons that I traveled to India when I was in college. I had a curiosity about the world and I went on a study abroad program, of course, and lived with a family and went to a university. So that was a rich lesson that she gave me and to her grandchildren. I really value that.

- Blanche Touhill: How old was the oldest child when your father died?
- Maggie Hales: She was...sorry, I'm doing the math...she was 21 so she was about to graduate from college.
- Blanche Touhill: Did she assume responsibility for the younger children?
- Maggie Hales: She did not. She traveled to Washington. She got a wonderful job after college. She went to Carlton College where I...I later went to Carlton College, followed after her. She got a job at the Library of Congress and I really don't think my mother wanted to hold her back.
- Blanche Touhill: No, I understand.
- Maggie Hales: She was a...
- Blanche Touhill: She was ready and the job opened and she...
- Maggie Hales: And she was very scholarly. She'd done well in college and so she went off to Washington, met a man and married him. My older brother, the next in line, did, I think, come home. He had been at college in Minnesota. He graduated but he came home and lived with us for a while and I do remember him taking care of me, in particular, coming to pick me up when I fell off my bike and had hurt myself. He bought me a bicycle. He took care of me when I was 16 and I backed into a telephone pole and I dented my mom's car. He helped me through all that. So my older brother did do that. Then he later went off and made his own life as well.
- Blanche Touhill: But I just wondered if the older children were able to...not live at home but at least be a source of support.
- Maggie Hales: They absolutely were and my mom was exhausted. I was the youngest of six and I later came to appreciate how much energy that took, having had only two of my own, and so I sought other adults and my siblings for that kind of support and they were there.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you stay in the house in Kirkwood?
- Maggie Hales: I stayed in the house...
- Blanche Touhill: Your mother was able to manage that?

Maggie Hales: She did.

Blanche Touhill: And so you went to the local school?

Maggie Hales: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And you walked?

Maggie Hales: I walked to Tillman, the elementary school and later I rode my bike but it was a very safe, easy walk, 15 minutes, and I loved that.

Blanche Touhill: And did you go to Kirkwood High School?

Maggie Hales: So, interesting, I went to two high schools. My mom had an opportunity to get her graduate degree in English. The University of Missouri in Columbia was offering scholarships and this was in the mid '60s so there was...perhaps late '60s, there was a fund of money to help people get their graduate degree in English to help provide teachers in the community colleges and so she took advantage of that and we picked up and moved to Columbia. I was going into 10th grade. It was the worst day of my life.

Blanche Touhill: You went to Hickman High School?

Maggie Hales: I went to Hickman which turned out to be so enriching. I feel so fortunate that I went...

Blanche Touhill: Everybody says that.

Maggie Hales: Well, Hickman, first of all, is a wonderful high school and I met so many people. I met African Americans; I met Jewish kids; I met kids from other parts of the world, because their parents were professors. I became more politically active because the university was there. I joined a club after school about black and white dialogue. So it was really enriching. I had wonderful teachers in algebra and history. I loved it actually, as it turned out. But we only were able to spend a year-and-a-half there because she finished her degree and we moved back to St. Louis, to the family home. So I didn't want to go and then I didn't want to come back but I got through all that and I had a wonderful second part of my high school at Kirkwood and graduated from Kirkwood High School in 1972. And so that was a good experience as well. I look back on those years, though, and it was a tough time. It was the early '70s, I felt somewhat lost without a

father. My older brothers and sisters were leaving and somehow I just made it through and went off to college.

Blanche Touhill: Did you know Mary Dennigan who taught at Kirkwood...or Ross Wagner?

Maggie Hales: You know, I don't recall Mary Dennigan. What did Ross Wagner teach?

Blanche Touhill: He taught history.

Maggie Hales: I don't recall him.

Blanche Touhill: They were two people I knew who taught at Kirkwood forever. It was a big school.

Maggie Hales: It was. I discovered William Faulkner at Kirkwood High School. I had a wonderful English teacher who really...

Blanche Touhill: What was her name?

Maggie Hales: You know, I don't recall but it was a wonderful class and I wrote a paper on Faulkner. What a terrific time that was. I mean, I think school and books in a way...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, you were in really good public schools.

Maggie Hales: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And I assume that Kirkwood is still a very good community.

Maggie Hales: That's my understanding. Oh, I think so. Actually, I have a sister, the third in line who still lives in the family homestead. She and her husband bought it so I can still go and visit, go visit her.

Blanche Touhill: When you played and you rode your bike and you stayed out, did you play with boys as well as girls?

Maggie Hales: Absolutely. We had this wonderful crowd of kids: Wendy and Kirk Wagenack lived up the street and I am still friends with Wendy and Kirk on Facebook but they were my friends from the age of four. They both live in California now and we had another group of kids, the Snow family, who lived in Wilson, right around the corner. We lived on Clay and they had a big gaggle of kids and so we all played together.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, all ages and sexes?

Maggie Hales: All ages, absolutely, yes, very competitive, very fun.

Blanche Touhill: Did you play with dolls?

Maggie Hales: I didn't so much. I didn't play with dolls.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a dollhouse?

Maggie Hales: I did later have a dollhouse but it was more decorative and to look at. When my daughters were young, I got more pleasure out of playing with dolls and dollhouses than I did as a child. I was very much a tomboy.

Blanche Touhill: Was that the Barbie dolls or the American Girl?

Maggie Hales: You know, it's funny, both, but the poor Barbie dolls suffered from such sarcasm...

Blanche Touhill: Took off the hair and...

Maggie Hales: The heads came off, the hair came off but the American Girls and other dolls. I mean, my older step-daughter had a doll she dragged around and named it Dorna. I really, through my children, gained a richer appreciation for child play. I was so busy as a child managing grief and life.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah. Did you learn to cook when your mother was working?

Maggie Hales: I did. In fact, my mom paid me an allowance and in part she said, "If you can cook five nights a week, this will justify your allowance." You know, people have different theories about that. It worked for me. I learned five meals and I cooked them every night. Then I had an older brother who had traveled to France and came home, the brother who had taken care of me when I fell off my bike, he had fallen in love with a girl over there, Françoise. He came back and taught me how to ratatouille.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Maggie Hales: That was the first real special dish I ever learned to make and I still make it. I made it last week.

Blanche Touhill: Do you like to cook?

Maggie Hales: I loved to cook then and I love to cook now, very relaxing.

- Blanche Touhill: Did you do the shopping?
- Maggie Hales: As a teenager, yes, because I was making the meals. Now, my mom didn't send me to the store by myself but we would go together and I would keep track of the costs and help her figure it out and she always wanted to buy the off brands and I wanted Peter Pan. I later figured out why.
- Blanche Touhill: Were you a leader in elementary and secondary school?
- Maggie Hales: So, you know, I can't say that I was elected to leadership positions per se but I always felt kind of out front. I don't know how to describe it better than that.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you join clubs?
- Maggie Hales: I joined clubs. I joined a club with African Americans and white kids.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes, that's right.
- Maggie Hales: At Hickman High School and that was a wonderful experience, just to learn about how people in the community lived and how they viewed the world. And this was in 1969 to '71.
- Blanche Touhill: That was a huge change in the American society.
- Maggie Hales: It was and I was there in Columbia and I was paying attention and listening and my father was a New Deal Democrat and my mom was a Democrat. I guess on the political spectrum, I'd describe them as moderate to liberal and I was paying attention to what was going on with the Vietnam War. My mom was very, very busy. She didn't express political opinions so much, managing her own career but I had older brothers and sisters and I read the paper and I watched the news. So I began to go to the campus. I was too young to drive. Somehow somebody got me to campus. I went to what was then called a "women's liberation meeting" with a bunch of college-aged kids and it was fascinating. I dropped out...I could tell it was not really for me because I was still a teenager but I was drawn to it. I was just so interested in what was going on. Later, I would attend protests on campus against the war.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, you did?
- Maggie Hales: I did, I went to some protests but it wasn't a huge part of my life. It was kind of part of being in Columbia, learning more about the world,

venturing out on my own without my mom, but it didn't become a big focal point for my life.

Blanche Touhill: When your mother returned to Kirkwood, did she keep the world affairs job or did she...

Maggie Hales: So she actually taught in the community colleges.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, so that was what...

Maggie Hales: Yeah, afterward.

Blanche Touhill: Did the community college make an agreement with the university that they would hire these graduates or did she just find her own job?

Maggie Hales: My recollection is that she made a commitment to teach once she finished her degree. Whether they were mandated to hire or not, I don't know.

Blanche Touhill: Is unknown, and probably not but they probably got first choice, these individuals.

Maggie Hales: Right, and so she did teach for several years but ultimately she decided that wasn't for her so she opened up her own firm doing public relations.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful.

Maggie Hales: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And she made a living off of it?

Maggie Hales: Barely, but she did, she made a living and she wanted to be out in the world and she loved the world of advertising and PR. She had many, many friends around St. Louis.

Blanche Touhill: What was the name of the firm?

Maggie Hales: Helen McNally, yeah, Helen McNally Group, I think is what she called herself. I later actually worked for her, in between college and law school, for a summer. I did some work for her and learned how to write a press release and manage a small event. It was actually great fun. Even though we weren't especially close, it was a great experience and I enjoyed learning from her.

- Blanche Touhill: So you went off to Carlton?
- Maggie Hales: Yes, thank goodness, I went off to Carlton.
- Blanche Touhill: People love Carlton.
- Maggie Hales: I loved it. Funny thing: my sister had gone there 13 years earlier and there was still an English professor who remembered her and I was in his English class and he quoted her. I didn't like that very much and I transferred out of that English class.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, did you?
- Maggie Hales: Well, it was just too much pressure.
- Blanche Touhill: Because she was so good.
- Maggie Hales: She was so good. He was quoting her 13 years later. I don't know if he was conscious I was in the class or not but it was a wonderful experience and at Carlton, again, that continued my interest in the world and world cultures. I found a professor there, Eleanor Zelliott who had been teaching for a good while and had come to her area of interest kind of late in her career...in the middle of her career and Indian history was her field and I loved history and I was drawn to her classes so that's what caused me to go to India because they had a wonderful study abroad program.
- Blanche Touhill: Was the *Passage to India* true?
- Maggie Hales: Oh, wonderful, E.M. Forster, is that the book?
- Blanche Touhill: I mean, it's sort of the cave and it's so ancient?
- Maggie Hales: Oh, yes, absolutely.
- Blanche Touhill: The voices.
- Maggie Hales: Well, I went to those caves that are in the State of Maharishi. I'm pretty sure that E.M. Forster's book was set...part of it was set in Maharishi which is where Mumbai is located and there's a very famous cave south of there.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you have a feeling of antiquity?

Maggie Hales: Of course. I mean, I went there to study history and archeology and culture and politics and language and literature. It was a wonderful program, really very well taught. The University of Poona and Carlton...the associated colleges the Midwest which included Carlton and Lawrence and O and McAllister and others, had this program together and they designed a curriculum that was taught by Indians in English...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, of course.

Maggie Hales: ...because English is the second most widely spoken language in India.

Blanche Touhill: I assume the universities in India speak in English.

Maggie Hales: Top-notch...yes, they do.

Blanche Touhill: Because the dialects are so varied.

Maggie Hales: Well, they're actually independent languages so I'd say it's more than a dialect.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Maggie Hales: It's like Marati and Hindi and Konjabi are descended from Sanskrit the way Italian, Spanish and French are descended from Latin and then there's the whole south and that's a whole different set of languages, not descended from the Indo-European languages. So many separate independent languages but because of British rule, education became in English and the government is run...

Blanche Touhill: What did you learn from the trip?

Maggie Hales: Oh, my, where to start? Well, it further affirmed, cemented, really, my appreciation for world culture. It also, though, taught me so much about Judaea-Christian background from which I came, and in the '60s and the early '70s, I became entranced with Asian studies, Asian religion, literature, not just Indian but Chinese and Japanese and when I landed in India, the culture there is so different and I don't just mean the dress and food, but really a mindset kind of about the world and perception.

Blanche Touhill: That's what I got out of the *Passage to India*.

Maggie Hales: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: That it is an entirely different mindset.

Maggie Hales: It was profound and I went there as a rebellious 19...20-year-old and once I got there, I hungered for things Western and I read a book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* while I was there and Robert Pirsig, the author, spoke directly, directly to what I was experiencing, which is this different view of time, of truth. It was just amazing and reading that book really helped me manage that stark culture shock I was going through. I think about that trip all the time because it was so enriching and I learned so much about myself and my friends and India and how to manage being on your own. So many things happened during that time.

Blanche Touhill: When you came back to Carlton, you felt different?

Maggie Hales: I did. In fact, coming back to the United States, I experienced more culture shock, so much so that I actually decided to leave Carlton. My advisor, Eleanor Zelliot was still there pursuing work and the publishing that she was doing so my mom and my sister had delivered me to Carlton in January ready to finish my last two trimesters and I couldn't do it and my sister took me to lunch. We talked about options. We telephoned Webster University and Washington University from that lunch, restaurant and Webster said, "We're starting in a week-and-a-half. We'd love to have you. Come down, we'll enroll you," and that's what I did. So I packed up and put everything back in the car, came home and enrolled right away and finished my degree in August of that year. I just had a hard time coming back and there was two feet of snow at Carlton and I was somewhat adrift. It was a time of lots of change and that was the best way for me to manage it and I don't regret that, ever.

Blanche Touhill: Did you live at home?

Maggie Hales: I did, I moved into a spare bedroom, lived at home. I had two professors at Webster University who were terrific and really helped lodge me into the next phase: Neil George and Mike Salaboris, were both history teachers and I just thrived there and when I was graduating, I was talking to Professor George about my next step and I said, "You know, I know I need a job and I need to be independent. My mom's going to start charging me rent. I'm thinking of becoming a paralegal" and that was a big deal. There were paralegal schools popping up everywhere. This was 1976, '77 and he said, "Oh, no, no, no, no, don't you dare." He said, "You

need to go to law school.” He said, “If you think you would enjoy being a paralegal, just go to law school” and I am so grateful to him for saying that.

Blanche Touhill: So where did you go to law school?

Maggie Hales: I went to St. Louis University. I took a year off. I worked on a political campaign.

Blanche Touhill: Whose campaign?

Maggie Hales: It was for Bob Panky. He was running for alderman in the City of St. Louis. The campaign manager was Jim Shrewsbury.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Maggie Hales: And Jim and I are still friends.

Blanche Touhill: And Jim is an UMSL grad?

Maggie Hales: He is, a terrific guy. We’re still friends.

Blanche Touhill: And he’s an Irish. Did you know he had an Irish connection?

Maggie Hales: No.

Blanche Touhill: I’m sure he does.

Maggie Hales: I’m 100% Irish.

Blanche Touhill: Well, if you ever seen him again...

Maggie Hales: Well, I will. I send him business so if someone comes to me and need help with wills and estates, we send them to Jim Shrewsbury. So I did that and I worked for my mom in the PR firm and I actually waitressed so I was juggling several different things in between graduating college and going to law school.

Blanche Touhill: Did you tell your mentor at Carlton you were leaving?

Maggie Hales: Eleanor Zelliott was in India and I communicated with her later so this was before e-mail but, yes, I did communicate with her and she was disappointed.

Blanche Touhill: But she probably understood.

Maggie Hales: I think she did. So she was a wonderful teacher and a wonderful mentor and I'm so grateful to her. It wasn't as though she counseled me directly about careers and teaching or law or anything. It was really more watching her live her life with such passion and she loved Indian history and she loved teaching.

Blanche Touhill: Why did you choose law?

Maggie Hales: So that's interesting. I think in part, one of the reasons I chose law is my grandfather was a judge, my father's father. My father went to law school but on his own decided to withdraw and it was partly out of rebelliousness against his own father. And so when I was looking around at a career...I was 20...even though I was 20...22 years old, only eight or ten years had passed since my dad had passed away, I was still grieving and I think in a way I chose law to take him in. It's kind of hard to explain.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah.

Maggie Hales: But that this is something humans do, we take on characteristics or qualities of people we lose and it's a way to keep them alive and so I think that was part of it. Also, I've always been verbal. I like to write, I like to read. I've not been quantitative and I like to argue. So that's something I learned from my father, around the dinner table, how to make an argument and do it in a civil way. So that seemed to be a good fit.

Blanche Touhill: Were there many women in the law school?

Maggie Hales: I entered law school in 1979 and I would say, yes, there were, in the class. There were...I don't know what the percentage was. I don't think it was 50% but a good number of women were in my class, not as many teachers were women, but I had wonderful teachers.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have any women teachers?

Maggie Hales: I did, I had a wonderful teacher of Contracts who I think is still there. I'm afraid her name is escaping me, and she was young, she was a star, she was wonderful. She was tough and she came in, there was this legend there whose name I do remember, Professor Immel at St. Louis University Law School and so she came in and had to live up to that. So she was good.

Blanche Touhill: Were you a leader in law school?

Maggie Hales: I was one of those students who always raised their hand and annoyed everyone else.

Blanche Touhill: I know everybody else is trying to not raise their hand.

Maggie Hales: I didn't know until later how annoying that was. I loved law school. Something about it really spoke to me and I loved reading the cases. I loved contributing in class. Professors would ask questions and I was so anxious to participate.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a study group or did you do it yourself?

Maggie Hales: You know, I did it myself. Later I formed a study group when we were studying for the bar. I wish I had done that sooner but the friend who later told me how annoying that was is one of my closest friends today. In fact, she was over for dinner last night. She's an appellate judge, Shari Sullivan and we became very close friends in law school and have remained close friends. But after we became friends, she teased me about always raising my hand. You know what I did with court? I didn't pursue elected positions but I just thrived there and loved it.

Blanche Touhill: So you graduated from law school and then what happened?

Maggie Hales: So I had an idea that I wanted to do urban planning and I took every course I could from Peter Salsin, who was a professor there and still, I think, is a professor emeritus. I've taken continuing legal ed from him. He was a wonderful teacher and yet, I couldn't find a job specifically in that area of urban planning. So I started networking and I had some informational lunches which is what we did then and we still advise new graduates to do and I ended up going to work for May Company. May Company at the time was a huge nationwide retailer. It has since been purchased by Macy's and I went there and I did not go into the real estate area, luckily. Instead, I had a wonderful job there doing business contracts, trademarks, copyrights, anti-trust, advertising law. It was a terrific, terrific time and I learned so much there and it was something I hadn't planned on. I hadn't thought in advance I wanted to go to work in an in-house legal department for a retail company but it was just amazing because of the people and the things I learned, the discipline I gained because of how I was mentored there.

Blanche Touhill: Did you get to travel?

Maggie Hales: I did. Oh, my gosh, within a month after arriving as a brand new lawyer, they put me on a plane to Washington, D.C. We didn't have Google Maps. I had to buy a map. I had to travel around to all these department stores and advise them on how they were complying with a federal order around anti-trust laws in these shopping centers and I was brand new on the job. That was a terrific job because in an in-house legal department like that, where they had a lot of lawyers, it operated really like a law firm, you got to do things that outside law firms didn't get to do. I was very close to the heartbeat of the company. So I did, I traveled right away. I had to rent a car, travel around, following the map and it was great. And then they sent me to other...because there were department stores all over the country. I went to Connecticut; I went to California; I went to Denver, advising companies on how to comply with federal law. It was really fun.

Blanche Touhill: And then what happened?

Maggie Hales: And so I stayed there and I did well. I set goals. While it wasn't a law firm, I figured out that they had an equivalent to making partner so I talked to the general counsel and I said, "What do I need to do and how long will it take for me to get this promotion?" and he gave me an idea and so I did it and I think it was senior counsel, was the title, so I achieved that within five or six years, which was what I thought was a good amount of time. I had a ball there, working with men and women who were mentors to me and were very kind and taught me so much and really helped me grow as a professional.

Blanche Touhill: Could a women get promoted?

Maggie Hales: Yes, actually, a woman could. I did and the lawyer I'd had an informational interview with, Mary Kathic was a real estate lawyer and had been there for many, many years and she was senior counsel.

Blanche Touhill: When you got there?

Maggie Hales: Yes, when I got there and she was quiet and reserved so I didn't seek her out so much for mentoring. In fact, she said something interesting to me a year after I'd been there. I stopped in her office and she said, "You know, it's funny, Maggie," she said, "you know so much. You have so much information about what's going on" and I wasn't necessarily even conscious of doing this but I do believe...I thought about that when she

said it and I think that has contributed to my doing well. At May Company, I absorbed like a sponge everything I could and I just listened and I talked to people. It's funny, when I say that, I feel a little self-conscious because when I've seen other people do that, it looks very grasping and clawing. I don't think I was doing it that way...

Blanche Touhill: You were a communicator.

Maggie Hales: I was and I loved information and I knew enough to know that if you knew what was going on, there were more opportunities. So I did do that, I kept my head down.

Blanche Touhill: Was that your work with your mother's PR firm, or just the dinner table conversations?

Maggie Hales: I don't know. I think it's genetic. I just think I have a communicator. I see this in my daughter.

Blanche Touhill: And your family dinners encouraged you?

Maggie Hales: Yes, it did. Dinner was mandatory.

Blanche Touhill: So the boys and girls each talked?

Maggie Hales: Yes, and my father would hold forth and then he would invite those of us around the table to counter him. My father's best friend his whole life was the opposite of a New Deal Democrat, whatever that is in 1960, best friend. We went camping together and he and Arthur argued and had great love for one another but politically they did not see eye-to-eye.

Blanche Touhill: Well, so, how long did you stay with the May Company?

Maggie Hales: Thirteen years.

Blanche Touhill: And then what happened?

Maggie Hales: I was married and 11 months later, I had a baby and it was 1994. I wanted to stay and work out a part-time arrangement so I talked to the general counsel but at that time, they weren't offering that and he said no and I had just received my best review of my career there and the biggest bonus I'd ever received and I talked to my husband and we were able to allow me to stop working. So I decided to take time off and I had a five-

year-old step-daughter and a new baby and I decided it would be best to knit the family together and take some time off so that's what I did.

Blanche Touhill: And how long did you stay off?

Maggie Hales: I stayed off for nine years.

Blanche Touhill: Until your youngest child was four or five?

Maggie Hales: No, until she was nine.

Blanche Touhill: Under she was nine, okay.

Maggie Hales: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: So she was going in the 4th or the 5th grade.

Maggie Hales: She was in 4th grade and I could have done it sooner. I am very close to my younger daughter and I actually...I went back to work at the advice of a friend who said, "You know, the benign neglect is one of those tools in the toolbox of a parent that all children benefit from so maybe you should go back to work because it might be good for Chloe" but I wanted to. I very much wanted to get back out.

Blanche Touhill: So where did she go to school?

Maggie Hales: She went to New City School in grade school and then she went to MICDS for high school.

Blanche Touhill: And who was the principal of the New City School?

Maggie Hales: Tom Herr.

Blanche Touhill: He's an UMSL graduate.

Maggie Hales: Tom Herr, I just saw him a week ago.

Blanche Touhill: Everybody loved Tom.

Maggie Hales: Yes, he's lovable. My older daughter went to Forsythe School and then MICDS.

Blanche Touhill: When you went back to work, where did you go to work?

Maggie Hales: Interesting: I was walking around the neighborhood, ran into a friend of mine who was a surgeon and this was 1993, actually, and I said to Jeff Lowell...he's a transplant surgeon at Barnes, teacher at Washington University...he had been working with a group of volunteers from First Responder Community so police and fire, public health, other doctors on planning for regional security. So this post 9/11 and there were people in St. Louis as volunteers working together. This was before there was any funding and they were making plans of what to do if there's a big disaster in St. Louis as a result of...they were thinking mainly about terrorism but natural disasters, of course, are something that you need to respond to as a region. So he said, "We need to incorporate. Could you help us set up a non-profit corporation and start raising money?" I said, "I'd be happy to do that. I'm hanging out a shingle. I'm going to practice law." So I got into that and months later, the federal government announced funding coming to metropolitan areas to do just this. So my husband knew Les Sturman at East-West Gateway so we called Les and said, "We think that this should be under the umbrella of a regional planning agency" and Les said, "I agree" so I negotiated an agreement with Les Sturman, a memorandum of understanding that would allow East-West Gateway to be the fiscal agent of this new not-for-profit I had set up.

Blanche Touhill: Terrific. So the federal money can come in more easily?

Maggie Hales: Yeah, more easily and they knew how to accept the money and distribute it and so I was hired within a couple of months as the deputy director of this new Homeland Security agency called Stars and we were housed at East-West Gateway so I started doing that in February of 1994.

Blanche Touhill: How did your daughter take to the fact that you were going to get a job?

Maggie Hales: Wonderfully. I think it was a relief in a way for her, subconsciously probably, a relief but you only need so much of your mom and New City School had a wonderful after school program so I sent her in to that and it was good for her, really good for her. She learned a lot.

Blanche Touhill: So how long did you stay with Stars?

Maggie Hales: So, that was so much fun. So I was deputy director and Les actually wanted to make me the executive director but the powers that be, many of the first responders, many of them male, felt that "a uniform needed to be the executive director" and I didn't have a uni...they found a retired

fire chief to become the executive director. So he was executive director and I reported to him and it worked fine.

Blanche Touhill: You did the work?

Maggie Hales: Mainly.

Blanche Touhill: And he reached out to the fire departments and...

Maggie Hales: And the police and he was a decent guy with a good heart, a little bit in over his head.

Blanche Touhill: Well, he hadn't been trained for that.

Maggie Hales: No, he wasn't a writer; he wasn't a communicator.

Blanche Touhill: But he was willing to let you do it.

Maggie Hales: He was a good guy and he appreciated the work that I did.

Blanche Touhill: You were a good team.

Maggie Hales: We were and I treated him very well, with respect but within a couple of years, I was hired at East-West Gateway to be the deputy director of East-West Gateway.

Blanche Touhill: Under Les?

Maggie Hales: Under Les.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, good.

Maggie Hales: That was a new position that he had created. His board had been advising him for some time to do that and Les and I connected. I looked around when I got there and I could see things that he could improve in terms of finance and human resources and he said, "You're a position. You should apply for it" and so I became deputy director of East-West Gateway.

Blanche Touhill: And how long did you stay there?

Maggie Hales: So I stayed there for...my time there really was just a total of about eight years, I think...to 2012, so 2004 to 2012.

Blanche Touhill: And then did you go with Arch River?

Maggie Hales: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Okay, now stop. I want to change the subject just a bit: If you had been born 50 years earlier, what do you think your life would have been like?

Maggie Hales: So, if I had been born in 1904, I would have gone to college, I have no doubt. I would have likely, because I am so verbal, I think I would have become a teacher or a writer. I thought for a time about becoming a teacher when I was in college but I was encouraged to follow law and, of course, my father having rejected the law, I thought I would take it up. I would have married. I do think I would have had a career. I think I would have been teaching or writing in some capacity.

Blanche Touhill: So you would be different than your mother because your mother was really the homemaker until life changed.

Maggie Hales: Well, you know, Blanche, that's an interesting question because I do strongly believe that who we are as people relates very much to who our parents were, how we were raised, the kinds of feedback and love and support and encouragement we received. So my upbringing, for example, is very, very different from my daughters'. My mom was limited, I think, in her capacity to be a mom. Her parents lived through the Depression. She lived through the Depression. She didn't have access to counseling or help when she could have used it, I think, raising six babies and then losing her husband so her capacity to be there for me was limited. I kind of went in the opposite direction and studied a lot about how to be a good parent and I think gave my daughter a stronger foundation than I had. So, I wouldn't change my life because everything that my mom and my dad did, every experience I had contributed to my rich, rich life today but to try and judge without knowing what kind of parents I had, it's hard to say. So looking backward, I guess, is a little bit of a cheat for me because had I had the mom I had and I was born in 1904, I don't know that I would have had a career; I don't know that I would have had the courage and the gumption to do what I did.

Blanche Touhill: Well, if you were born in 1904, the chances are you would have been a teacher, a nurse, a secretary or a homemaker.

Maggie Hales: Yeah, so I think...

Blanche Touhill: What you're saying is you would have done one of those.

- Maggie Hales: I would have been a teacher because as much as I admire nurses, I'm so thankful for the medical profession, I didn't have the ability to do that. Teaching I would have loved.
- Blanche Touhill: And you could have worked in St. Louis County and you could have gone to college. More and more colleges were opening for women.
- Maggie Hales: So my mom went to St. Catherine in St. Paul.
- Blanche Touhill: There were Catholic women's colleges and there were the Lindenwoods of the world.
- Maggie Hales: Yeah.
- Blanche Touhill: I think Webster College didn't really open until the '20s. But anyway, let me ask: Is there some award or awards that you've gotten that you really do prize?
- Maggie Hales: I have been at the helm of organizations that have received awards, City Arch River, for example. As far as awards in my name, my name might have been on a plaque but the award was really for the organization and the work that we had done together.
- Blanche Touhill: As a team.
- Maggie Hales: Yes, my predecessor worked on it, my staff and our design team so at City Arch River, we did receive an architecture design award, for example, the first year I was there and they were just wonderful about it and I went and accepted the award.
- Blanche Touhill: Is that the one that you really treasure more than any other?
- Maggie Hales: I think it is, yes because they were architects and landscape architects and paid so much attention to the detail of what it was that we had done. In comparison, at the dinner, they showed all these competitors so it was a very thoughtful award.
- Blanche Touhill: Would you be the same person today if you hadn't gone to India?
- Maggie Hales: No, I would not. I pay close attention to international news. I mean I always have. All of us do today but 20, 30 years ago, I would absorb everything I could about news in South Asia, for example. I was very interested in India and Pakistan and Afghanistan and I remember, after

9/11 and all the news came out about everything that was going on, I would talk to people who would say, "Well, Afghanistan is nothing. It's a nothing country. They never had any history"; "Oh, right." And so I'd sit them down and say, "Well, let me tell you about the history of the Near East and South Asia and it's very rich. So much was happening there before we came."

Blanche Touhill: Let's go on then to the City Arch River.

Maggie Hales: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: So how did you decide to make that move?

Maggie Hales: Well, I was happy at East-West Gateway and I was humming along, although I also had experienced a disappointment there because when Les left, I applied for his job and he wanted me to get that job but the board of directors is comprised of elected officials from around the region. I had good relationships with all of them. They formed a search committee of 10 and interviewed me and interviewed some other candidates, narrowed it down to two people and the search committee of 10 was split, 5 to 5—5 wanted me and 5 wanted a new guy from a small town in New York and I had good friends on the search committee so I kind of understood what was happening. They didn't breach any confidences but they kept me apprised but this process went on for months and months and didn't resolve in favor one way or another. Ultimately, they dissolved the search committee and decided to name one of the board members as the executive director. So that was Ed Hillhouse, wonderful guy. He had been the county executive from Franklin County and so I chose to stay. He became executive director. I went back to being deputy director and I stayed and I enjoyed working with him. I wanted to support him. I felt a very strong loyalty to him, to the board and to the organization in spite of that set-back or disappointment that I experienced. It turned out it was the best thing that could have happened because a year-and-a-half later, Susan Troutman, the executive director of Great River Screenway who I had come to know while I was at East-West Gateway, called me and said, "Maggie, this job is opening up and you should apply." I said, "Oh, gosh, no." I said, "That project is never going to get off the ground. That's way too expensive of a project. I'm coming from an organization that gives out federal money..." ...and this was a huge project, 380 million dollars.

She says, "You know, I think you should interview. I think you'd be perfect for the job. Why don't you just interview." So, on a lark, I took the interview, I met with Walter Metcalfe, I hit it off with him and I thought, this is a wonderful challenge so I wanted to learn more about it and I just stayed in the process.

Blanche Touhill: And that was 2000 and...

Maggie Hales: '12, right, and they offered me the job and I took it and I'm so glad I did.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, it was a wonderful experience.

Maggie Hales: It was terrific. What a lucky turn of events.

Blanche Touhill: Because it will change that downtown area.

Maggie Hales: It absolutely will. I would say the theme of my life is...I'd have to choose two adjectives...

Blanche Touhill: Well, choose two.

Maggie Hales: Resilience.

Blanche Touhill: And?

Maggie Hales: Learning.

Blanche Touhill: Okay. Why don't we start off the last five minutes by saying...I'll say talk about City Arch River and the theme in your life and you've got five minutes and when you get to a minute, she'll tap me. What's the theme of your life?

Maggie Hales: The theme of my life is resilience and life-long learning.

Blanche Touhill: Now talk about your experience with City Arch River. Why was it so important?

Maggie Hales: City Arch River Foundation, that job was a wonderful opportunity because I took so much of what I had learned at East-West Gateway about partnerships, relationships, funding, accomplishing projects, solving problems. When I interviewed for the job, Walter Metcalfe said to me at one point, "You know, Maggie, I don't know if you're the right person for the job. You're a planner. You're coming from a planning organization." I called him back immediately and I said, "Walter, no, no,

no, no, no, I don't know anything about planning. I stumbled into this job at East-West Gateway. I'm a problem solver and you need a problem solver at this job" and he said, "Bingo, you're right" and later he did offer me the job.

Blanche Touhill: What problems did you solve?

Maggie Hales: So, a lot of relationship issues. That project at City Arch River is going to profoundly change the region, not just downtown. It's important for downtown but by taking that icon and creating a new museum, freshening all the landscape and tying in the river is going to have an effect for years to come on the quality of life in the region. It will create jobs; it will make urban downtown a much more fun place to be, and it's really fostering other developing going on in and near downtown, I would say not just downtown but out to Cortex, across the river. It's a regional project that's so important. So some of the problems we faced were knitting together all the partners that were essential: the National Park Service, the City of St. Louis, Great Rivers Greenway District, MODOT, the state, Jefferson National Parks Association, all of these organizations have a hand in making sure it works. So I spent a lot of time working on those relationships, reassuring people that it was going to work and they had to trust us and work with us. I don't know that I was 100% successful but I do think that I helped a lot in that arena. I helped negotiate contracts that needed to get done. I really brought kind of a practical point of view to getting things done, less philosophical, less ideological; let's just get it done because you had to have contracts. You had to check that box to move to the next step, and building the organization. When I started there were three employees and when I left there were eleven, so building the kind of organization, a team really, to do the work needed to finish the construction, but more importantly, to establish the partnerships going forward, to care for that finished project for decades to come. So we needed a strong staff there at the foundation and I did build that staff.

Blanche Touhill: And you also built the money to keep it going when it got up and running.

Maggie Hales: Right, absolutely. Well, we raised \$250 million dollars for the capital part of the project and were starting on building the endowment beyond that and we had started plans around annual giving and memberships to

create that annual fund. So that will be done really by the current staff there now. I did the capital part of the project.

Blanche Touhill: Well, it was exciting.

Maggie Hales: It was terribly exciting. I mean, I felt at City Arch River like I was really at the heart of things.

Blanche Touhill: And you were.

Maggie Hales: Yeah, in terms of St. Louis and it's a profoundly important endeavor, really, a direction for St. Louis more than a project so to have a role in that, it felt historic and important and significant. I was very, very lucky to have a role in moving that forward, really lucky.

Blanche Touhill: Do you think your communication skills helped?

Maggie Hales: I'd like to think so. I've always been more of an over communicator. Sometimes people say I don't need to communicate quite as much and I accept that as constructive feedback but I find that it's always better to make sure you're communicating as much as possible, if not a little too much because I have found people often don't take in what you're saying the first time. The repetition helps. I would just pick up the phone and call people rather than use e-mail, for example. That's something I've always believed in but a couple of mentors at City Arch River said, "Don't use e-mail. Pick up the phone," because with all of those partnerships, there were times when things got heated or there were misunderstandings and really, to cool everything down, you needed to go meet someone in their office or pick up the phone because you can always repair those miscommunications and keep going.

Blanche Touhill: When did you know it was going to succeed?

Maggie Hales: Well, I always believed Walter Metcalfe who said, "We are going to succeed." He just didn't take no for an answer.

Blanche Touhill: So when you took the job, you knew you were going to do it?

Maggie Hales: I really did feel that way. Walter Metcalfe and the board of directors he had assembled, I knew we couldn't fail. I just had to live up to his expectations and the commitments that he had made and that, in taking

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that job, I was made to work my tail off to ensure that we did everything in our power to succeed. I just never took no for an answer.

Blanche Touhill: Well, thank you very much. It's been a wonderful hour and I appreciate all you've done for St. Louis and I wish you well in the future.