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Interview no. 1626

Judith Leonard

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Judith Leonard

Interviewer: Barbara Dent

Project: El Paso Medical History

Location: El Paso, TX

Date of Interview: April 8, 2004

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Transcript No.: _____

Transcriber / Summary: Patrick Driscoll

Judith Leonard was the wife of orthopedic surgeon Mort Leonard; she was born in Chicago, IL on August 8, 1925; she attended multiple colleges, and had two sisters; she graduated from the University of Arizona in 1946 in Social Work; describes courtship with husband when she returned to Chicago and recounts moving to El Paso, TX in 1948 for husband's residency at Hotel Du Catholic Hospital. She goes over the various doctors that worked in El Paso; she recalls the various hospitals at the time, the building of Providence Hospital; mentions that there were few Hispanic doctors, and reveals that the medical society was closed to them except for a few from medical families; she remembers Dr. Kalikian that trained her husband; she explains why her husband's group eventually moved their office to Murchison St, closer to Sierra Medical Center. Ms. Leonard recounts travelling for her husband's work, describes the career and interests of her children; she goes over her family's love of opera and talks about her volunteer work and social life, her husband's involvement with the building of Temple Mt Sinai; she recalls vaguely knowing the physician who killed attorney Theodore Andress in a feud; she reveals that despite her social work background, didn't work after getting married because people viewed it as taking a job away from someone who needed it; states she did volunteer work for the El Paso Symphony, National Council of Jewish Women; Planned Parenthood; describes husband's time as a volunteer Olympics physician for the U.S. Ski Team for ten years, says her family got to travel with the team; discloses why nurses and other medical personnel eventually went from wearing skirts to medical scrubs. She recalls UTEP's plan to have a medical school, but doctors who owned Southwestern General Hospital blocked it to prevent Providence from becoming more important; she goes over family interest in music and skiing, the death of her husband; Mrs. Leonard explains the Pan American Round Table effort to get to know women in Juarez. Ms. Leonard closes by summarizing her volunteer social work and support of her husband in his activities.

Length of interview 57 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a