

# Basic Detail Report

## **Title Interview with Judge Ellen Bree Burns**

Date 1999 November 24

Primary Maker Ellen Bree Burns

Description Oral history interview with Judge Ellen Bree Burns who was interviewed by Bruce M. Stave on November 24, 1999 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project.

Topics Discussed: - Early Life and Family : Born on December 13, 1923, in New Haven, Connecticut. Lived in Hamden for early years and after marriage. One of three daughters. Her mother worked as an inspector during World War II. Her father was a Veterans Employment Representative for the State of Connecticut. Her grandfathers, James Bree and William Bree, were lawyers and state senators. - Education: Attended Spring Glen School and Hamden High School. Graduated from Albertus Magnus College with a B.A. in September 1944. Entered Yale Law School in July 1945 and graduated in 1947, both on accelerated wartime programs. She majored in English and studied Greek for three years at Albertus Magnus. - Interests: Reading, ice-skating, was a Girl Scout. - Experience: Discusses being a woman in Law School , approximately six women in her Yale Law class. Notable female classmates and friends include Anita Robbins, Alicia Connor, Mary Fitzgerald, and Catherine Roraback. - Law School Activities and Preferred Subjects. - First Job After Law School and Career in the Legislature : Graduated in 1947. First job was with a special commission revising Connecticut Statutes. Joined the Legislative Commissioner's Office in 1949. Worked closely

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with legislators, especially the Judiciary Committee. Key legislative

accomplishments included the abolition of county government and restructuring the state government, and completely redoing the criminal code.

Appointment to the Bench. First appointed to the Circuit Court in 1973 by

Governor Meskill. Her first assignment was in GA 14 in Hartford, a traffic and

small claims court. - Religion.