

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Lee S. McKeithen

Date 2001 April 4

Primary Maker Lee S. McKeithen

Description Oral history interview with Lee S. McKeithen who was interviewed by

Judge C. Ian McLachlan on April 4, 2001 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's

History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project. Topics Discussed:

- Early Life: Lee S. McKeithen was born on April 24, 1913, in Albemarle, North

Carolina. Her father and two brothers were lawyers. She was the youngest of

four siblings. - Early Education: She attended Albemarle Public Schools, and

graduated high school at sixteen. - College: She attended the Women's College

at Duke and then Duke Law School, starting in 1932. Her entering law class had

six women out of thirty students. She initially studied English as an

undergraduate, and decided to study law. - Law School Experience: She passed

the Bar exam in 1934, after two years of law school. She never felt discrimination

from male classmates or professors, except for a professor who was difficult

with everyone. - Early Legal Career: Her first job after law school was working

with her father at his firm, R. L. Smith & Sons. She was admitted to the Bar in

New York in 1941. She argued six or seven cases before the North Carolina

Supreme Court. She was the first woman admitted on motion in the First

Department of New York. - Marriage and Family: She married in 1939. Her legal

career was interrupted for over twenty years to raise four children. - Return to

Law: After her husband's sudden death in 1968, she was encouraged to take the

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Connecticut Bar Exam. She took and passed the Connecticut Bar Exam in 1973.

She then began working at Cummings & Lockwood in Greenwich, doing real

estate and title work. - Community Involvement: She was involved with

American Field Service, where her son participated in an exchange program to

Italy. She also served for twenty years on the Representative Town Meeting in

Greenwich.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes