

PEGGIE JACKSON HICKS

Narrator

KIM HEIKKILA

Interviewer

December 12, 2025

Saint Paul, Minnesota



Funding provided by the State of Minnesota's Legacy Amendment, through the vote of Minnesotans on Nov. 4, 2008, and our generous donors and members.

Copyright © 2025 by Minnesota Historical Society

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy and recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Oral History Office, Minnesota Historical Society, 345 Kellogg Blvd West, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102.

TRANSCRIPT—PEGGIE JACKSON HICKS

Interviewee: Peggie Jackson Hicks
Interviewer: Kim Heikkila
Interview Date: December 12, 2025
Location: Saint Paul, Minnesota
Length: 01:07:26

[START OF INTERVIEW]

Kim Heikkila: This is an interview for the Oxford Community Center Oral History Project. It is Friday, December 12, 2025, and I'm here again with Peggie Jackson Hicks. My name is Kim Heikkila. And this is the second interview Peggie and I are doing, because I realized almost immediately after our first interview that there was so much more that I'd like to talk to you about and learn about you. So Peggie has very graciously agreed to a second interview and I'm so glad because there's a lot of stuff yet to talk about. So thank you again for being here.

Peggie Jackson Hicks: You're welcome. No problem.

KH: So, again, we've had a full first interview, so I won't repeat too much of that. Some of it may be repeated, but one of the things that I was struck by after our first interview and that I didn't ask you much about was the fact that you moved here in 1973, I think it was, with a baby, with a four month old son.

PJH: Yes, right.

KH: And you said you got involved at Oxford pretty quickly and ended up making some really good friends there and continuing your basketball career, which is the other thing I want to talk about. But tell me a little bit about just what it was like to be in a new city. You had had contacts here before, you had been to St. Paul before, but what was it like to be here, living here in a new city with a little baby?

[00:02:00]

PJH: Right. Well, first of all, it was very exciting knowing that I was moving to a place where I had relatives. I had relatives in Mississippi as well, but I came here from Chicago because I had left Chicago when I was four months pregnant with my son. You remember the story. My Aunt Bea, who I lived with, was a schoolteacher. When she found out that I was pregnant, she told me I could no longer live with her because I guess she felt that it would, I guess, ruin her reputation, so to speak, because she was a schoolteacher teaching children, students, what to do, what not to do, and those kinds of things. And so I had gone and did some of those things that she said don't do. [laughter]

So, in essence, okay, so I moved to Chicago, and that's where my son was born, in Chicago, because my brother came to pick me up as soon as I called him. He came down to Mississippi and got me and moved me to Chicago. So I stayed in Chicago for eight months. I was four months pregnant when I got there, and my son was four months old when I moved to Minnesota.

So it was actually, like I said, exciting knowing that I was moving to Minnesota, where my sister was—my two sisters, rather. I moved in with one of my sisters, me and my four month old son. So I was looking forward to that, looking forward to being in a new city here in St. Paul, Minnesota. I knew some people that were already here, even from Mississippi, people that had already moved to Minnesota from Mississippi. There's at least four families that I knew.

[00:04:00]

I was looking forward to starting a new life here in Minnesota. Moved in with my sister. We lived at 1036 Marshall Avenue, which was very close to Oxford. So that's how I knew about Oxford and had heard some people talk about Oxford Recreation Center. I

went to Oxford one day and that's where it all began. Met a really good friend, my first longtime friend here in Minnesota. Vera Carpenter was her name. She came here from Blytheville, Arkansas with two toddlers.

KH: Okay, so she was a mom also?

PJH: She was a single parent as well and we hit it off, clicked right away, and continued that friendship up until she passed away September 18th of this year.

KH: Oh wow. That's amazing. That's a long relationship. Now, did either of your sisters have kids also when you moved up here?

PJH: Yes. Well, one of them did not have children at the time. Or did she? Well, one of my sisters had kids, but no. The one sister that I lived with did not have children at the time.

KH: Okay, so it was you and your sister and your son. Was she married at that time?

PJH: Yeah, she was married. They were separated at that time.

KH: And you have to forgive me if I don't remember that I asked you this before, because I know we talked about you being at Oxford and seeing a car with the state of Minnesota and that you had this long career at the state of Minnesota. But when you first got here with your son when he was so little, were you working?

[00:06:00]

PJH: I was not working at the time. I wasn't working at the time. Actually, I'm trying to remember exactly how I got that job. I'm thinking it may have been through the St. Paul Urban League because I had some contact with the St. Paul Urban League. I had previously worked at the St. Paul Urban League prior to my moving here. I came during the summer months and had a summer job at the St. Paul Urban League. Then, actually, once I moved here, I was able to go back to the St. Paul Urban League and work. During

my work at the St. Paul Urban League, they told me about this job opening at the state of Minnesota. So that's how I got to the state of Minnesota.

And yes, that was a dream come true, too. Because during one of my times at Oxford. Yes. I saw this car passing by, state of Minnesota written on it. And I just knew that. I said, Wow, that person driving that car has to be someone very special and has a very important role to be driving that car. So, one day I'm going to be driving one of those state of Minnesota cars.

KH: And you did.

PJH: I did. Drove many state of Minnesota cars. For years.

KH: And all over the state, right?

PJH: All over the state of Minnesota. Saw some of the most beautiful places in Minnesota that I never knew existed. Never knew existed. This is Minnesota? I felt like I was out of the state of Minnesota, in some of the places that I saw.

KH: There's so many different landscapes in this state.

[00:08:00]

PJH: There really is. Yeah. So back to your original question. You know, how did I feel about moving here? Like I said, it was exciting knowing that I was going to be with my sister; knowing that she was going to be a big help, a support system for me, which she was. And the rest is history; I guess I'll say.

KH: So you got the state of Minnesota job through your work at the Urban League. Was that the first job you had then, once you had moved here with your son, was for the Urban League?

PJH: Yes, it was. The first job.

KH: How soon after you moved here do you remember that you started that job?

PJH: Oh, gosh. Well, let's see. He was just four months old. I'm going to say

probably within four months, I would say. Somewhere around four months.

KH: Okay, so your son was still little.

PJH: Yeah, he was still little and then I had my older sister here who was not working, so she kept my son while I worked at the St. Paul Urban League.

KH: And she was the one who had kids of her own?

PJH: Yes, she had kids of her own.

KH: So, she was home with her kids and your son?

PJH: Right.

KH: And just for the record again, what is your son's name?

PJH: Garland, G-A-R-L-A-N-D, Jackson.

KH: So he grew up then in the company of your—his family, aunts, cousins. How many kids did your sister have?

PJH: Oh, my sister that kept him. Let's see. She had, at the time, just three. And as a matter of fact, one of her children and my son are the same age.

[00:10:00]

KH: And the reason I was so chagrined at myself for not having asked you about this the last time was I was thinking about it. We adopted our son, so he was 16 months old when he came home to us, and I was married at the time, and even so, it was overwhelming. That's a lot of work to have a little kid and to do it as a single mom. So it occurred to me, how did you do this?

PJH: Yeah, you just never know what your capacity is until you're put in a position where you have to do certain things. So that's the way it was for me. I always loved kids though. I was always babysitting kids. When I had my own child, it was a lot of hard work. But again, living with my sister and having another sister here who supported me, they were great, very helpful in helping me to raise my son. You just do

what you have to do.

KH: You don't really have a choice, yeah.

PJH: Exactly.

KH: So you move here with your son, you take a job at the Urban League a few months later, and then eventually with the state of Minnesota. So you're busy, you're working, you have a young child. How does Oxford fit into all of this? How do you put all of this together?

[00:12:00]

PJH: Well, let's see. I would say Oxford, for me, was a place that allowed me to get away from the stressors of life, raising a son. You have family that assisted, but just being able to be around others, to go and to release some of the anxiety through sports, through athletics, was very helpful. So, yeah, it was a way for me to release some of the stressors of life by participating in sport, by playing basketball, softball, volleyball. And that was a part of me. That was something that I love, too. I enjoy being active in sports and athletics.

KH: Because you had grown up playing sports in high school and at home.

PJH: Exactly. At home with family, with all of the six brothers and the two sisters. Mostly the six brothers though. And through high school and college. It was just a part of me. I don't know how I would have turned out without being involved in sports and athletics. It was so embedded in me, and it was wonderful to have that opportunity to be able to go down to Oxford whenever I needed to get away.

KH: And it was close, too, so it was easy access.

PJH: Very close. Just a block away.

KH: And would you go on the weeknights after work? Would you go on the weekends?

PJH: Whenever I could. Whenever I could fit it in.

KH: So you were playing all these sports at Oxford. Were they like league sports?

Did you have a set schedule, like every Monday night I'm there to play basketball?

[00:14:00]

PJH: I know that at one time, I was on this basketball team, and I can't remember when we played, but I know through the Parks and Recreation. I was also on a team where I think it might have been Tuesday nights or something, we were in this league.

KH: Okay, so there was a regular schedule to it.

PJH: Then there were times when I'd just go for what they called pickup basketball, just going because you knew somebody was going to be down there playing.

KH: And so when you went for pickup, were you playing with other women only or were you playing with men also?

PJH: Both, yeah. Both men and women.

KH: And the men were fine? They were respectful of women athletes?

PJH: Yeah, it was fun. Yeah. A good time. We learned so much from them boys, and they learned a lot from us, too. "Oh, these girls can play," I would hear them say, sometimes.

KH: We'll come back and we'll talk specifically about your basketball career through Concordia and through the other big miss in the first interview is the Minnesota Fillies. That's a big deal. But before that, at what point did you start bringing your son to Oxford?

PJH: Oh wow! Probably I would say maybe around when he turned three, maybe. When he turned three years old.

KH: And did they have activities for the little, little kids like that?

[00:16:00]

PJH: I don't recall them having activities when I was there during those times.

"Okay, darling, sit right here while Mom plays basketball," or whatever. Bring him toys to play with or books to read or something.

KH: So this is the era before there were daycares set up or toddler activities?

PJH: Right, I don't recall that at all.

KH: But he grew up watching his mom play ball.

PJH: He did. Yes, he did and he enjoyed it, too.

KH: And at what point, I don't mean when, specifically, the month and year, but at what point did he become involved in sports himself?

PJH: Oh gosh. Well, this was actually before he became involved in sports. I'm going to my college years now. I just remember him being in the stands and during timeouts or halftime, he would come out of the stands and get out on the court and shoot the ball. [Laughs.] It was a lot of fun. He wanted to play, too. They would let him run and play until it was time for us to start back.

KH: And that was when you were at Concordia?

PJH: This was when I was at Concordia, yeah. But let's see, I would say he was probably second, third grade when he started sports. He played some basketball and football. Those are the two that he was involved in.

KH: And that was at Oxford?

PJH: Yeah, that was at Oxford.

KH: Were you both down there playing your respective sports at the same time once he started playing?

[00:18:00]

PJH: No, because I needed to be where he was when he was playing his sports, making sure that he was okay.

KH: So you mentioned your college playing days. When you were at Concordia, were you working at that point?

PJH: When I was at Concordia? Let me think. No, I was not working at the time because school was mostly all day. So, no.

KH: Okay, so you were a full time student?

PJH: Yes, I wasn't working then.

KH: So, and maybe we talked about this before, and it's probably in my notes somewhere, but do you remember what year you started at Concordia?

PJH: '75, 1975.

KH: So, it wasn't long after. So your son was still pretty little. Two years old, three years old?

PJH: Right. My sister was taking care of him.

KH: So, yeah, let's talk then more about the evolution of your basketball career because it's quite an accomplished basketball career. So you had played in high school, and you graduated in 1970 in Mississippi. You get pregnant, moved to Chicago, then end up here, and then you are playing at Concordia. So tell me a little bit about what that experience was like playing ball at Concordia.

PJH: Right. Well, first of all, the reason I chose Concordia was because one of my sisters had gone to Concordia and had graduated from Concordia. I always say I'm always two steps behind her. [Laughs.] This is my sister that I lived with, and she told me about Concordia.

KH: And what was her name?

[00:20:00]

PJH: Armanda, A-R-M-A-N-D-A. She told me about Concordia, and I said, okay, I'll check it. Because I knew that I wanted to continue my education. There was a little

lapse, because I graduated from high school in 1972, and then I enrolled in Concordia, 1975. But, as I know I mentioned this to you earlier, when I first enrolled in Concordia, it was a little overwhelming because I had never attended school with anyone outside of the Black race. Concordia was not very diverse at the time I went. I think the population was 800 and the Black population was 80, so about 10 percent.

So it was overwhelming. Wow, how am I going to do this with all these white people? But slowly, actually, after a few days, I felt like, wow, these people are really nice. These people are really nice. There's nothing to be afraid of. I felt like they embraced me quite well. I became very involved and met some really nice people, and became friends with them. So it wasn't as scary as I thought it was going to be.

KH: That's good.

PJH: It ended up being a great experience. I know I told you, too, earlier about a couple of people that asked me to run for the homecoming queen. I'm like, really? Nobody's going to vote for me, but anyhow. They did.

[00:22:00]

KH: They did.

PJH: I ended up being the first Black homecoming queen at Concordia College. So, I guess, in essence, I would say that it ended up being like one big happy family. All the students just cared about each other, the Blacks and the whites. We became great friends and didn't really have any opposition or anything. It was a wonderful experience.

KH: That's nice. And so that was in the mid-70s?

PJH: Yeah, this is '75 and through '79 is when I went to Concordia. It was in '76 when they approached me to run for the homecoming queen. When the vote was all tallied, my heart did a flip-flop when they announced the results. I was like, "Really?" Yeah, it was great. It was just exciting.

KH: Yeah. Now, Concordia is not technically in the Rondo neighborhood, but it's very close. Did you ever feel a connection between Concordia and the neighborhood at all? Was there overlap there? I mean, apparently not so much in the student body.

PJH: I don't think so. I don't think I felt a connection.

KH: I mean, it's so interesting and good that you describe such a harmonious culture at Concordia, because I would imagine that that wasn't the case everywhere.

[00:24:00]

PJH: Right, right. And maybe not even from everyone's perspective. I don't know. I feel like I'm the type of person that can get along with just about anybody. I love people. I really do. It doesn't matter what color you are. So everybody may not have had the same perception or the same experience, but that was my experience, and that's what I saw.

KH: So, a lot of it is what you, and what an individual, brings to a situation as well.

PJH: Amen. Exactly. Yes.

KH: And so, you said, am I understanding you correctly, that your primary motivation for going to Concordia was to complete your education?

PJH: Yes.

KH: And tell me again what your degree was in.

PJH: Elementary education.

KH: That's right. But you also played basketball.

PJH: Yes. Yes.

KH: Was that an incentive for you to go to Concordia at all, or was it just like a happy byproduct?

PJH: Well, yeah. I knew I wanted to play basketball. Because I knew I had

something to bring to the sport, but that was not my primary reason for going. I wanted to finish my education. So once I got to Concordia, I decided, okay, I'm going to try for the basketball team. I did and was welcomed and had something to share with them. I had something to bring to the basketball court. They saw me. As a matter of fact, at Concordia, during my basketball years, they changed my name from Peggie to Leggie Peggie. [Laughter.]

KH: Which is your email address, even today.

[00:26:00]

PJH: Right, exactly. It was because of my jumping ability and my rebounding ability. Leggie Peggie. As a matter of fact, it was my coach that was the first one that called me Leggie Peggie and that's what they call me now. They see me on the street, "Leggie Peggie." [Laughter.]

KH: So those are some of your particular skills on the court, jumping and rebounding. How tall are you?

PJH: Five-ten.

KH: And so, was the basketball team at Concordia also like the rest of the student body, mostly white?

PJH: Mostly white. As a matter of fact, when I played, let's see, there were probably—let's see, there was Betty Hart, Kathy Burks, a young lady from Minneapolis. I would say maybe four of us on the team.

KH: Four African American women?

PJH: Yeah, four African American women.

KH: And so, this is in, again, '75 to '79, not long after Title IX passed in 1972. Did you feel when you were playing basketball at Concordia like the women's team had equal access to the gym, to the locker room, to training schedules, all that stuff that we

hear about Title IX being necessary to kind of expand opportunities for women?

PJH: Right. Well, I guess I did feel that there were some limitations for the girls, or females.

KH: Like what?

[00:28:00]

PJH: Oh, I don't know. Well, actually, there were times when we were getting ready to practice and it's like the guys would act like they owned the gym. They would come in and pretty much take over.

KH: While you were out there in the gym?

PJH: Yeah. I mean, it felt that way, but, of course, we didn't allow them to come and take our space. We finished what we had started. So, I mean, that's just an example.

KH: From these guys that were trying to kind of elbow you off the court in the gym, did you get a sense of their attitude towards women athletes?

PJH: Well, yeah. I guess a differing attitude, basically. But again, we stood our ground. "Hey, we're getting ready to practice. You have to wait. Wait your turn."

KH: And did you have a male or a female coach or coaches?

PJH: We had a male coach.

KH: A white male coach?

PJH: Yes.

KH: And he was good?

PJH: Oh, yeah. He advocated for us. Yes, he did.

KH: And how were your games? Were they well attended? Did you have a good fan base from the students?

PJH: We had a good fan base because we had a good team. Yeah, we had a good fan base. Yes, we did. Probably not as many as the guys had, but yeah, we had a good fan

base, and we had a good team, too.

KH: And what was your travel zone when you were playing for Concordia? What other schools were you traveling to, to play?

[00:30:00]

PJH: Oh, gosh, let's see. I remember Gustavus had a team. I'm trying to think locally. I can't remember.

KH: Yeah, that's okay.

PJH: I just remember Gustavus Adolphus, right at this point.

KH: But they were all in Minnesota?

PJH: Yes.

KH: Do you know, was it a Division III?

PJH: Division II or Division III, something like that.

KH: So it was more of a regional competition. So do you remember when you traveled to other places, Gustavus or wherever else, did you feel like other schools had a good fan base? Like, were fans coming out to watch women's basketball?

PJH: So-so. Some schools had a good fan base. There were quite a few in the stands and then at some schools there weren't.

KH: And did it matter to you?

PJH: No. [Laughs.] I'm going to go out here and do my thing, no matter who's in the stands or how many are in the stands. Sports, for me, it was embedded in me. What's in you has got to come out of you. So that's how I felt. This is something that I've been blessed with. So I'm going to do my best, no matter who's in the stands or who's not in the stands, I know what I'm supposed to do. That's the attitude I had. I feel that my teammates had the same feeling. Because no matter who was in the stands, we just worked together, we played together quite well.

[00:32:00]

KH: And were you aware of the context? Like, oh, Title IX has been in place now for just a few years and this is about women's equal access to sports?

PJH: No, no, no. That never was brought up.

KH: So. Not even on the radar?

PJH: Not at all.

KH: What was on the radar was the game.

PJH: Right. Not at all.

KH: And tell me again, I know you did last time, I'm sure, what position you played.

PJH: In college, I played forward. No, I take that back. Yes, I did. Forward. And sometimes center.

KH: And were there any particular games or events or moments in your college basketball career that were really important to you or that stand out in your memory?

PJH: Yeah, as a matter of fact, I remember doing a two-day tournament. It happened to be at Concordia College, where I broke the rebound record. I had 28 rebounds in one game, and I believe I had 28 points in that same game. And there was also a time, it was actually during this same weekend, I believe it was, where I also set not just the single game, but the tournament record.

KH: For rebounds?

[00:34:00]

PJH: Yes. Matter of fact, let me see. I think I got some notes on that. Can I take a look at that?

KH: Yes, by all means.

PJH: So during my freshman year, okay, I set the team record by hauling down 26 rebounds—26, not 28—26 rebounds in a single game. The following year, which would have been my sophomore year, I was voted the most valuable player while also setting a state rebound record with 32 rebounds in a single game. I also set a tournament record with 80 rebounds in four games. As I said, because of my jumping ability, my teammates and coach gave me the name Leggie Peggie. In 1977 and ‘78, I was voted team captain and all tournaments player. In 1978, I was voted the most valuable player in a tournament.

KH: Well, I sure am glad we’re having this conversation because we missed a lot in that first interview, because that’s pretty impressive.

[0:36:00]

PJH: Yes, and it was my sophomore year that I was approached by some students to run as one of the five candidates for the honor of homecoming queen. I said I was reluctant and really didn’t feel that I had a chance to win but decided to give it a try.

KH: And eureka, you won.

PJH: I did win, yeah. And, yes, my heart did a flip flop.

KH: That’s pretty outstanding. And this is true for many, if not all, student athletes. You’re busy. To be that talented and that committed to your athletics as well as being really committed to your academics, that’s a busy life. And you were a mom as well.

PJH: Oh yes. Time management. It really is about time management and being able to do those things. Only by the grace of God and having my sisters as my support system was very, very helpful.

KH: Speaking of support systems, were there any support resources from the city or from Concordia that helped young mothers?

PJH: Well, through the county, yeah. I did get some help through the county.

Because like I said, at some point, I wasn't working, so I did get some support from the county.

KH: Now, was Concordia able to offer any scholarship money for you to play basketball?

[00:38:00]

PJH: Yeah, they did help us as well. The Pell Grant or something like that.

KH: Any other highlights? I mean, those are really good highlights. Or any particular games that stand out in your memory or teammates?

PJH: Right. Well, let's see. Well, actually, during the end of my junior year, which was in '78, that's when I was drafted to play in the first women's professional basketball league in the United States.

KH: And what was it called? Was it the Women's Professional Basketball League?

PJH: Yes, the WBL.

KH: Yeah, so let's talk about that.

PJH: So it definitely was a dream come true. I remember at one of the games, this sportswriter, you remember Charley Walters? You heard of him? He wrote articles in the *Pioneer Press*. So he came to one of our games one night and he interviewed me. I remember telling him that I wanted to play professional basketball and, somehow, I don't know, the word got out. Then I found out that I was drafted to play women's professional basketball.

KH: You found out?

[00:40:00]

PJH: Yeah, I don't recall exactly how it happened. I really don't. But all of a sudden I get word that I was drafted to play women's professional basketball. I was drafted in the third round and that was exciting. That was very exciting. I remember our

first coming together, everybody that had been drafted to play in Minnesota for the Minnesota Fillies. We met at the Met Sports Center, which is where we played, our first meeting, getting a chance to meet all of these ladies, and meet the coach. It was just a wonderful and exciting evening of coming together. Wow, so, who are you? Who are you?

KH: Did you know anybody else?

PJH: I did know one other person. Well, maybe two other people that played. It was very exciting. Very exciting.

KH: And how old was the league by that time?

PJH: Oh, this was the first year.

KH: So you were in the inaugural class?

PJH: Exactly, yeah. Yeah, this was the first year. And it went from '78 to '81 because of money. I think it had to do with money, the owner. It folded.

KH: The whole league did?

PJH: Yeah, the whole league.

KH: Wow. So, '78. This is the predecessor to the WNBA.

[00:42:00]

PJH: Exactly, exactly. We are trailblazers. We were finally inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, I believe it was 2014 or '17. I've got it written down somewhere here. I think it was in 2014. And that was wonderful to come together with all the different teams. When we played, there were just eight teams. When we were inducted, to see the women from all the different teams come together after almost 50 years. That was great. In Knoxville, Tennessee.

KH: And do you remember where those other teams were based?

PJH: Let's see, we had Chicago Hustle, Iowa Cornets, Dallas Wings, I think there was one in New York, St. Louis Streak. I can't remember the others.

KH: We can find that information. That's not hard. So tell me about this experience playing pro basketball.

PJH: Well, my experience was kind of short lived. I played the first year. Then I was waived, which meant that I could go and play with any of the other teams if the other teams wanted me. But I chose not to play any longer because I knew that would mean moving from Minnesota, going to a different state and having the wonderful supportive sisters that I had, my support system, I just didn't want to uproot my son and take him to a different state without knowing how things were going to work out.

[00:44:00]

PJH: I knew that I had the support here that I needed, and so I chose not to pursue it any further. But, hey, that one year.

KH: Playing pro ball.

PJH: Yeah. Hey, my dream came true. That was a dream come true. I told you about the dream that I had when I was probably five years old, I dreamed that I was going to play professional basketball.

KH: Even though there was no professional women's league at that time.

PJH: No, no. I don't know where that came from. Only God knows. But he put it inside of me and it came to fruition.

KH: That's amazing.

PJH: Yeah, it was. It is amazing, isn't it, when you think about it?

KH: It really is. Did you grow up watching men's pro basketball?

PJH: Yes. Sports.

KH: And you thought—

PJH: A woman can do it, too, not just the men. Yeah, it was amazing. It was amazing. And met some really wonderful women friends that I'm in touch with now.

We're still good friends.

KH: And were you still playing forward during this time?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: Any particular games or tournaments that stand out from that year?

PJH: No, there was not. It was just exciting being in the mix of playing professional basketball. Just fun to get to travel places that I hadn't been before, again. New York. It was one of the places that I'd never been and to finally have the opportunity to travel there was awesome.

[00:46:00]

KH: And how long was the season?

PJH: Let's see. It seemed like it started, I would say, in the fall of the year, probably through April. Somewhere around there.

KH: And you were professional, so did you get paid?

PJH: Yeah, but very little. They still owe me some money. [Laughs.] Yeah, I think they owe me about \$8,000.

KH: Wow. Got to find somebody to pay up.

PJH: Right. [Laughs.]

KH: And when you traveled, how did you travel?

PJH: Let me see. It seemed like we traveled by bus at that time. Yeah. I don't remember getting on the airplane and flying to any of these destinations.

KH: And do you remember, speaking of, we were talking about fan bases earlier. Did you have fans showing up for these games?

PJH: Oh, yeah. We had a good fan base here in Minnesota. We did. People were excited. A women's professional basketball team, we've got to go out and see them play. It was at the Met Sports Center in Bloomington.

KH: I remember that. And what about the racial demographics of the league?

PJH: Oh, okay. The racial demographics was probably even. It was probably even.

KH: Black and white?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: Was there ever any, I don't know. In any sports, if you're playing competitive sports, obviously competition is part of it. Oftentimes, most of the time, we think about that in terms of competition between teams. But there can also be competition among the players on the team. What was the competition, whether in either of those ways, whether with other teams or internally?

[00:48:00]

PJH: Well, yeah, obviously, everybody wanted to start, so there was competition within the Minnesota Fillies. Not to the point where you were upset at someone or at the other person who was competing against you. It just made you even better and made you want to compete at a higher level. So, yeah, there was competition.

KH: But it was a productive competition.

PJH: Yeah, very productive.

KH: And how many coaches did you have? Do you remember?

PJH: Oh, gosh. Let's see. I would say I just remember the coach and maybe one or two assistants.

KH: And men, women?

PJH: We had a woman coach.

KH: Your head coach was a woman?

PJH: Yes.

KH: And what was her name, do you remember? And that's, again, something we

can find if you don't remember.

PJH: Yeah, let's. I'll have to look that up. I can't remember. [The name of the Minnesota Fillies first coach is Julia Yeater.]

KH: That's okay. We can Google that, I'm sure.

PJH: Yeah, for sure. It could have been a man. I mean, there were some men around, too.

KH: So this is kind of the same question I asked about when you were playing at Concordia. Did you have any sense of, at the time you were playing, being trailblazers, doing something new for women, or even getting any brushback or resistance from anybody about a women's pro basketball team?

[00:50:00]

PJH: No, I don't remember. I think people were mostly excited for this new thing, women playing professional basketball. Yeah, it was great.

KH: There must have been media coverage, right? Were your games covered in the local papers?

PJH: Yes, they were.

KH: I have to go look at that. That would be so interesting to see. So I think we missed, unless I just didn't write it down, one of your honors at Concordia. And tell me about being in the Hall of Fame there.

PJH: Oh, yeah. In the Hall of Fame. Let's see, what year was I inducted into the Hall of Fame? I know I was the first Black female inducted into the Hall of Fame. Not to go back and back, but it was 2017 when we were inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Tennessee. And as far as Concordia Hall of Fame, I don't know what year that was. [Hicks was inducted to the Concordia Hall of Fame in 1992.]

KH: I'm sure we can find it.

PJH: I mean, I'm sure I have it at home.

KH: Sure, sure. And that was for athletics?

PJH: Yeah. Oh yeah, for athletics.

KH: And so you said that you were drafted to play for the Fillies in your junior year at Concordia?

PJH: Right.

KH: And so were you playing for them during your senior year?

[00:52:00]

PJH: I went back to college and finished my degree after I was waived. Then I went back to finish my college.

KH: Okay, so there was a year when you played and then you went back?

PJH: Exactly.

KH: Which would have been another thing you would have lost, right, had you continued to play. Or would have been just delayed further.

PJH: Pushed back, yeah. So it all worked out. Yeah, it all worked out.

KH: And did you continue to play basketball after the Fillies, after Concordia?

PJH: I did. I did. I played on an AAU basketball team. Actually, Kwame McDonald, you've heard of him, and Steve Winfield were our coaches. There was a team in Minneapolis and a team here in St. Paul. I played on the St. Paul team and our home court was Central High School.

KH: And how many years did you play? Was that the Summit-University All Stars?

PJH: Yes, the All Stars. Oh, I probably played with them, I would say at least five years. A long time. Because it seemed like I played basketball until I was 40. [Laughter.] Seriously.

KH: That's great.

PJH: Yeah. Like, wow, I can't believe I did it.

KH: Yeah. And so you were playing then for the All Stars. Was that while you were working at the Urban League and then even when you were working for the state? Are those things overlapping?

[00:54:00]

PJH: Yeah. I remember we traveled to, oh, Beaumont, Texas, and we ended up winning the competition, I don't know what, National AAU tournament.

KH: Okay, so you were traveling out of state then?

PJH: Yeah, for different tournaments.

KH: And you said there was a team in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul, so you would play against each other?

PJH: Yes.

KH: Were there other teams, like regionally or in the state that you played against?

PJH: No, I just remember the Minneapolis team and the St. Paul team. It seemed like we played weekly.

KH: And was there a season for this? Was it like winter, fall, year round?

PJH: I don't know, it seemed like it was warm. So I would say in the spring, maybe.

KH: And who were some of your teammates on All Stars?

PJH: Well, Lisa Lissimore was one. Linda Roberts. Kathy Burks. Let's see, who else? Diane Bradley. Those are some that I can remember right off the top of my head.

KH: Sure. Now, Kathy Burks, was she also at Concordia?

PJH: Yes.

KH: Okay, so both of you came out of Concordia and played.

PJH: Yeah. She was from Central High School. She went to Central as well.

KH: And were you still playing forward?

PJH: Yes.

KH: So that's kind of your position for the bulk of your career.

PJH: Right, forward. Sometimes center when I was at Concordia. But power forward.

[00:56:00]

KH: Any highlight memories from your time with the AAU team?

PJH: Just a fun time. I remember it being a lot of fun at Central High School. We would have the concessions, and a lot of people would come out, too. We played those games on the weekends. Those games were played on the weekends. We had quite a few supporters.

KH: So I had asked you earlier if you felt any connection between Concordia and the Rondo community, and you said no, not really. Was there more of a connection between the All Stars and the Rondo community?

PJH: Yeah, I would say so. The connection may have been Central High School. It had something to do with Central High School. I felt that there was a connection with the community.

KH: And so it was that your supporters were coming from right around you?

PJH: The community, yes.

KH: Gosh, there was something else I was going to ask you. So roughly what years were you playing?

PJH: Let's see. I would say '81. Wait a minute, let's see. Maybe '83. I don't know. I would say somewhere in the '80s.

[00:58:00]

KH: Yeah, that's fine. Just a general idea is fine. And the reason I ask is because how old is your son around this time? So, he must be, what, elementary school?

PJH: Now, when I played at Concordia College, he was like five. So, AAU time, he was probably, I don't know, eight, nine.

KH: So, school age. He was in school.

PJH: Oh yeah. He was still elementary.

KH: And was he watching you play all these games as well?

PJH: Oh yeah. He was always there, always in the stands, always during halftime, jumping out of the stands and coming down on the floor and playing.

KH: Were your sisters there? Did your sisters watch you play also?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: And your nieces and nephews?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: So you had family support in many ways.

PJH: Exactly. And lots of friends.

KH: And then we had talked about earlier that once your son started playing sports, football and basketball at Oxford, then you kind of, at least while you were at Oxford, shifted your attention to what he was doing. Is that right?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: And did he go to Central?

PJH: He went to Central.

KH: And do you remember what year did he graduate?

PJH: He graduated, I believe it was '93, '92, somewhere around there.

KH: And did he play?

[01:00:00]

PJH: Yeah, he played basketball for a while. Well, he didn't play high school football, but he did play basketball. Then he also was part of the drummers. I forget what they were called, the—oh, gosh, I can't think of it right now.

KH: That's okay. So, did your son know, and if I thought about this, I might know the answer, but did your son play for and know Bill Peterson? Was Bill still around at Oxford?

PJH: Oh, yeah, he knows Bill Peterson. Yeah. Steve Winfield. Yeah, he loved those guys. Everybody knows Steve Winfield and Bill Peterson.

KH: Yeah, and so many generations have come through. Florence Conover was saying the same thing about her sons playing at Oxford as well. And I was just looking at the email that you sent, and am I right that your grandsons have played?

PJH: Yes, through the rec department.

KH: Basketball, football and baseball, either at Oxford and/or Martin Luther King.

PJH: Yeah, they did.

KH: So, once you moved here, you've established some really deep roots. You had family roots here already. And now they are continuing.

PJH: Exactly, yeah. I think I mentioned to you, I don't know, it seems like, yeah, roots, I tell you. It's like, where would I be without a Bill Peterson, Steve Winfield, Frank White? They were great role models and great role models even for my sons. They really have really helped out a whole lot.

[01:02:00]

KH: And did those folks, Steve and Bill and Frank, serve as role models and help you and your kids primarily as coaches, or in what form did their impact come on you and your son? And part of this, I mean, the thing that strikes me from what you've said in our first interview and today, and you've said it explicitly yourself, is just this community of

support that surrounded you and your son. And not just for a year, but for—

PJH: Forever. Ever since I've been here. Ever since we moved to Minnesota.

Yeah.

KH: That's amazing.

PJH: It really is. It really is. It takes a special breed to have done what they have done. They are special people. They really are.

KH: Well, Peggie, I'm just looking at time, so it's 10:20, so we'll wrap up here in just a moment, but so we don't have to do a third interview, is there anything else that we should talk about or that is important to you in terms of your experience at Oxford or your basketball career or Rondo or anything?

PJH: Well, I will just say that life presents many challenges, many experiences. I look at my life as a puzzle. Without the experiences that I've had in sports, without the support that I've had from Steve Winfield, Bill Peterson, Frank White, my family, I don't feel that my life would have been complete without those pieces, without those experiences. It took those experiences to make my life complete.

[01:06:00]

PJH: Yeah, I don't know where I would be, or what route my life would have taken. I don't know. But I do know that as a result of those experiences that I've had, I feel that my life is complete now. I really do. The puzzle is complete. All the pieces have come together.

KH: And I just want to make sure we get this on the recording. So one of your sisters was Armanda. What was the name of your other sister?

PJH: Lee.

KH: Lee, L-E-E?

PJH: Yeah.

KH: I just want to make sure we get their names. You've been talking about them so much, I wanted to get their names in there, too. Well, Peggie, this has been delightful. And, again, I'm so glad you were willing to come down here again and follow up, because I'm glad we added what we've added today, these experiences about your family and your son and your amazing, amazing basketball career, and how much of that is rooted in Oxford.

PJH: Thank you. Yeah, for sure. I'm glad you asked for a second interview.

KH: Yeah, good. Thank you.

PJH: You're welcome.

[END OF INTERVIEW]