

George W. Andrews III

Lera Thomas and Elizabeth Andrews

Description of the deep connection between two congressional widows.

Interview recorded May 21, 2010

On the day we buried my dad in Union Springs, Ms. Thomas got in her car in Nacogdoches, Texas, and drove to Union Springs . it's probably about a six or seven-hundred mile drive. She got there late in the afternoon. She walked into our house in Union Springs. She found me and said, %I want to talk to your mother.+I got my mother. My mother . she was totally astonished when she saw Ms. Thomas. Ms. Thomas pulled her aside, took her to an isolated room in the house, and she told her, %Elizabeth, you need to fill out George's term. There are things that he was doing. Only you know what they are, and they need to be protected and only you can protect those things.+The immediate thing that came to mind· my dad had just gotten the seed money for the Cancer Center at the University of Alabama Medical School in Birmingham. And, it could have easily have gone somewhere else if another year passed by. And that was the thing that entered my mother's mind. Ms. Thomas convinced my mother that she could best serve the state. My mother's initial reaction was, %Oh no. It's time for another generation to take over. Our time in Washington has passed.+But Ms. Thomas convinced her to do it. And, then, after their conversation, Ms. Thomas got back in her car and turned around and drove back to Nacogdoches, Texas, that night.