Mel Steely: 00:00:01 Okay.

Camera Crew: 00:00:02 I'm recording. All right. Whenever you're ready.

Mel Steely: 00:00:06 Hi, I'm Mel Steely with the Georgia Political Heritage Program at the University of West Georgia. Today, we're interviewing former speaker Glenn Richardson at his home in Hiram, Georgia for the Political Heritage Program.

Mel Steely: 00:00:22 Okay.

Mel Steely: 00:00:26 Mr. Speaker, you were born January 12, 1960, about the time Jack Kennedy was getting sworn in as president. Born at Tanner Hospital, Carrollton, Georgia to James and Myrtle, or Merty, I think was her name, Richardson. You grew up in Winston just outside of Douglasville. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your family? Give us some idea of who they were and what they did.

Glenn Richardson: 00:00:55 Well my father, obviously, was a Richardson, and he... We grew up, I grew up and lived on the same piece of land, he'd call it the same piece of dirt, that he was born on and that his father was born on and his father's father was born on. The Richardsons had been there since at least the mid-1800s. And the road right there, it's actually a Villa Rica mailing address, is named Richardson Road. My mother still lives there. My father was born in and died in the same residential structure, literally. So, my mom was from Carroll County. Her maiden name was Broom, her mother was a Willis out of Carroll County, and they, too, had had family and roots back into the early 1800s in Carroll County. And oddly, my father's mother was from Carroll County: she was one of the Joneses. I don't know if you know the Jones boys, there was about eight of them in the mid-1800s. So anyhow, that's where we were from. Father and mother met in Carroll County and moved to Douglas County. He moved mother from Carroll County to Douglas County and they still live there. My dad passed away a couple of years ago.

Mel Steely: 00:02:18 Out at Winston?
Glenn Richardson: 00:02:19 We call it Winston, it's a Villa Rica mailing address in Douglas County, it's on the Douglas County telephone exchange with a Villa Rica mailing address.

Mel Steely: 00:02:27 Okay. Was your Dad in the military or anything?

Glenn Richardson: 00:02:32 No, Dad missed the military all the way around, he was born just right. He was born in 1936, so he missed World War II and was married with a kid and he came up A-1-A, I believe he said, and then his name was never pulled.

Mel Steely: 00:02:49 I had the same experience.

Glenn Richardson: 00:02:50 Did you really?

Mel Steely: 00:02:51 I did.

Glenn Richardson: 00:02:52 And he always talked about how lucky he was. He got married in 1956 to mother. He worked at Sears and Roebuck in Atlanta for about, I don't know, ten or twelve years, and then he bought a convenience store in Winston and ran that for forty-something years.

Mel Steely: 00:03:14 That was the Fair Mart.

Glenn Richardson: 00:03:15 Fair Mart.

Mel Steely: 00:03:16 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Now you worked at the Fair Mart there at Winston for a while and you delivered newspapers, The Journal, if I remember correctly.

Glenn Richardson: 00:03:24 I did.

Mel Steely: 00:03:26 Then worked as a grocery clerk at the Food Giant...

Glenn Richardson: 00:03:29 That's correct.

Mel Steely: 00:03:30 ... in Douglasville while you were... all that, while you were growing up and getting into high school and so forth. Tell us about that period of your life: religion, friends, activities, or whatever.

Glenn Richardson: 00:03:40 Well, it's strange. I still work, I've worked my whole life, it's kind of funny when you grow up on a... We had a farm, on top of everything. Dad also, other than a convenience store, had a trucking business - dump trucks - and a sand mining business
and we raised chickens, hogs, and cows, and did some row crops and so... You know, we only had about a hundred acres, but we kept something going on all the time. There were always chickens to be fed, hogs to be slopped, and cows' fences to put up; and then we had the convenience store and Mother had a paper route and I had a paper route.

Mel Steely: 00:04:16 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:04:18 We went to the same church that my great-great-grandfather... Right now in the cemetery at Ephesus Baptist Church, within about 150 feet: my father, my grandfather, my great-grandfather and my great-great-grandfather are all buried at Ephesus Baptist Church.

Mel Steely: 00:04:37 Is that Ephesus which is below Carrollton?

Glenn Richardson: 00:04:40 No, it's Ephesus Baptist... It's on Ephesus Church Road in Douglas County.

Mel Steely: 00:04:43 Douglas County.

Glenn Richardson: 00:04:44 It, too, has a Villa Rica mailing address but it's on Ephesus Church Road in Douglas County.

Mel Steely: 00:04:50 Okay.

Glenn Richardson: 00:04:51 We grew up Baptist. We went to church more in one year than most people do in a lifetime. You know, the Baptists, they meet Sunday morning a couple of times, Sunday evening a couple times, and then on Wednesday night just to make sure that you...

Mel Steely: 00:05:06 Prayer meeting.

Glenn Richardson: 00:05:07 Yeah, prayer meeting.

Mel Steely: 00:05:09 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:05:10 So anyhow, we did that. My father sang gospel music in his spare time.

Mel Steely: 00:05:14 Was he a pretty good singer?
Glenn Richardson: 00:05:16 My father was a really good singer. I didn't get that gift, but he had a little gospel quartet, he had, and had a real powerful baritone voice, and you know, he... Yeah, I miss that. I miss hearing him sing.

Mel Steely: 00:05:31 You grew up with the gospel music, then?

Glenn Richardson: 00:05:33 That's right.

Mel Steely: 00:05:34 Yeah, me too. I remember going to those all-night gospel things.

Glenn Richardson: 00:05:38 I wasn't real thrilled when I was a young man at hearing singing all day on... They call them... You know, if you didn't go to church enough with Sunday School and Sunday morning, Sunday night, training... BTU, you remember that?

Mel Steely: 00:05:49 I do.

Glenn Richardson: 00:05:50 Yeah, and then evening service. They'd have Sunday afternoon singings. I said, Lord, we might as well just spend the night at the church!

Mel Steely: 00:06:01 I grew up in Cedartown. They used to have them there at the courthouse on the lawn.

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:06 Right.

Mel Steely: 00:06:01 And food, dinner on the grounds.

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:06 Dinner on the grounds, that's right.

Mel Steely: 00:06:09 Our upbringing was very similar.

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:12 Those are good days.

Mel Steely: 00:06:13 They were good days.

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:13 They're good times. It was a different time. It was like Mayberry in the ’70s and ’60s, it was a different era. No cell phones. No cable TV. No computers and internet and...

Mel Steely: 00:06:28 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:29 You know, we managed fine. We hustled to make a living; we did everything we could, I mean we had hundreds of chickens... and I still have chickens today because of it.
Mel Steely: 00:06:43 Yeah. Well, you didn't have much time for extra-curricular activities, then, did you?

Glenn Richardson: 00:06:50 I really didn't. I played baseball, and that's about the only thing I did, growing up. I played a little bit of football. I didn't really like football. But I played baseball until I got to be high school age and then I actually took a full-time job when I was sixteen years of age. I say full time - thirty hours a week - almost full time. That's full-time for most people nowadays.

Mel Steely: 00:07:12 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:13 And then through college, I averaged about 32, 33 hours a week.

Mel Steely: 00:07:17 Mm-hmm (affirmative), working at the Food Giant.

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:19 I worked at Food Giant and went to Georgia State University in Atlanta.

Mel Steely: 00:07:22 When you delivered papers, you delivered by car?

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:25 Correct.

Mel Steely: 00:07:26 Yeah, okay. A lot of people my age - I'm a little older than you are - tend to think of bicycles.

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:32 You couldn't have-

Mel Steely: 00:07:34 That's in a town, though, where you do that.

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:37 That's right. Yeah, I had probably twenty miles' worth of route; you couldn't have delivered them with a bicycle.

Mel Steely: 00:07:42 No. Particularly at night.

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:44 Particularly.

Mel Steely: 00:07:45 And that's when you were doing it. Well, I don't know, though, with the *Journal*, it might have been the daytime.

Glenn Richardson: 00:07:48 The *Journal* was an afternoon paper except on Sundays, and it was an early morning, so you'd deliver about four in the morning Sunday morning.

Mel Steely: 00:07:56 Yeah.
Glenn Richardson: 00:07:57

My dad would get up with me, ride up to the place in Douglasville, put the newspapers together, he took half my route, he'd go deliver half my route, I'd deliver half. We'd get home in time to eat breakfast, take a shower, and go to church. And my dad would give up, you know, three hours of sleep, the only night that he could sleep a little bit, and help me.

Mel Steely: 00:08:17

Yeah. Always has, hasn't he?

Glenn Richardson: 00:08:20

Yeah.

Mel Steely: 00:08:21

That's good. Now you went to high school in Douglas County High, but at the time you were there, you were sharing a building with Lithia Springs High.

Glenn Richardson: 00:08:30

Yeah, the first two years.

Mel Steely: 00:08:31

Yeah. That's because they were building the Lithia, new high school there?

Glenn Richardson: 00:08:35

Yeah, there was only one high school in Douglas County at that time, but it had gotten so big that they had to go to double sessions. When I first entered high school, we had double sessions and they were building a new high school.

Mel Steely: 00:08:47

Mm-hmm (affirmative). What do you remember about that period: your teachers, your friends, activities, things like that in high school?

Glenn Richardson: 00:08:53

It's a long time ago.

Mel Steely: 00:08:54

Was it a good period for you?

Glenn Richardson: 00:08:56

Not particularly. I didn't really enjoy high school. I just... It was a... I guess, back in those days, I would go to school, you know, you get to high school about eight o'clock in the morning and get off about three-thirty or four. I would typically go, from my sophomore year through high school, I'd go to work every day. I might get one day off a week, but if I got out of high school at three-fifteen, three-twenty, there wasn't time to go home. I would go grab me a little something to eat and then go to work at four o'clock and work until nine or ten o'clock at night.

Mel Steely: 00:09:29

Mm-hmm (affirmative). And then start again at eight the next morning.
Then go home, study - whatever studying you could... So it wasn't particularly fun.

Well, you did all right in your studies; you did well enough to get admitted to Georgia State University.

I did. It was little... I had pretty good grades in high school. I never had great grades. I would have been right on the cusp of the HOPE Scholarship, just under it or just over it, but not... I certainly wouldn't have made what they now call the Zell Miller Scholarship.

Yeah, well, thank God for Zell. He got that one, and my grandson's got one of those now, up at Berry.

When you entered Georgia State, you majored in political science, graduated with a B.A. in '81.

Right.

Wasn't it a big change for you, coming from Douglas County High to downtown Atlanta?

It was. It was odd, how I got to Georgia State. I had a high school teacher that had sent me down for... He thought I needed to look at Georgia State. I didn't even know how to get to Georgia State, so he drew me a map and told me, and there was some seminar or conference about politics, and he sent me there, and that's how I got introduced to Georgia State.

Hm.

So, I drove down that first time and I thought I'd driven a hundred miles; it was only thirty, but...

Yeah.

In those days, and... But back in that time period, there were only two choices for college if you wanted to stay home, and I didn't have a choice. I didn't have the money. I paid my own way; my parents helped me with little things like gas, but I bought my own car, made my own payments for insurance.

What kind of car did you buy? Do you remember?

In 1979, I bought a brand-new Mustang from Don Rich Ford there in Villa Rica.
Glenn Richardson: 00:11:26 So, I had a car, but it was economical and it was a good car. But I would work, and Georgia State let me do that. But I could either go to West Georgia, or Georgia State, and my sister had gone to West Georgia. She is two years older than me; she'd gone there and the time I was looking, she was still going there. And so, I wasn't going to go where my sister went, I had to do something different. So that took that off the chart, it just wasn't available. So, the only other choice was Georgia State if you wanted to stay home.

Mel Steely: 00:12:00 But you lived at home and drove back and forth every day?

Glenn Richardson: 00:12:02 I lived at home. I'd leave every morning. Typically, I'd have an eight o'clock class, leave about... I tried to leave by six-thirty in the morning to get to Georgia State at eight. Even in those days, it was hard to get to Atlanta at eight o'clock in the morning because you never knew from minute to the next who was going to wreck in front of you.

Mel Steely: 00:12:19 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:12:20 And so I'd get up about five-thirty, leave about six-thirty, go to school, come home about one o'clock, study a little bit, eat something and maybe take a nap, go to work at four o'clock, work until nine or ten o'clock, come home, and that was my routine. I went to college pretty rapidly, I'm sure you know, I went to college in three years.

Mel Steely: 00:12:43 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:12:44 And then I took a year off between college and law school as a fluke, not because I wanted to, because I was sick.

Mel Steely: 00:12:50 Hm?

Glenn Richardson: 00:12:50 I'd just about worked myself into a frenzy, and I got mononucleosis the last quarter of my senior year. I was in the hospital.

Mel Steely: 00:13:01 Oh, my.

Glenn Richardson: 00:13:02 Dehydrated, had a temp of about 104.5, I think is what it was, it was out the roof, and they admitted me. I was planning to go to law school at Mercer University that fall. I had been accepted, it was 1981, and I was going to go down there and work at the
Food Giant down in Macon. There was no Georgia State University College of Law.

Mel Steely: 00:13:27 Right.

Glenn Richardson: 00:13:28 But my mother, my father, my doctor decided I needed... They said, why don't you take off. Go ahead and graduate, and take a year off. Rest. You're killing yourself. So, I reluctantly agreed because they weren't going to let me out of the hospital unless I agreed, so...

Mel Steely: 00:13:44 No choice.

Glenn Richardson: 00:13:45 I spent a week in the hospital, missed the whole first week of class, went to class, graduated, and then I took the year off. And then, in one of the many things that, I don't... I'm going to say that God guided me. I get a little emotional, but if I had not gotten sick and taken that year off, I wouldn't have went to Georgia State University Law School. So in the time I'm taking off, thinking I'm resting, Georgia State University opens the law school.

Glenn Richardson: 00:14:16 And again, I was admitted at Mercer but they didn't admit me to Georgia State until like, July of '82, the month before it opened. And it was a blessing because it let me keep working at the same job, living at the same house, and I was able to graduate from law school with very little debt. I might have owed four or five thousand dollars when I graduated.

Glenn Richardson: 00:14:41 And so, one of the many sagas in my life of two paths, I reluctantly took the path of taking off a year, and in the meantime, Georgia State opened a law school.

Mel Steely: 00:15:01 I don't know. I think it was what I was made to do.

Mel Steely: 00:15:05 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Just seemed like the right thing at the time?

Glenn Richardson: 00:15:08 Well, I had looked into medicine for a long time. I thought about being a physician, but I have a little trouble with blood, seeing it, especially my own, and I finally decided that was probably not going to be a good field.
Glenn Richardson: 00:15:23 I always knew I was going to do something and more; I used to joke and say we had enough chickens, hogs and cows, I knew one thing - I didn't want to be a farmer. It was hard work. And so, I decided law school was a good profession, and I always had that mindset that I never accept an answer, I always question the answer and the authority, and that's good for a lawyer's success, to question.

Mel Steely: 00:15:51 Did you know lawyers at the time that you looked up to, or anything like that?

Glenn Richardson: 00:15:55 I knew a few. I knew Bob Nolan, who was a judge down in Douglas County, and...

Mel Steely: 00:15:59 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:15:59 ... but not many. I would go though... When I was in high school and college, I'd go to the courthouse some and hang out and watch trials. And so, that's probably how I really got into it. I think it was, the politics always was out there; I loved politics, and that also looked like that went hand-in-hand with being a lawyer. You know, if you're going to make laws, you ought to know how to interpret them. So, I think it was a conscious decision by me that I wanted to head down the political field and the best way to do that was in law, and then wait for the right opportunity to run for something.

Mel Steely: 00:16:38 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Well now, you graduated in '84. And instead of staying in Atlanta at one of the big firms there, they're always hiring new people coming in, you came to Dallas, Georgia, Paulding County; not Douglas or Carroll, but a third county here for you, and joined up with Vinson & Osborne Law Firm.

Glenn Richardson: 00:17:05 Right.

Mel Steely: 00:17:06 That was right out of law school, '84.

Glenn Richardson: 00:17:09 Well actually, that was a little bit of a fluke, too, Dr. Steely. I had been working... I quit the grocery store as I started studying for the bar exam in the summer of '84. In those days, you could take the bar exam while you were still in school, and technically, I'd only been in school for two years when I was taking the bar exam. But you can take the bar exam if you graduated before the next bar exam. So, I quit the grocery store, started studying for the bar exam, and that's where I incurred a little bit of student loan to get through, and I started clerking part-time for
a law firm in Douglasville, Jim Dollar and Neil Detmoraine. And they had told me I had a job with them. I graduated December 15, 1984, and that was the official day they split up their law firm.

Mel Steely: 00:18:03 Oh. Job went out the window.

Glenn Richardson: 00:18:06 So, for about two or three months, I was just flapping in the wind, wondering. And a lawyer from Douglasville named Don Howell ...

Mel Steely: 00:18:15 I know Don.

Glenn Richardson: 00:18:18 ... I was doing some clerking for him. Don Howell, Jr. came to me one day and said hey, there's some boys up in Dallas, Ken, Vinson and James Osborne, are looking for a lawyer. Why don't you go talk to them? And I don't think I'd ever been to Dallas, Georgia until that day. I called them, went up on a Wednesday, interviewed with them, they called me on a Friday and I went to work on Monday. That's how quickly it went. I've been there ever since.

Mel Steely: 00:18:48 What was it like, being a small-town lawyer, and Dallas at that time was a pretty small town; the rapid expansion hadn't taken place yet. Sleepy little town.

Glenn Richardson: 00:18:57 It was. It was a lot like Douglas County. Paulding County and Douglas County have many similarities. Paulding County has now, you know, eclipsed Douglas County in size.

Mel Steely: 00:19:06 Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:19:10 It was neat. I learned to practice law, did everything from A to Z, still do to this day. I wouldn't take anything for it. I wasn't going to work in an Atlanta firm. I don't like that. I like working in a community, knowing people, knowing the community leaders and the business leaders, and being in Rotary Club, and local ball fields. Right about that time... Let's see, I went to work in March of '85. I got married in 1990 and I just became part of the community, which is what I always wanted to do.

Mel Steely: 00:19:44 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Became a community leader, as such.

Glenn Richardson: 00:19:48 I was for a while.

Mel Steely: 00:19:50 Well, you got to be the county attorney in '89.
Glenn Richardson: 00:19:51 I got to be the county attorney quickly. That was... That... I...

You know, that also was part of the guidance I got; I had a gift. I had a county commissioner come in that knew a friend of mine and knew me, and we met, and he liked me, Johnny Helms. And he said, you know, I'm going to hire him to be county attorney. I'd been practicing law four years. That's why they call it practicing, but-

Mel Steely: 00:20:19 But you knew all about deeds and all the stuff the county would need to perform day to day.

Glenn Richardson: 00:20:23 I knew... That's right. And so I was county attorney for sixteen years.

Mel Steely: 00:20:29 Hm, '89 and I guess, that was your first real exposure to retail politics, wasn't it? Unless you had been involved with somebody's campaign?

Glenn Richardson: 00:20:42 I always meddled in everybody's campaign, tried to help people, but yeah, that was when I really... So in 1989, I was twenty-nine years old, I was the county attorney, and that is as political as it gets. I mean, that's local politics 101.

Mel Steely: 00:21:00 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:21:00 Yeah, I got in there and I liked it. But that's how I got my feet wet in politics and started... I was looking for the right opportunity to run for office, so I felt like I probably needed to be a little older, I needed to be a little more settled, married, and that gave me the opportunity.

Mel Steely: 00:21:20 Is that about the time you grew your mustache?

Glenn Richardson: 00:21:23 I don't know when I grew that silly mustache. I look back on it now and laugh.

Mel Steely: 00:21:28 Well, you kept it for a long time.

Glenn Richardson: 00:21:29 I did. You know what? I don't know why I thought that was a good idea. But I-

Mel Steely: 00:21:34 It was kind of dashing, I thought.

Glenn Richardson: 00:21:36 In 1985, it probably was.

Mel Steely: 00:21:39 Yeah.
Glenn Richardson: It's kind of like looking back on those tuxedos we wore in 1978, had those lapels that were... looked like they were eight inches across! They looked pretty good at the time, now you look at them and go, what were y'all doing?

Mel Steely: Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: And wearing those bell bottom pants that would come about two feet out in front of you.

Mel Steely: Yeah, you hope those don't resurface any.

Glenn Richardson: I hope not, either.

Mel Steely: Oh, Lord. Well now, you came in to politics as county attorney about the time Paulding was going Republican.

Glenn Richardson: That's right.

Mel Steely: And I was working a lot in Paulding County at that time. I was working for Newt as a congressional aide and liaison up there.

Glenn Richardson: Right.

Mel Steely: And I remember meeting a lot of the people, remember that old sheriff they used to have up there, and he was a scary so-and-so.

Glenn Richardson: There's a bunch of them like that.

Mel Steely: Yeah. I remember going up there and they had asked me to check on this guy, NAACP was all worried because somebody had been killed up there and I went by and saw the coroner first. He and his wife were... He was a doctor there, and they were big Republicans. And I said, what about this? He said, well, it was suicide. Do you have any pictures? He showed me pictures. They'd taken the body out of the lake and laid it face down on a big old table where they were cleaning fish and all, and they had four of these little long wires with little flags on them sticking in the holes where the bullets had gone in. And they were in the man's back. And I said, how in the world could he have shot himself four times in the back? And he said, the sheriff said that's what happened and that's what happened. He wasn't going to question it. And he didn't.

Glenn Richardson: I don't recall that one, but I'm not surprised.
Mel Steely: 00:23:33 That would have been right before your time. It'd been the earlier 80s. Well, you'd have been county attorney, I guess, but... I thought then, Paulding County is kind of on the edge out here.

Glenn Richardson: 00:23:44 Used to be.

Mel Steely: 00:23:46 But it was changing, though.

Glenn Richardson: 00:23:47 It was.

Mel Steely: 00:23:48 It really was changing. You came in right with that change, as they begun to move from a rural to an urban - suburban, then urban - county.

Glenn Richardson: 00:23:58 Right.

Mel Steely: 00:23:58 Was that an exciting period for you? Did you...

Glenn Richardson: 00:24:01 Yeah, it was. When I decided to run, it was a real dilemma, do you run as a Republican, do you run as a Democrat?

Mel Steely: 00:24:09 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:24:09 At that time, there had not been somebody completely in Paulding County elected solely in Paulding County. There’s a... Fred Aiken ... I used to say I was the first Republican elected from Paulding County and Fred Aiken would correct me and say that he was the first Republican, but as I recall, his district covered Cobb and Paulding County.

Mel Steely: 00:24:30 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 00:24:31 And so it was a lot easier to get with that Cobb base, because it was Republican. But when I ran, I ran solely in Paulding County. I completely, district of Paulding County, there had never been anybody completely in Paulding County get elected as a Republican. And it was an issue. I remember contemplating it. I had no doubt of what I was going to run as.

Glenn Richardson: 00:24:55 I would go down to the capitol and watch the debates, and my representative was Charlie Watts. Now, I'd known Charlie since the 80s. Charlie actually used to represent part of Paulding, part of Douglas. He represented the part of Douglas where my family was. And then I moved to Paulding, he represented that area. But I'd go down and watch the debates, and I'd talk to Charlie. And I went, well, Charlie, you're going to vote against that,
aren't you? Or are you going to vote for it? And he'd go, no, I got to go with the majority on this one. I go, why? That's the dumbest thing I ever heard of. He said, well, we just have to do it. And that's how I used to go, this is not a good way to do business; and I decided that if I was going to run at all, I was going to run Republican. And I did. And I had a Republican opponent and a Democratic opponent.

Mel Steely: 00:25:46 Mm-hmm (affirmative), that was in '96.

Glenn Richardson: 00:25:48 1996. I remember when I made the decision to run, it was 1995, though. Charlie Watts knew I was interested, I'd talked to him, I'd been to Alaska with Charlie. We're good friends still today. He called me driving home from the capitol. He'd had just enough, it was that special re-districting session, and he said, if you want to run, you can have this job, I am never running again. And I said, all right now, I'm going to announce in a week or so. And sure enough, he came out and said he wasn't running and I announced in '95. Ran in '96.

Mel Steely: 00:26:21 Mm-hmm (affirmative), and were elected.

Glenn Richardson: 00:26:24 And was elected, first... I guess I'll make a little and say, it was going to change and all that; I think it was people like me, running as Republican, that did change it. Because in the past, a lot of the Republicans came from Atlanta and had more of that urban connection. But I was rural and I was redneck, is what I used to say. Now my friends look at me and say that I'm, you know, not a redneck. I'm a redneck. I grew up... I can do just about anything. But I also had a real conservative side, a Baptist conservative side, and fiscal conservative side. And people like me ran all over Georgia, started running in the '90s. And so now when I play in this game...

Glenn Richardson: 00:27:13 And there was a big disconnect between the conservatives of the South and the Democrats because there were many conservative Democrats, as you know, but they would often succumb to national Democratic politics on some liberal issues and water things down a little bit, and finally that's really what drove Georgia Republican, was those conservative leanings.

Glenn Richardson: 00:27:41 That's not to say I don't make mistakes; I'm not trying to say I'm without reproach by any means, but I was very conservative and I thought it was time to change the trajectory a little bit.

Mel Steely: 00:27:54 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Well, you had a Republican Senator, Mattingly, in the 80s.
Mel Steely: 00:27:59 And then you had Gingrich as your congressman.

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:02 That's right.

Mel Steely: 00:28:03 And if I remember correctly, you also, Paulding was also electing commissioners and sheriffs and what all from the party.

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:10 We started that in 1994, may have been the first time. Is that when Newt went in, in '94?

Mel Steely: 00:28:17 No, Newt went in in 70-

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:19 No, I mean, is that when he went in as speaker?

Mel Steely: 00:28:20 Oh, as speaker, yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:21 That was the year we elected the first commissioner.

Mel Steely: 00:28:24 Yeah. He actually didn't get to be speaker until '96 election, but in '94 is when the great wave started.

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:34 Right.

Mel Steely: 00:28:35 ... in Washington, so...

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:36 Yeah, I remember Newt came to our church and spoke, it was sometime in the late 70s, I was in high school or just getting out of high school, and that was in the days when you'd go speak at churches.

Mel Steely: 00:28:48 Right.

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:49 I wouldn't dare do that now. I just wouldn't do it. I never did do it, the whole time I was in office.

Mel Steely: 00:28:54 He wouldn't do it either. Back then, it was-

Glenn Richardson: 00:28:57 Back then, it was-

Mel Steely: 00:28:58 ... especially black churches.

Glenn Richardson: 00:29:00 You go politic at church! And now people try to get me to go, I'm like, no I ain't doing that. I'm not going to go to church and run for office. I'm just not going to do that. I'll go visit with you, we'll talk about the Lord's work, but I am not going to get up
and talk about political issues in church. And I just never would do that.

Mel Steely: 00:29:19 Well now, your first session, which was '97-98, was it what you expected when you got there? You'd been watching them, but now you're on the inside.

Glenn Richardson: 00:29:31 I don't know, you know, Dr. Steely, it's all such a blur now, I'll have to dig that one out of my memory banks. It was, you know, as a first-year freshman Republican with majority Democrats, no, it wasn't exactly what I wanted. I'd always realized that you need to ask questions and I wasn't scared to ask questions. The strange thing was is I shared a county with Tom Murphy. So anything that we had to be done in Paulding County, he and I had to agree on.

Mel Steely: 00:30:12 What was that like? Working with Tom?

Glenn Richardson: 00:30:13 Well, there were times it was not so easy. Do I need to stop for a minute and make her move, is she okay?

Mel Steely: 00:30:21 No, she's all right. She's all right.

Mel Steely: 00:30:24 Bob Irvin and Lynn Westmoreland probably were the two highest profile Republicans in the House at the time. What do you remember about them? Were they helpful to you?

Glenn Richardson: 00:30:35 Well, Westmoreland wasn't when I first came in. Westmoreland was a back bencher, and strangely, you know, when you go back and you look back on life, you can see, it's a lot easier to see the courses you were taking. I got seated on the left side and Anne Mueller sat to my right and Westmoreland was on the row behind me on the House floor, and one over. And he sat right there; I mean, I could reach back and touch his desk. And so that's how I got to know Westmoreland in '97-98. I was right in the middle, and I call it the left side, facing the podium. I was sitting there and I'd listen to them. Irvin was the minority leader. Mike Evans was the caucus chair. Earl Ehrhart was a minority whip. And Garland Pinholster was something in there, but Westmoreland was just nothing.

Mel Steely: 00:31:35 Caucus leader, I think.

Glenn Richardson: 00:31:37 Maybe. Maybe I've got this mixed up a little bit, but anyhow, it was Irvin, Evans, Ehrhardt, and Pinholster. And there were times that I looked at them and thought, what are y'all doing? They would sometimes oppose things just to oppose things. And I
have too, don't get me wrong, there's times you could oppose stuff. But strangely-

PART 1 OF 5 ENDS [00:32:04]

Glenn Richardson: 00:32:00 You could oppose stuff, but strangely after the '98 session ... Maybe it was in '96, we went up to seventy-something members, in '98 we held on, but in 2000 we backed up. Everybody thought we should be gaining members and we weren't. A lot of people attributed that, it's like a football coach. If you're losing football games they don't blame it on the players, they blame it on the coach. I never have understood you fire the coach. Get some different players. Maybe it's the players and not the coach, but in politics we blame it on the leader as well. Bob Irvin was the leader. I remember the conversations and most people thought Bob was a little too soft and he was a little too citified. He was never going to get republicans like me to follow him into battle, because I just didn't respect him that much. He was a good guy, he was a smart guy, but he just didn't have the same level of intensity that some of us country boys had, I guess would be a way to say it.

Glenn Richardson: 00:33:14 Westmoreland got a little disgruntled, so in 2000 after the elections, I believe is when he and I started talking. I believe that's when he took over. He came to me and said, "Why don't you run for minority leader?" I'd only been there four years and I went, "I'm not running for minority leader. Why don't you run for minority leader?" He was clearly contemplating it. That was his way of getting me to tell him I would support him. That's how Westmoreland does business and I learned that quickly. I voted for Westmoreland in there and Westmoreland took over. That was in '00 and then he served in '02, and then Westmoreland served until he resigned in '03.

Mel Steely: 00:33:59 Did you have any dealings with the speaker at that time, Mr. Murphy?

Glenn Richardson: 00:34:04 I did. It was all on local stuff. Occasionally I would create questions. I realized quickly you needed to read the rules and know the rules better than anyone else if you wanted to be successful. I would occasionally challenge a rule interpretation and he didn't like that, but there were times that he would look and say, "You're right. That's the rule." Then they would turn around and get it done a different way. Which you know what, I learned that's how majority policies work, but I think I was fearful and respectful of him, I never disrespected him.
Glenn Richardson: I remember the one time that he took something at me personally, we were at a chamber event in Paulding County. I can't tell you what year it was. It was probably, let's see, he got beat in '04 so it was probably '02. We were at a Paulding County chamber event and he stood up and he made the cardinal mistake of speaking before me, and he lashed out at me publicly. He said something like, "If Mr. Richardson and his party will cooperate with me, we'll do some good things for the state." He just went on a litany, so I got to stand up and I said, "You know, I have the utmost respect for the speaker, but I want to say something," and I turned it on him. I said, "Speaker Murphy and his party," and I started listing things they had done, would not do this. Mr. Richardson and his party would follow.

Glenn Richardson: When I got through, I had scalded him. We took a picture together, I pulled him over to the side and I said, "You drew first blood. I will never criticize you publicly in a domain like this if you don't do me. If you criticize me at my home, I'm fighting back." He said, "I agree," and he shook my hand. "You're right, I shouldn't have said that." I said, "All right." And he never again said anything about me publicly. It was a healthy thing and I would talk about the policies and bills I didn't like, but I didn't say, "Mr. Murphy doesn't need to be doing A, B, or C." But when he said, "Mr. Richardson doesn't need to be doing this." I felt it and I went, "Okay." That's how politics works.

Mel Steely: It is.

Glenn Richardson: I was poised and that was '02 or '03 or something like that and then he got beat, I believe it was '04 when he got beat. It may have been '02 when he got beat.

Mel Steely: It was '02.

Glenn Richardson: So it must have been '01 when that happened.

Mel Steely: It could have been sometime in '02 before the election.

Glenn Richardson: Well, it had to have been before the session, probably of '02. I'll get a year or two mixed up here. There's so many big changes. If I say something wrong, it ain't because I'm lying, it's just because that was fifteen years ago. I just can't remember if it was '02 or '03.

Mel Steely: Well, Murphy of course is a legend. It's often said that the way he handled the reapportionment following the '80 census and
'90 census kept Georgia in the democratic column two decades longer than it should have been.

Glenn Richardson: 00:37:24 Possibly.

Mel Steely: 00:37:24 They should have gone Republican quicker, but Murphy had managed to handle it.

Glenn Richardson: 00:37:31 Possibly so.

Mel Steely: 00:37:32 You think that's possible?

Glenn Richardson: 00:37:33 I don't think there's any doubt. I think, and you're a political scientist. If you go look, and I don't want to take credit for too much, but I'm going to take a little credit for changing that map. What really happened is Barnes got in office with Murphy and Barnes saw it was changing so he double stacked the cards. They just bit too much and had too in their mouth to chew after the '00 census in '01 and '02.

Glenn Richardson: 00:38:08 We were in session on September 11, 2001. That was when he started doing those multi-member districts and they would use those deviations, they used to call them, at 4.99%. That's because there had been a Supreme Court case that said you could make deviations of 5%. What they failed to realize is the deviations of 5% were based upon a 1980s case and technologies had caught up with it by 2000. You could draw a congressional district to one or two people. You could get it that precise. They were drawing districts with deviations of nearly 5%.

Glenn Richardson: 00:38:50 What would happen is, they would for example, in the Republican districts, if the ideal size was 25,000, I'll just make that number up, they would draw my Republican district at 25,000 plus 4.99%. I would have a bunch of Republicans in my district, where a Democrat right beside it would have 25,000 minus 4.99%. Some of them were 3%, some of them were 4%, but what they were doing was stacking Republicans all in districts to keep their votes down. It was smart, if you could get away with it. What had happened with technology and with the census data getting much more accurate, is you could draw those districts much more precise and keep those communities whole. What they were using were the deviations to pack Republicans into districts and minus Democrats out so that they could keep majorities. That's what Barnes and Murphy did together.
Glenn Richardson: 00:39:59 I don't know what they say privately, but I've talked to Roy about this and I'm still friends with Roy Barnes, but I bet you if they told the truth that was the only way they could keep majority. I'll be surprised if Tom Murphy didn't disagree with them on it, but Barnes is smart and he said, "We can do it." He was right, there was a case that said you could do it, the case was just old.

Mel Steely: 00:40:24 I remember my representative at the time was a fellow named Tracy Stallings. Tracy came to speak at our Kiwanis in Carrollton. There were a lot of people really upset about splitting those districts. Somebody stood up and said, "Tracy, why in the world did y'all split those districts like that? This is terrible." Tracy said, "We split them because we could. Our main objective was to take care of the Democratic Party." He was just as open as he could be. He lost the next election and the people just reacted. He'd run as a Democrat, and he got a lot of Republican votes because people liked him. They left him that next term.

Glenn Richardson: 00:41:07 I gave you that history to tell you how we transitioned to Republican in Georgia. I'm convinced of it, I know what happened. They draw the maps, they put them in place, and again, Republicans lost in the '02 elections. While Murphy lost, Republicans didn't take a substantial majority. We might have picked up a seat or two, but Sonny Perdue won, Tom Murphy lost and we still had 72 or so Republican seats out of 180. That was because of the districts.

Glenn Richardson: 00:41:46 What happened then is by '03, when Westmoreland decides he wants to run for Congress, he calls me up and tells me and I said, "Okay, I'm going to run for minority leader." That's a whole different story about me making that decision, but I decided to run for minority leader. In that period though, I went in and said, "What's going on with this redistricting suit?" Republicans had filed suit against the state of Georgia. It was called Larios versus the State. You almost can't find anybody who knows what Larios is. It's the last name of the first named plaintiffs. Sara Larios actually worked for the minority party at the house and we had filed suit.

Glenn Richardson: 00:42:32 There's only one little problem, we didn't have the money. Everybody thought all these rich Republicans had all the money, we didn't have any money. And so we were about to discontinue that suit because nobody had the money. I sort of spearheaded the effort and talked to Westmoreland we got all of about forty or fifty Republicans in a room and said, "Listen, we need to come up with about $500 apiece out of your campaign accounts, you can do that, and pay the attorney's fees
to keep this suit going." There was a big discussion about how we were wasting $500 apiece and whether we should do that. I went, "Y'all are nuts. This is our best chance. The Dems were wrong in doing this. If we get this in court, I think we can win it." Everybody's going, "Oh you're wasting money."

Glenn Richardson: 00:43:20 You know what happened. It all happened about the same time. The case went to court in '03. We finally sprung with enough money, we got it going and by early '04 when I became minority leader, we were in court. We actually tried that case before that three judge panel, while I became the minority leader. The judges came back during the '04 session and they ordered the legislature to redraw maps. They said, "These are unconstitutional. Draw some more." Because that's the remedy. If you're drawn them wrong ... the Democrats were in charge and I believe that I headed them off every step of the way. I love Terry Coleman to death, but I got up every morning and went to sleep every night thinking, "How could I beat them?" I had 71 Republican votes and they had 109 Democrats. 109 beats 71 every time. Why didn't they just muscle a bill through?

Glenn Richardson: 00:44:28 The answer is because I outmaneuvered them. I went and I picked up and I have eighteen Democrats that I met with privately and drew a map just the way they wanted their district to look where they could get elected. Then I went to the 71 Republicans I had and I had this little creed. I got them in a room and locked the doors. No staff, nothing but me and seventy other Republican House members. The Senate had gone Republican and you'd have thought they would have just been right in line to try to help us out, but they're senators and they didn't care. As long as they won the majority they didn't care what happened.

Glenn Richardson: 00:45:15 I got the 71 Republicans to sign a creed, and I still have the original somewhere. I made up the language myself. It says, "We, the undersigned members of the House Republican caucus, realize that if we were ever going to be a majority we've got to hold the lines. We pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor to hold the position."

Mel Steely: 00:45:36 Did you actually put that in there?

Glenn Richardson: 00:45:38 I did. I had every member sign it and here's what it old them to do. I need you to vote the way the majority says to vote. If the majority of Republicans vote on a map, I need you to vote for it, even if it means you lose your job. Guess what, some of them did. They did it. They signed it and they held the line. What I was able to do then, I took those 71 Republicans, and Coleman
didn’t know how many Dems I had. I had eighteen. I had 89 votes and I wasn’t so sure what would happen if we ever threw it up on the board. I had this map drawn, and to set up a decoy, I had multiple maps. Every time I would go get a map drawn, somebody would take and make a copy of that map, even though they weren’t supposed to, and send it over to the speaker’s office. They knew what I was up to, or at least they thought.

Glenn Richardson: 00:46:32
At one point, I had three maps in play, but one of them was an amendment, one of them was a substitute and one of them was a committee report. Of course the map, once you’d print the bill, one copy was about like that. I asked Robbie Rivers once, the clerk, how long it would take him to print those if they called it for a vote. He said about four or five hours, but we’ll have to stack it up like cord wood out in the hall if we print all that. He would immediately go tell the speaker that. I would ask them, I said, "If y’all call this for a vote, I have a bill I need printed. I need you to give me time. If you won’t give me time, I’m going to go have them print it now and we’re going to stack it up in the halls." They would look at me and say, "What are you up to?" I went, "I’ve got a little map that I want to vote on."

Glenn Richardson: 00:47:23
What I had planned to do, if the Dems called it for a vote, I was going to put my map out there. I knew full well they could never get 91 people on the floor to beat me. They could never get their members there. That’s what happened. What happened was I kept them at bay the entire ’04 session and ultimately, the court, because we couldn’t draw a map, drew the map for us and that’s how we won. That’s a long answer to how we finally got a map in place that gave us a fighting chance.

Mel Steely: 00:47:56
Jimmy Skipper was the majority leader of the Dems and he didn’t have a clue what y’all were doing, did he? Or did he?

Glenn Richardson: 00:48:04
Larry Walker had been there. Coleman and he had that fight, so Larry Walker had bowed out. Skipper had become leader.

Mel Steely: 00:48:14
Walker was gone by then wasn’t he?

Glenn Richardson: 00:48:15
He was still there. He was a back bencher but he was still there. He was one of the eighteen that would have voted with us.

Mel Steely: 00:48:22
Didn’t he almost switch over?
Glenn Richardson: 00:48:24 That's a whole different question if we start talking about Sonny Perdue and the switch-overs and who was running the show and all that.

Mel Steely: 00:48:33 Let's speak to that later. Let's go ahead and finish up.

Glenn Richardson: 00:48:37 What ultimately happened is because we outmaneuvered them, we got to a day when there wasn't a map drawn and the federal district court hired a demographer from Ohio who came to Georgia and drew blind maps. It was those blind maps in the summer of '04 that I took as minority leader. I can't remember, I think I drove 30,000 miles that summer. I drove all over Georgia recruiting candidates and running races. As you know then, we won the election in the summer of '04 or the fall of '04. When we won those, we went from 71 members to 95 members in one election cycle. Two or three of those were switchers, but they weren't switchers until we hit 91. That's how we won it. We finally got maps.

Mel Steely: 00:49:28 Well now, you did more than maps. You touched just briefly on the idea of recruiting. That '98 election, when you came in Zell Miller was governor. Then Roy Barnes and then eventually Sonny and you were his floor leader for a while.

Glenn Richardson: 00:49:48 '02 for one year.

Mel Steely: 00:49:49 And then became leader yourself.

Glenn Richardson: 00:49:50 I mean '03.

Mel Steely: 00:49:52 What do you remember about Zell Miller as governor? Did you have any dealings at all with him?

Glenn Richardson: 00:49:56 I did. Zell Miller would meet with you whether you were Republican or Democrat. You never got turned down. You could go meet with Zell Miller and talk to him. Just ask somebody, can I get a meeting with the governor and they'd say, "Do you want to come now?" Where Sonny Perdue, I was the leader and I'd have to wait a day to meet with him sometimes. There was no meeting with Sonny. Zell always had, and so did Roy. I don't know what Sonny's deal was. He was always busy and it was always hard to get meetings with him, but Zell Miller, no matter what, he was brash and hard on you and he would say some things, the first time I heard him say a couple of things, I went, "Did he just say that?"
Glenn Richardson: 00:50:41 I remember he was speaking about one particular Republican member, I guess I can say this ... No, he said it in a group of us. He said, "Well, I wouldn't take off my boot, pee in it and pour it down your throat if your guts were on fire." I thought, "Now that's pretty strong right there for a governor to say, even in the governor's office." That's how much he disliked that particular person. He'd just say it.

Mel Steely: 00:51:11 He was very straight. Newt and I went to talk with him about reapportionment while he was governor at the time. He listened. He and Newt were friends and he and I were old friends. He said, "Well, I'll tell you the truth Newt, I ain't gonna help you, but I ain't gonna hurt you. I'm going to stay out of your race altogether." That's exactly what we wanted to know. He was straight up. He told us, he didn't do anything to help us, but he didn't try to hurt us, didn't encourage anybody or anything. Very straight talking.

Glenn Richardson: 00:51:50 That's how Zell was. I didn't meet with him every day. A half dozen times maybe. He was always very straightforward with me and very honest. Roy was more difficult to meet with than Zell was because you always had to go to Bobby Kahn to meet with Roy.

Mel Steely: 00:52:11 That was his Tom Perdue wasn't it?

Glenn Richardson: 00:52:13 Yeah. Bobby always wanted to know what you wanted to meet with and then Bobby wanted to trade something in order for you to even talk about something. "Well how about voting with us on this? Why didn't you vote with us on that?" I just got to the point, I just didn't even meet with him.

Mel Steely: 00:52:30 Roy was an amazing person. He came in his first year as governor, was about as good as a governor can get. He got just about everything he wanted. Then his second year and the rest of the time it seemed like he'd wake up each morning and say, "Who can I screw today? Who can I make mad at me?" A lot of people blamed Bobby for it, and I'm sure Bobby played a role in it. Were y'all aware of all that?

Glenn Richardson: 00:52:59 Oh yeah. I mean, listen, it's natural for a governor ... it's natural for men, and I mean mankind, if you give them power, it changes them. Including me, it changes who we are and we start thinking. You start thinking, "Well I got three things done last year, I'll get four done this year." At what price? "Well I don't care about the price. I'll just pay it. I'll get it done because I want it done, therefor it's going to be done." The power
changes you into thinking, you start trying to do things that you really shouldn't try to do. That's what Roy did.

Glenn Richardson: 00:53:39 Now, Roy Barnes is as smart of a lawyer or governor. I don't want to talk about anybody's intelligence. He's one of the smartest people you'll ever meet. Supremely intelligent, but very ambitious and he tried to do a little too much and he tried to step on too many fingers and too many toes in doing that or else he would have repeated. Sonny Perdue didn't beat him, he beat himself.

Mel Steely: 00:54:07 It was a great surprise to me. I remember standing outside the VFW talking to Sonny right before the election. He felt good for winning. "Mel, we're going to win this thing." "Sonny, I think we're doing well, but I don't know whether we can pull it out or not." He said, "Oh yeah. I've got blacks and teachers that are with me now." I said, "No, uh-uh." But he did and they voted for him. It just surprised me. I guess it was after the '98 election is when you really jumped in and started getting busy organizing. At least that's my impression.

Glenn Richardson: 00:54:52 Yeah, I'd only been in there two years, but I realized quickly, Dr. Steely, I got in there and I went, "You've got to decide." I made the decision I was going to chart the course. If I was going to do this, I wasn't going to just put my toes in the water, I was diving in. I started to spend more and more time. It will consume you.

Mel Steely: 00:55:12 It was just amazing to me, because I had met you when you were first there, when you still had your mustache. I was Newt's liaison with the legislature, but you were such a back-bencher and so young looking.

Glenn Richardson: 00:55:25 I was young.

Mel Steely: 00:55:28 You were, that it didn't click much. I look back now and I see how you put together, you organized, a Republican recruitment and organization during that period. I don't know who else helped you with it.

Glenn Richardson: 00:55:45 We had some help.

Mel Steely: 00:55:47 It reminded me very much of the '70s when Gingrich and Coverdale and Mattingly had set up what they called the Long Range Policy Committee to do exactly what you were doing in looking at districts, watching reapportionment, recruiting serious candidates.
Maps, men, and money. We had to have maps. We had to have the right men for the right races and you had to have money. We had never put all those together.

They weren't able to get it totally done. They started it. But were you ever aware of their efforts? I didn't think you would be, it was twenty years later.

What was strange to me was that we had all these Republican congressmen, and you would have thought that we would have had ... I don't think I ever ... somebody may correct me, I don't think I ever talked to Newt while I was in this place. He had already come and gone, but the only person I remember talking to was the gentleman, I can't recall his name. The doctor that died, I'm sorry I can't pull it out of my ... The congressman who was a dentist I believe. What was his name?

It escapes me too.

He passed away, he was from Gainesville area. Anyhow, I didn't talk to many congressmen. They weren't that much help. The Jack Kingstons of the world, they never did anything. He wasn't any help to us, nor John Linder. These big Republican congressman were the Republican ... It was just insignificant to them that we would change Georgia. I never understood why they didn't think it was a big deal. I'm going to say this, we got a little help, but we must have did it on our own in the year 2004.

You started it earlier, during the '98 election. At least, that's the first time I picked up on it.

We started working, and we did some other things. We set up some issues. We finally figured out how to game their system. We would take their system and we would create votes that we would use. Actually in the 2002 election, I went and bought a color laser printer. I would do these pieces of paper with issues and I'd make them very targeted. A good example, why is your representative opposed to "In God We Trust." We'd take a little vote about putting that on the flag and say, "Why was representative X, why did he vote no to putting 'In God We Trust'?" We'd print about five thousand of them and we'd hand them out. On the back side, you'd flip it and it would be the vote. We'd have it circled their name and say no. If you get enough of those out there, somebody at church would say, "Hey representative, why did you vote no?"

Was Randy Evans helpful in that?
Glenn Richardson: 00:59:07 I never talked to Randy.

Mel Steely: 00:59:08 Yeah. Randy had done the same thing against Murphy in '88.

Glenn Richardson: 00:59:12 Did he really?

Mel Steely: 00:59:13 He did. He found out that Dukakis had supported a program to outlaw BB guns. Randy had those same kind of fliers printed up and had a guy run against Murphy and go out and hand these things out to people. He'd say, "You know, Tom's just lost touch. He's supporting these liberals up here."

Glenn Richardson: 00:59:39 Isn't that funny?

Mel Steely: 00:59:40 Then Tom would go around, "Tom why are you ...?" When Dukakis came to Atlanta, Tom disowned him. He won the race obviously, but Randy had started and I was just wondering if you had ...

Glenn Richardson: 00:59:56 You would think that we had some help. We didn't have much help at all. You would have thought we had help on that suit, but we didn't have much help at all. It was almost like they were scared of Barnes. I'll tell you what I found, and this will probably offend some, I don't care if I offend him. It's the truth. The Republican congressmen were so attenuated on keeping their district the way they wanted it, they wouldn't get too involved because they were scared they would irritate the Democratic majority in Georgia and they would draw their district and draw them a bad congressional district. What did they do? They would play footsie with us and pretend like they were helping us and all the while go meet with their Dems to keep their districts the way they wanted. If I said that, they'd say, "Oh well that's not true." It is true. It's true.

Mel Steely: 01:00:49 It was true. After the '91, I was Newt's representative during that time before you got there. That's exactly what was happening. Tom Perdue and I were working with Republicans and that's what was going on.

Glenn Richardson: 01:01:06 I can see Jack Kingston now. I walked in the speaker's office one time and Jack Kingston was sitting on Speaker Murphy's desk. Sitting on his desk.

Mel Steely: 01:01:15 I don't know where you found any room. Usually they sat on that big old couch.
Glenn Richardson: 01:01:21 I know, but he was sitting up on the corner of the desk and I walked in, they told me to go on in. I don't think they realized, and Jack Kingston sitting there. I thought, "What's he in here talking to Murphy about?" Of course, I was still a little bit of a novice. I didn't quite grasp that whole, "Hey just let me have my district at the coast." That's all Jack cared about, he wanted to stay at the coast. Now then he wants to represent all of Georgia, but in those days he was playing games. I see that, but that's what I was able to do. I was able to get Georgia Republican house members to say, "I'll give up my district. I'll give up my right to be a representative to get a map that'll get a majority. I'll vote for a map that draws me out of my own district in exchange for ..."

Glenn Richardson: 01:02:13 Some of our guys, like Barbara Bunn is a good example. She lost, there's lots of people that lost. I don't know where history records those. If you go look at the Republican members that were there in the session of '04 and then those that didn't come back, there were four or five of them that gave up their seats to get a majority. What I did as a majority in '05, I brought them in when we had our first end of the session deal in 2005, I invited them and introduced them as, "These are the men and women that let you be here as a majority." I can't call all their names now. I can probably pull up a piece of paper and try to find it, but some of them did it.

Mel Steely: 01:03:02 Pretty gutsy thing to do.

Glenn Richardson: 01:03:04 It was. That's what politics is, is a team sport, not an individual sport.

Mel Steely: 01:03:11 Did the religious right work with you or you with them during this period?

Glenn Richardson: 01:03:17 Well, I think they did. Obviously the religious right has always been aligned with Republicans. I wouldn't say I worked with them because I won't go quite as far right as they want to go. They would drive the bus off the cliff and they'd be okay as long as they get to hang onto the cliff. I never would do that. I always thought, and you've got to be careful, the religious right will tell you they're the majority in Georgia. They're not. They're about 45%. The antithesis of the religious right is about 45% and maybe it's 43, maybe it's 44, maybe it's 46. It depends on who you poll and when, but it's not 50%. There's about ten or ...
Glenn Richardson: 01:04:01 But it's not ten percent. And there's about ten or fifteen percent that's in the middle, and they lean a little right but they don't want to go way off the edge. And so every once in a while they'll vote to the left just to keep from driving the bus off the cliff as I call it.

Mel Steely: 01:04:17 Mm-hmm (affirmative). During this period following '98 and going up into the 2000 period, Governor Barnes was still in and you opposed ethics legislation that he was pushing, which brought a statement from Murphy that I'm sure you're proud of that he I guess was speaking to Robbie Rivers. Made the comment he didn't know what you were after. "God damn him, I don't know what the hell he's up to but he's up to something," he said. "He's the smartest son of a bitch that they've got. And he's going to beat us if we don't get something." And I don't remember the whole story on it, a part of it's repeated in that AJC interview that they did with you after last year, in 2012. And they put part of that in there.

Mel Steely: 01:05:19 But I remember Murphy was very impressed.

Glenn Richardson: 01:05:22 I don't even remember what the vote was right now. If somebody pulled it out, I probably could scrim. It may have been sometimes, sometimes when you're in the minority you set up a fight on something.

Mel Steely: 01:05:35 This was open records.

Glenn Richardson: 01:05:36 Open records.

Mel Steely: 01:05:38 Yeah, open records, as part of the ethics [crosstalk 01:05:40].

Glenn Richardson: 01:05:39 Yeah, I did oppose open... I was only person on the floor that voted against it.

Mel Steely: 01:05:44 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:05:45 I still believe that's true. Open meetings... There's a fine line between having an open government and having government open enough that it can function. Everybody says they want government to function like a business, well the first thing you know is in a business, the shareholders meetings are open to the public but the board of directors is not. And a business can't operate by talking about... If you talk about everything in a public domain, you can't get anything done.
But what was happening is Barnes... And I'll say this, I'd say with him sitting here, the funny thing is that nobody ever told the story. Barnes' agenda on that was really not so much at that time to open up government. Barnes was mad. Barnes had represented the guy that owned the *Marietta Daily Journal*, Brumby.

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Otis.

Otis, and they were trying to get records out of the Cobb Hospital Authority. And the Hospital Authority made it difficult. Brumby wanted to run a story to sell newspapers, and the Hospital Authority didn't want to open up all the records. So Barnes filed suit against them, and then he committed that whenever after that suit, that when he became governor, that he would make it easier to get records. Well, I thought that it was just a little over reaching, and so I opposed it. I think there's a healthy mix, and I'll take this example.

After my fall from grace, that I'm sure we're going to talk about in a minute, one of the things that still sticks out in my mind is that the night that my mother called 911, I don't believe that when people pick up 911 and dial 911 and they're upset and nervous and excited, I don't believe the public has a right to hear that. I think that ought to be a private communication like with a doctor, because it's typically a call for medical help. And yet, the news stations in Atlanta, they could not stand it. They had to hear my mother's voice screaming, "Get an ambulance to my son's house, I'm afraid he's dead."

But that's open records. And under open records, they can go get that 911 tape and I believe it ought to be protected. Now there actually was a bill where they're trying to protect that. And that was sort of my thought process, is that you got to be careful opening records. Government should be in the open, but there are certain parts of government that it ought to be personal and confidential. And I still believe that. I still believe that if you have a heart attack and fall on the floor and your wife calls 911 and says, "Oh my god, Mel Steely's having a heart attack," and he's screaming obscenities, that ought to be private. But it's not under today's law, because of that law we passed fifteen years ago.

We tried to change that, Charles Thomas was chairman of the duty judicial committee at the time, and he wasn't happy with it either. And Don Wagner, who was a fellow faculty member at West Georgia, close friend of mine. He and I sat down with
Charles and tried to redo that thing, but just couldn't get it done like it needed to be done.

Glenn Richardson: 01:09:15 Well, a lot of times people make open records requests not for the purpose of trying to get information but really to harass government. Anyhow, enough of that.

Mel Steely: 01:09:29 When you became leader, minority leader, you were governor’s floor leader, which opens up a whole new area. You and the governor at that point got along okay.

Glenn Richardson: 01:09:41 We did.

Mel Steely: 01:09:41 I mean, this is after the ’02 election, when we got our first Republican governor. But as you pointed out earlier, we didn't sweep the state. We got a lieutenant governor who was Mark Taylor, who was a Democrat, and Coleman became speaker.

Glenn Richardson: 01:09:57 Right.

Mel Steely: 01:09:58 And was still... The Democrats were still in charge of the house.

Glenn Richardson: 01:10:01 That's right.

Mel Steely: 01:10:02 And that's when you moved into overdrive and started doing your maps and...

Glenn Richardson: 01:10:05 That's right.

Mel Steely: 01:10:06 And all of that stuff. What was it like working with a split... I mean legislatively, working with the split system like that?

Glenn Richardson: 01:10:12 Well my role changed in that first two years pretty dramatic, I went from being the governor’s floor leader in ’03 to being the minority leader in ’04.

Mel Steely: 01:10:21 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:10:21 I was only the floor leader for one year, thank goodness. I realized quickly that governors were more interested in getting things done, getting things done so they could say they got them done as governor than they were in getting a Republican majority. And Sonny wanted to get some things done, he didn't care how he got them done. And he wanted it as his legacy.

Glenn Richardson: 01:10:48 And so it was odd, there were times I would go have meetings and I mean I think of some really strange situations. We had
that flag bill. You know, the flag was... We argued about that flag for a long time, and it's just silliness. There was a way to fix it. And ultimately, with Bobby Franklin's assistance on the present design, I came up with that spin on how we came up with the flag vote. And I remember laying it out to Sonny Perdue. How I had it a little differently, but it was clearly to go in, and I remember springing this on him. I said, "I have an idea." Do we need to get her moved?

Mel Steely: 01:11:35  No.

Glenn Richardson: 01:11:36 So what I said is, "I got an idea. Let's just change it to what we want. Just change it. And then put it on the ballot, and ask voters to essentially ratify this or go back to this or this." And they looked at me and said, "What?" And I went, "We go in and we change the flag. We get rid of the one that Barnes just put up that everybody hates and we put in this flag that Bobby Franklin has designed. And we call it the Bobby Franklin design," it really was some other... But we do it instantly, start hanging it all over the state of Georgia, but we go ahead and have a ballot question since everybody wants to vote and we give them this flag that we've changed to, the old stars and bars flag, or the one that Barnes had. Or we... Didn't matter.

Glenn Richardson: 01:12:27 Well they looked at me and said, "We can't... How can we do that?" I said, "We can do whatever we want to do. Sure we can do that." And so that's how the conversation started. Well then somebody said, "Well, you know we can't do that because we just shifted that electronic voting and electronic voting won't let you have three options. You either got to vote for one or the other." And I went, "Well that's the craziest thing I ever heard of. You're telling me we got a computer voting system and you can't have three choices?" And they went, "No, it can't be programmed." I went, "That's the biggest bunch of baloney I have ever heard of. You're telling me we got a computer voting system and you can't have three options?" And they went, "No, it can't be programmed." I went, "That's the biggest bunch of baloney I have ever heard of. You can program it to have fifty choices. I don't care what they're telling you, somebody's lying." And point of fact it was, I believed at that time it was Cathy Cox's MO, "Oh we can't, the machines won't do that." I'm like, what?

Glenn Richardson: 01:13:23 So then they ran with that for a while, said we can't do that. So ultimately, you know, we wound up with we'll change it and we'll vote for this or the other flag and it was a compromised position. I still think it was wrong, I think we should have put the stars and bars out there, because I went and privately polled it. And it was not nearly as important of an issue as everybody thought it was. And I said, "Let's get the crazies that wanted to go back to that Civil War flag," and I mean that. Because it was not a fight worth fighting. Represented about ten to fifteen
percent of Georgians. And it wasn’t enough. And I said, “Let’s give them their vote.” Because the flag we’ve got now is a good looking flag. And I said, "It'll go down five to one," but ultimately I couldn't prevail and that was because of the Democratic influences didn’t want the stars and bars back on the ballot, and I was convinced it would get defeated.

Glenn Richardson: 01:14:23 That was how it was working with Sonny Perdue. Obviously we came up with, we did the change, we did the vote, but we voted on the Barnes flag versus the, I called it the Bobby Franklin flag.

Mel Steely: 01:14:35 But you were almost guaranteed to win that one.

Glenn Richardson: 01:14:37 And we were. Overwhelmingly.

Mel Steely: 01:14:38 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:14:40 And so-

Mel Steely: 01:14:40 People didn’t like the Barnes flag at all.

Glenn Richardson: 01:14:42 They didn’t at all, I didn’t. It looked like a... We used to joke and call it, it looked like a place-mat at Shoney’s.

Mel Steely: 01:14:48 Right, exactly. Well when you became leader, you got new committees. I mean you moved right into the power structure, economic development, rules, ethics, ways and means. I mean those are the power committees.

Glenn Richardson: 01:15:05 Right.

Mel Steely: 01:15:10 You were busy at that time doing party recruitment, you were working on the reapportionment maps, and all of that stuff. But you also had to work on legislation. What do you remember legislatively doing that period, anything at all or is it just a blur to you?

Glenn Richardson: 01:15:26 It's a blur. We did a couple of things, and we'd set up some votes on some things. But you can go look at whatever we ran on the elections in '04 were issues that we privately sat back and set, those votes on amendments were not accidents. They were thought out, planned, strategized, drawn up and… I used to have in my desk, I had amendments to bills that never got voted on. But we thought through what, if this comes up, how we can amend it to frankly create a vote on something that we can use as a campaign issue. Because we knew they would
take... If it said “Glenn Richardson” on it, the Dems were voting against it.

Glenn Richardson: 01:16:13 And so that's how we get those silly votes like putting “God we trust,” that was a James Mills amendment, but at the time James Mills was sitting right beside me. And he said, "I got an idea," and he lays that out there. And he goes, "Help me figure out where to do it." And that's what people would do to me. They would come to me and say, "I have an idea." And I'd go, "Yeah. But you can't do it like that. Do it like this." And I would show them where to put it in the bill.

Glenn Richardson: 01:16:37 So I sat with James, and we worked that up. I never will forget when that went up on the board, we used to say, all of a sudden it went up. And it said on page three, insert the words at the bottom of the flag “In God We Trust.” And you could have heard a pin drop on the floor of the house, because everybody's going now how do we vote against a Mills amendment that says in God we trust? But they did, and they held a party line, and voted it down. And we took something as simple as that and beat them.

Glenn Richardson: 01:17:09 And then when I got in majority, I quickly took away the ability to do that. That was the craziest thing in the world. We would sit and plan for days and weeks amendments on bills, you didn't have to tell anybody you had it, hold it in those desks. They say, "Hey, they're bringing up house bill 184 today," and you go, "Oh, I got an amendment for that." I had them in order.

Mel Steely: 01:17:32 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:17:32 We'd pull that out, you hold it to the last second. You'd wait 'til debate had concluded, you'd walk up there, you'd drop it in, and you'd have ten seconds for people to look at it and they'd go, "What does that say?" And that's how we created issues.

Glenn Richardson: 01:17:51 Now, did we ever win on those amendments? Not much. But we created votes.

Mel Steely: 01:17:58 You became kind of a Republican Denmark Groover. In a sense.

Glenn Richardson: 01:18:03 That's what some people would say. I never knew Mr. Groover but they said he was really sharp at putting in things just in the right places.

Mel Steely: 01:18:12 He was something else. He was something else. He was a marine fighter pilot in WW2.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glenn Richardson: 01:18:15</th>
<th>Yeah, I wasn't a marine fighter pilot.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mel Steely: 01:18:17</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
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<td>Glenn Richardson: 01:18:17</td>
<td>Never.</td>
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<td>Mel Steely: 01:18:18</td>
<td>He was sat in a... We interviewed him, we spent half the interview talking about how to fly a Corsair before we ever got to the other stuff.</td>
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<td>Glenn Richardson: 01:18:29</td>
<td>Would this be a good moment to-</td>
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<td>Mel Steely: 01:18:30</td>
<td>But you were doing-</td>
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<td>Glenn Richardson: 01:18:31</td>
<td>Could we take about a two minute break?</td>
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<td>Mel Steely: 01:18:39</td>
<td>Your dealings with Sonny Perdue as governor when you were his floor leader reminds me of the dealings that Tom Murphy had with Lester Maddox. Lester was more open I think then possible Governor Perdue was, in that he was willing to allow, at that time floor leader Murphy to represent him, but also to differ with him and he would actually listen and make changes at times.</td>
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<td>Mel Steely: 01:19:08</td>
<td>Was that your experience at all with Sonny?</td>
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<td>Glenn Richardson: 01:19:13</td>
<td>Sonny would listen. Governor Perdue would listen. And every once in a while he would make a change, but it became clear to me over time that his idea of making a change would be so that he could use that as a chip the next time he really wanted something. So he would throw... We'd call it throw you a bone, he'd throw you a little bitty thing, we'll make a change on this bill, now let's talk about the big deal. And so it wasn't so much about him listening and compromising, it was about him trying to get a chip so that he could get you to do what he wanted.</td>
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<td>Glenn Richardson: 01:19:50</td>
<td>There were several cases in point. You know, we'd been fighting to get a Republican majority, a Republican governor. I'll never forget, the very first meeting I had as a floor leader was in the fall of 2002. Sonny had been elected, it was December. We walked into a meeting and this would foreshadow the way he would govern. Lynn Westmoreland was the minority leader, I was the floor leader, we walked in a meeting and we thought we were meeting with the governor. Well, we could never find Sonny Perdue after he got elected. I may have met with him</td>
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once between the time of the election and when the sessions started, he’d always send other people in. And he sent Hank Huckaby in, now you know Hank. And we had this big meeting and we said, well, where’s the governor? Well he’ll be here in a minute. He’s tied up. He’s got other people he’s meeting with. Well what’s more important than meeting with his floor leader, the minority leader, the Senate leaders.

Mel Steely: 01:20:49 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:20:49 What could be more important? I never did understand what could be so important that he was meeting with that he couldn’t meet with us. But they said we’ve got some bad news, the revenues are not good, it appears that Barnes and them spent all the money and we’re in trouble, but we got a way to make some revenue enhancement. That was the first time I’d ever heard the word revenue enhancement.


Glenn Richardson: 01:21:14 And we go... Then the second thing they said is we’re going to increase the sin taxes. Now, here I am 42 years of age, a lawyer, governor’s floor leader, I’d never heard the words “sin taxes.” I don’t know how I’d missed it, I was just stupid I guess. And I went, "What’s a sin tax? How do you tax sin?" And they introduced me to, "Oh, we’re going to tax alcohol and tobacco." And I went, "What does that have to do with sin?" I get the alcohol. If we’re going to tax sin, we’re going to make a billion dollars a day because there’s a bunch of sin out there. But I didn’t know anything about taxing tobacco as a sin.

Glenn Richardson: 01:21:58 So what happened is they come in and they quickly made a decision. The first meeting I go, they said, "We’re going to raise revenue, we’re going to raise taxes on tobacco and alcohol." So the very first meeting I had as a floor leader, Sonny Perdue had made a decision that we were going to raise taxes. The first Republican governor since the Civil War and the first meeting he has with his Republican leaders is to tell them we’re going to raise taxes. And we were in stunned silence. How are we going to get our guys that we fought so hard for to get this guy in office, and the first thing we’re going to do is raise taxes. But that’s what I was charged with doing as the floor leader.

Mel Steely: 01:22:40 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 01:22:41 And I swallowed hard and took it. So here’s an idea how compromise came about. I was trying to push the tobacco tax,
and ultimately got the governor to agree that we couldn't push the alcohol tax. We already were taxing alcohol at a high rate. And so we figured out a way to raise tobacco taxes, but there was no way that the governor was going to back off the... So what I got him to do is I said, "Listen, at a minimum let me do these as separate bills." And that was his idea of compromise. I did them as separate bills and so as to not ask other Republicans to sign on tax increase bills, I was the only signer on the alcohol tax bill. It still got introduced, it never passed. Glenn Richardson's the only one who signed it, and I raised my hand and said I'll take the whipping that I introduced two tax increase bills.

Glenn Richardson: 01:23:42 Now, out here it didn't beat me, although I had some of my supporters saying, "What are y'all doing? Raising taxes? Why don't you cut government services?"

Mel Steely: 01:23:50 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glenn Richardson: 01:23:51 But that was Sonny's. And that's why Sonny never went over really big with the real Republicans. Because his idea after all these years was we'll just raise taxes on tobacco and alcohol. It was one of many things that we disagreed on.

Glenn Richardson: 01:24:09 The other was how were trying to do the maps, and it's a strange story not reported anywhere in history, but it happened. Sonny publicly tried to get Larry Walker to be speaker, because he and Larry Walker were from the same county. Well he lost that and Terry Coleman became speaker. Well I was then the minority leader, I mean I was the floor leader. No I'm wrong, I was minority leader by then. By the time we got to talking about the new maps, I was the minority leader, I changed. In less than a year, I went from being floor leader to minority leader.

Mel Steely: 01:24:50 Mm-hmm (affirmative). '03 you became leader, minority leader.

Glenn Richardson: 01:24:53 I got elected the fall of '03 after Westmoreland started running for Congress. And so by '04, we started talking about a power sharing arrangement with Terry Coleman. And we were trying to get a power sharing arrangement where enough Democrats would switch from Dem to Republican. We would put a map in that would appease the judges, and Coleman would remain speaker. And I was the minority leader, not the floor leader. And I went and met with Terry Coleman and we had this piece of paper. I still haven't found it. It exists. And it had a power sharing arrangement, where we offered to Terry Coleman that he would switch in the '04 cycle and he would stay speaker, and
I was going to be the majority leader. But, the power sharing arrangement in exchange for him getting Democrats to switch to Republican was he would name one chair, I would name another. And we split them up, I had them written down. He could have rules, I'd have appropriations. He could have ways and means, I would take something else. And we laid it out there.

Glenn Richardson: **01:26:11** And we had this deal almost done. And the governor, Sonny Perdue, was trying to broker it. But we got down to the last meeting or so, Terry Coleman looks at me and it's just he and I in a room, he goes, "Okay, this is the '04 cycle. What happens after the '04 cycle?" And I went, "What do you mean what happens after the '04 cycle?" He went, "What are you going to do. I'm going to be speak in '04, who's going to be speaker after that? What are you going to do about speaker?" I went, "I'm running for speaker after the '04 cycle. You can run and I'll support you in '04, but in '06? I'm running for speaker."

Glenn Richardson: **01:26:49** Terry looks at the piece of paper, folds it, slides it back across, no deal. I went, "No deal?" He goes, "I'm not going to go for that. I'll just take our chances." Now, I don't know how he remembers it. That's what happened. Coleman and I could probably talk about it and laugh about it. The worst decision Coleman ever made, politically. Because if he had stayed and I'd got him... I don't know how in the world we'd have got the votes in '04 to getting speaker again, but he would have been a Republican, he'd have switched parties. He'd have been the Republican speaker. I would have been the Republican majority leader. And he could have hung on and he could have built the power base, and he could have been speaker for several more terms. Once you get in, you can stay in. He didn't... I walked downstairs to my office and I went to the minority leaders office and the governor's office said, "The governor wants to meet with you." Terry Coleman had already called the governor's office.

Glenn Richardson: **01:27:57** I walked back over and miraculously, this was one of those times you could meet with the governor. When he wanted to meet with you, he wanted to meet with you right then. I walked in a room, all of a sudden everybody comes in, the entourage I used to say, eighteen people, they come in taking notes. And he goes, "Well, I talked to the speaker and he told me about your conversation about you running against him as speaker." I went, "We had a conversation, it was the last thing said." He goes, "Well from now on, I'll handle the negotiations on this. We don't need to be talking about beyond '04." And I went, "We weren't talking about beyond '04, the man asked a question,
honest question, I have him an honest answer. Told him I'd run against him after '04." "Well that's not conducive to our negotiations. I'll handle the negotiations from now on."

Glenn Richardson: 01:28:46 And the grand potentate Sonny Perdue says, "From now on," and I went, "Well I don't know how you're going to handle the negotiations, I'm the minority leader." "Well I'm the governor, and I'll handle it." And I got my stuff and walked out. And guess what? We didn't talk about it anymore, and it didn't happen, because he could not pull off nearly as much as he thought he could. That's how I became speaker. Because I wasn't going to lie to Terry Coleman and say oh, you'll be speaker forever, which is what Sonny Perdue wanted me to tell him, and that's how they play the game.

Glenn Richardson: 01:29:23 And I laugh about it now with Terry Coleman. I could say, "Terry, you should have taken that deal."

Mel Steely: 01:29:30 What does he reply?

Glenn Richardson: 01:29:32 He wouldn't... You know what, we don't talk about it.

Mel Steely: 01:29:34 Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:29:36 Because it's not his best decision. I mean... But he finally figured out that I had built this base, and I was building support. And I had all these people behind me willing to walk the plank with me, and then I was going to be powerful. And I was. It wasn't because of me, it was because I would take an issue, we would lead on it and go forward.

Mel Steely: 01:29:59 Well when you... After the '04 election, it's the first election after the 2000 reapportionment and we've already discussed what happened.

Glenn Richardson: 01:30:11 Right.

Mel Steely: 01:30:11 On that. And GOP took control of everything, you were speaker in the five and six election, Mark Burkhalter's your pro tem, Jimmy Keen, majority leader. And good old DuBose Porter was the minority leader. What was it like working with DuBose? He was having a struggle of his own at the time, I know.

Glenn Richardson: 01:30:33 Yeah, I don't... You know what, I didn't spend much time working with him. We had a solid enough majority. And that's the thing about majorities, you don't have to work with the minority except in certain cases, and I didn't. I chose not to. I
chose to tell him what we were going to do, I'd ask him if he would support us on certain things and he'd say no. He was difficult, he didn't want to work with us, and so he didn't. So I didn’t meet with him very much.

Glenn Richardson: 01:31:02 I would set up the meetings, we would talk about it. I would tell him what we were going to do, and we would say, "Well has this decision already been made?" I went, "Yes, I'm just giving you the courtesy of telling you what we're going to do. I'd love to have you support, but I understand you're not going to be able to do that and that’s okay. I just wanted you to know what we're going to do." He said, "Well we're going to have to oppose that," and I went, "Well okay."

Mel Steely: 01:31:29 Well during that period, when you become speaker, I love that picture in the Atlanta paper that they did in November when they voted for you, the party voted for you as speaker. I don't know whether you remember it or not, but you're seated and everyone's standing clapping, because they've just elected you as speaker for the next upcoming session. And you're grinning like a Cheshire cat, like we finally have done it, I've got it now. Good article, good long article, talks about all of your background and stuff, which I've got and kind of put into the folder with all of this others.

Mel Steely: 01:32:15 By the way, what did you do with all of your papers? Your speaker's papers and legislative. Do you have them?

Glenn Richardson: 01:32:22 Not much.

Mel Steely: 01:32:24 I'd like to get them, get you to donate them to West Georgia. If you have them, we can keep everything together with the interview and the papers and... Think about it.

Glenn Richardson: 01:32:33 Unfortunately I threw most of them away.

Mel Steely: 01:32:35 Oh my goodness. I know. Those were so historic.

Glenn Richardson: 01:32:39 I know. I threw it all away. I may have some scattered that probably have been outside long enough now that they've been weathered and they're in a storage.

Mel Steely: 01:32:49 If you run across them, think about whatever you've got there might be helpful to you know, fifty hundred years from now when people go back and look at the shifts and the change.
Glenn Richardson: 01:32:59 Well you know, the way I went out was not the way ... I moved on Christmas Day 2009. And on that particular day I threw away most things that anybody would have wanted. I put them in garbage bags, piled them up.

Mel Steely: 01:33:16 Well, the only person I've known that has done that was Ellis Arnall. And I ask Ellis, I say, "You're a historian, why in the world did you do that?" He said, "Oh my god, if people got a hold of those I'd be in a penitentiary." I said, "Well, pretty honest." He said, "Yeah, it was."

Glenn Richardson: 01:33:32 I wasn't worried about that, I just thought-

Mel Steely: 01:33:33 He was worried about it.

Glenn Richardson: 01:33:33 I just thought I was suffering from major depression and I was trying to stay alive day to day.

Mel Steely: 01:33:42 When you became speaker, after you were elected and clearly that was one of the high moments of your life, had to be, did you seek advice from Coleman or Murphy? Talk to them about what do I need to do or?

Glenn Richardson: 01:33:58 I used to say there's not a book on it, and there was no one there to tell me.

Mel Steely: 01:34:01 Oh.

Glenn Richardson: 01:34:02 You know, Coleman would help a little, but he was only speaker for two years. And Murphy by then I think he'd had his stroke. I don't think I ever talked to him.

Mel Steely: 01:34:13 That'd be about right. Yeah.

Glenn Richardson: 01:34:15 And I asked about seeing him a couple of times to the family, but they just said it wasn't a good time. I never met with him. He was aware, I was told he was aware I was speaker. But I didn't insist on it, I respected his personal time and family time.

Mel Steely: 01:34:32 Mike and his son were close, and I talked to Mike and his wife. And I spent some time over there, and they had just set up a hospital bed with round the clock nursing. And he really couldn't talk, he could hear and understand most of what you were saying, and could nod yes or no, that kind of...

Glenn Richardson: 01:34:55 There probably would have been no reason for me to [crosstalk 01:34:57]. I never talked to him, I never got advice. There was
no book on being speaker and I had to do the best I could with what I had and I obviously made some good decisions, made some poor decisions.

Mel Steely: 01:35:09 Yeah. What problems did you face as speaker that you think were different from what Murphy and Coleman had faced earlier? How was your term different in that sense?

Glenn Richardson: 01:35:26 Well early on, the strange thing is as if I hadn't had enough accidents in my life and health issues, after that vote in November, I fell off the roof here at this house and severely broke my leg and had to undergo surgery and I had a compound fracture in my left leg and ankle. So when I was sworn in as speaker in '05, that was the first day I'd actually walked without crutches, and I had crutches to get me there and I walked down the center aisle, hobbled down the center aisle on Percocet.

PART 3 OF 5 ENDS [01:36:04]

Glenn Richardson: 01:36:00 ... Hobbled down the center aisle on Percocet. That first few weeks as speaker, trying to power through all those things, I was in pain that was hard to describe. I would take pain pills to get through the day. I mean, I had a cast on my leg and it would swell so big that I would stand up there and literally be perspiring from the pain. I was trying to focus on what we needed to get done and get some things done and I was in pain. Anyhow, that's no excuse for anything. I don't know. It was different being in the majority. People expected us to go in and change the world and it was hard to do. We tried to, but we clashed with Sonny.

Glenn Richardson: 01:36:55 He had all these ideas of what he wanted to do and sometimes his ideas were just not that good. He thought that we were there to do his bidding. You know what? That General Assembly is not there to do the governor's bidding, period. I don't care if you're in the same party or different parties.

Mel Steely: 01:37:15 No. That ended with Carl Sanders.

Glenn Richardson: 01:37:18 You're there to do what's best, and to check a governor who might be a little bit of a megalomaniac, that just wants to do things just to do things. That was what we were up against. Then people would say, "Well, I don't understand why y'all can't just get along." Well, we're not elected to get along. We're elected to govern a state. There's a delicate balance of an executive, a legislative and judicial branches. My job, as a legislative branch, was not to be agreeable or disagreeable. It
was to do what I thought was best, not just because we had a
governor that thought his popularity was such that he could do
anything he wanted.

Glenn Richardson:  **01:37:59**

I don't care what public opinion polling was, some of his
decisions were just ill-advised. One in particular, he kept
wanting to exempt seniors from income tax in Georgia. Now I
don't particularly like taxes or income taxes, but I didn't think
that was a good policy decision. I still, to this day, don't believe
it's a good policy decision to pick classes of people that do or do
not pay taxes. I think all people ought to pay taxes. What I used
to say is, "We want the most amount of people paying the least
amount of taxes." When you start letting this little group, over
65 to 70, not pay taxes and this group not pay taxes and this
group, you have to raise the rate on everybody else paying
taxes. While I'm sympathetic to seniors, believe it or not,
seniors are actually, typically, in a better position to pay taxes
than twenty-year-olds because they've got more secure ...
Sonny felt that we ought to exempt them, and he kept wanting
to raise it, and raise it, and raise it. I go, "No, I just don't think
that's a good policy."

Glenn Richardson:  **01:39:09**

Every meeting we would have, he would go, "Well, where are
we on the senior tax exemption?" I went, "Governor, with all
due respect, I don't believe that's a good policy." "Well, I
disagree. We need to do it and have seniors move here." I went,
"Why would we do that? How does that help us?" "Well, they
come here and spend money." I said, "Actually, that's not true.
Seniors tend to spend less money."

Glenn Richardson:  **01:39:31**

They've changed their lifestyles. They don't go out to eat as
often. They don't spend money as freely. Getting people here
that aren't paying taxes ... They're already exempt from
property taxes, over 70, in most counties, from school taxes. I
went, "I just don't believe in that." I fought it, and I wouldn't do
it.

Mel Steely:  **01:39:50**

Is that the one where you famously said, "He was showing his
backside"?

Glenn Richardson:  **01:39:55**

Well, that actually had more to do with him. We didn't pass
something he wanted, and we adjourned at midnight. A
reporter walked up to me and said, "The governor just said he's
going to call you back into special session next week." I was
tired, it was midnight. If the governor wanted to call us back
into special session, that's his privilege. He could have told us
that the next morning, not at midnight when I was on the House
floor. That's how Sonny Perdue did. He had a reporter deliver it to me, rather than him come up and tell me.

Glenn Richardson: **01:40:35** He could have walked his happy self up there and said, "Speaker, I'm going to call you back in next week," and I could have had those private words with him. Instead, he tells a reporter, who comes up and says, "The governor says he's calling you back into special session because you didn't pass x," something he wanted. I went, "Well, that's just Sonny Perdue showing his ass." I said, "I'm sorry, I can't say 'ass' on television. That's Sonny Perdue showing his backside."

Glenn Richardson: **01:41:04** They corrected it to say, "His backside," but I originally said, "Showing his ass." Guess what? He didn't call us back into session, it was him rattling his saber over nothing. I don't know if was the senior tax credit or something else that he thought we should pass, but we survived. Should I have said it? No, but I was just as volatile as he was. I was tired. I was tired of fighting. I had to fight the Democrats. I had to fight my own party not to go too far right, and I had to fight him with all of his silly ideas.

Glenn Richardson: **01:41:37** Now, frankly, I resigned in December of 2009. 2010, he got the House to pass the senior tax credit, just like he wanted. They did that in exchange for the hospital bed tax. Then they promptly came back the very next year and took the senior tax credit off. They passed it for him. Then the first thing they do in '11, when Nathan Deal's in office, is take it back away because it was bad policy. I don't know why he thought it was a good idea.

Glenn Richardson: **01:42:08** Just so you know it, we already had exempted seniors from ... At that time, I used to get letters from people. "Why are you opposed to this?" Because Sonny and them resorted to telling seniors, "The speaker won't let it pass." Well, they started writing me letters. Well, I developed a letter to go back. I remember, one military family. I sent a letter back to them and I went, "Do you realize that with social security and your retirement, you and your wife can earn $102,000 and pay no Georgia income tax?"

Glenn Richardson: **01:42:40** Well, the guy got the letter, he called and wanted to talk to me. I got on the phone with him, he said, "Sir, I apologize. I apologize for writing you that letter. I didn't know that. I was told that seniors were paying taxes, and the way you wrote me that letter, sent it back, you're right. $100,000 is enough to be exempt and I'll gladly pay Georgia income tax on the part over 100,000." I went, "Thank you, sir, for saying that to me. I think it's bad policy to exempt everything." That was how the debate went, and so we're back to that today.
Glenn Richardson: 01:43:15 That's a long way of saying that I had fights over matters that we shouldn't have had fights over. Nobody thought it was a good idea. Then I tried to, I did try to end taxes. I wanted to end property taxes, and I took on that fight and came up short.

Mel Steely: 01:43:34 Did Lieutenant Governor Cagle help you at all? He was there right at the end when you were ...

Glenn Richardson: 01:43:39 No. We served together. No.

Mel Steely: 01:43:46 Wasn't a working relationship, you might say?

Glenn Richardson: 01:43:51 He had his own issues, and they were trying to ... They gave him the power back, took the power away, and all that.

Mel Steely: 01:43:58 Well, the same thing had happened with Taylor. They just took it away and didn't give it back with him.

Glenn Richardson: 01:44:01 He just, he was constantly having to fight his own battles in the Senate and so, no, we didn't particularly work together. There were times that we would get together, but ordinarily, they would pick the things they wanted to fight on. Because they knew that once I drew a line on the ground and said, "This is it," they could pass it. They knew good and well I wasn't going to let it pass the House, so they could pass it, appease the governor, even if they opposed something, because they wanted to get something else done. That's how it works-

Mel Steely: 01:44:32 That's true.

Glenn Richardson: 01:44:33 ... That's how it's supposed to work. That's why you got the House and the Senate. The Senate would pass all this crap over to the House, knowing full well I wasn't going to pass it. I rarely would do that to them, but they always did it to me because they wanted to get along with the governor because he came from the Senate.

Mel Steely: 01:44:53 I remember interviewing Senator Talmadge about him being governor, and he made a point about how it ought to be done. He said ... This was done through all the rest of my ... "If we wanted a salary increase for teachers and I wanted 3%, that's what we were looking for, I would propose 2%. The House would then come up and say, 'Oh, that isn't enough. I want two and a half.' The Senate would add another half, we'd get the three I wanted, but everybody got some credit and ..."

Glenn Richardson: 01:45:23 Yeah, everybody wants credit.
Mel Steely: 01:45:24 Yeah, and so that's the way it worked in Busbee and Joe Frank and all the rest of them said, "Yep. That's the way you do it."

Glenn Richardson: 01:45:30 I used to tell my leadership team, I said, "Listen, guys. If you're not worried about who gets the credit for it, we can get a lot more done," but we always had to worry about who got credit. Whose bill it was, whether it was a House bill, a Senate bill, the governor's bill, and who got to beat on their chest.

Mel Steely: 01:45:49 The parties themselves were undergoing change when you became speaker. You had rural and urban and suburban. You had the racial factor, particularly with the Democrats, and you had the religious right getting involved. Talk to us about how you viewed things at that point, party-wise.

Glenn Richardson: 01:46:11 Well, it was always, I mean, you always had to deal with it. Georgia always has been, still is a 45-45-10 state. Maybe 47-43-10, but it's something, it's mid-40s, Republican, Democrat and Independents, and you always had to be aware of that. The religious right always ... They would like to pass a bill that said, "There never will be another abortion. You won't even take birth control ever again." That'd be fine with them. They'd like to pass a law that said, "There'd be no sex ever," and they would be okay with that.

Glenn Richardson: 01:46:45 They would stand up ready to say and ... "No sex." Maybe they might even like to prescribe that married people have sex only twice a week and never on Sunday. Then when you pass that, then they'd say, "Well, let's just get it to one day a week." Anything they can do-

Mel Steely: 01:46:59 "In the missionary position."

Glenn Richardson: 01:47:01 Yeah, and that's what the religious right does it. It doesn't matter what it is, it's never enough. I happen to know that if you press that issue too hard, you'd hit a dead end. What I would do is, I'm not always a proponent of polling, but I would poll to try just to get a sense. Here's what you could find on the abortion issue, and it's still out there, it's just like it today. The abortion issue is 45-45-10. 45% opposed abortion, 45% are okay with it, 10% are ambivalent with it.

Glenn Richardson: 01:47:38 One thing that I did in about 2008 because they wanted that, they called it the Life Amendment. It was just another backdoor way to try to ban abortions at every stage. I did some polling and I asked a question. I remember my people closest to me getting mad at me. "Why do you want to ask an abortion
question in this poll?" "I want to test it." What I did is early in the poll we asked an abortion question, "Were you pro-life, pro-choice?" Because everybody wants to buttonhole you into something, and most people are something in-between, Dr. Steely.

Glenn Richardson: 01:48:13 Here's what I found, is that it was about 45% were pro-life, meaning they didn't want abortion. Later on, we would come back to the question and intentionally say, "Now, going back to the issue of abortion, if it comes to a situation where it's your wife, your mother, your daughter, or your sister, in the case of rape, incest, or to protect the life of the mother, where are you?" One half of those people that are pro-life supported an exception for rape, incest, or the life or health of the mother of the baby.

Glenn Richardson: 01:48:58 In other words, those pro-life people, fully half of them were okay with an abortion if their mother, their sister or their daughter were raped or the victim of incest or it might change their life. That told me what I already knew, is that they're pro-life when it comes to you. When it comes to them and their family, they might want to be able to make a decision based on the facts, and that's a point you can't put out there. The Right-to-Lifers go crazy and they will beat you, "Oh, you're an abortionist, you're an abortionist." The truth is most of them, if their daughter got raped and were pregnant, they would want the ability to make their own decision, and that's what we ought to do in Georgia, and so that's how I left it. That's why I wasn't always popular with them. They said I was pro-choice. I wasn't pro-choice. I think that we ought to do anything and everything to try to save the life of a baby, but there are some things that I can't legislate, you can't legislate and they can't legislate.

Glenn Richardson: 01:49:58 There are times when a mother's blood pressure's so high, they say, "If you continue this baby for the next six months, it may compromise the baby and it may compromise you." That's a decision best left to mamas, babies, and doctors. Not to a General Assembly saying, "Oh, well, you're three months and a day, you can't abort that child." Well, maybe it's better to abort that child in that particular situation, but if you want to take a chance, let you make that decision. If you both die and leave the other two kids without a mom, then you made that decision. That's why I was ... I always fought that battle and I go, "No, we're not going to vote on that. No, we're not going to vote on that."
Now, did we vote on ... Yeah. We changed the abortion laws. We did that Woman's Right to Know bill. I think if you're going to have an abortion, you ought to be fully informed of everything about it and then you make that decision. I don't know why that was so hard to pass, but it was and we passed it, and we passed other bills. I will never, ever allow there to be a straight up and down, complete ban on abortions because I'm not smart enough and nor are those people smart enough to pass a law that says there never will be another abortion.

I have got to take another break. I apologize.

All right, you go ahead.

Okay, we're recording.

Okay. You've mentioned a number of the things that you were for as speaker. With the property tax you were for some of that, limited.

I tried to end them.

End them.

I proposed an end to property taxes.

Replaced by what?

Consumption tax. I think this state and nation needs to go to that. I think that the system of taxing somebody's home or land is just backwards. It doesn't make any sense. You can put your money in a house and land and you have to pay tax on it, but if you put your money in stock, we don't tax that. We tax the static accumulation of wealth in the form of property, and I see it, real property, it's bad policy. It worked when we were agricultural society, and I just think it's, I think it's shortsighted.

I think we ought to be taxing the exchange of money, not producing income, the spending of it. That way, if somebody wants to save, they can save. It would encourage saving. There was a way to do it, but there were too many fiefdoms that thought they were going to be affected, counties and cities, and they fought like crazy. Because people always want to keep the status quo, because they've got it just the way they want their little fiefdom working and they don't want anybody to change it. I lost, I lost.
Glenn Richardson: 01:52:49 Property taxes will one day be, they will go away because we can't keep supporting government based on property taxes. You can't just keep taxing and taxing and taxing someone's house. Anyhow, I tried to end it. They came up with a way to end them on cars, ultimately, but I wish I had taken a little better approach. I wish I had excluded residential dwellings. That would have been a neat way to have done it. Because I just firmly believe you ought to be able to own your house and where you sleep, eat and raise your family without government coming in and taking it, if you don't have the money to pay the taxes.

Mel Steely: 01:53:32 How about PeachCare?

Glenn Richardson: 01:53:35 Well, I've never been a big supporter of it. I think it's a great program, but I think you've got to really watch who it's given to. I opposed every time they tried to raise the limits. I think we get to 250% of the poverty level, and it's back down to 235, as I recall, but you got to be careful with it. You want healthcare coverage for children, but at some point the market, people need to stand up and take personal responsibility for taking care of that. At 250%, at the numbers, as I recall, if poverty level's at 25,000 that means that if you made $62,000 a year, government would provide health insurance for your children. No, I don't support that.

Glenn Richardson: 01:54:29 I think there's a point at which men and women need to make conscious decisions to have children and support their children. Providing healthcare is one of the things you should do for your children. And government, if government supplies it, it sounds like a great idea, but government supplies nothing. Government takes from one person and gives to another, and that's the way it works. So PeachCare, it's great to have healthcare coverage for low income children, but we have ventured far away from low income children.

Mel Steely: 01:55:02 Tell me about transportation taxes, highway taxes, that sort of thing. What was your position on those?

Glenn Richardson: 01:55:08 Well, I felt like there was a way to do the transportation tax, which failed miserably. I opposed the formula that was voted on last year that failed miserably. I told them the regional concept would not work. Now, I know a couple of regions passed it. I felt strongly that transportation is like defense. It's a statewide issue, defense is a national issue. I didn't think you ought to do it by region. I thought that you had to do a statewide method of solving it, but what local legislators want to do is say, "Oh, well,
my people in my county won't vote for it unless we get more money back than we pay in taxes."

Glenn Richardson: 01:55:54 Everybody wants, they want to pay a $1 in taxes and get $1.25 worth of money back. Everybody can't do that, and that's not how transportation works. I supported a statewide transportation solution. The way you fix transportation, frankly, is you answer your truck problem. The problem with transportation is multifaceted, but the primary problem with surface roads in Atlanta, in the metropolitan area, the twenty or thirty county, is trucks. Provide truck-only toll lanes, give them the ability to use those and you'll free up the interstates, but it costs a lot of money to do that. I tried to do that. I came up short on that as well, and so they kept pushing this regional concept, which frankly, they put out there and got defeated.

Mel Steely: 01:56:51 Well, in 2006, Governor Perdue was reelected and you came back in as Speaker. In 2008, you were reelected as Speaker, but by that time were beginning to have problems both in and out of politics, especially with the press. This led, ultimately, to your resignation in November of 2009. Talk to us about that period.

Glenn Richardson: 01:57:19 Well, I mean, always looking back, it's easier to see now. I can't tell you who, a star, one of the movie stars came out this weekend, was talking about depression and how he had finally gotten through it. I have a struggle with depression, for a long, long period of time. I can see it so clearly now that I'm on the other side of it, but I couldn't see it when I was in it. The more power that came and the more responsibilities and the more demands on my time, and frankly, the more bad decisions I made. It took a toll on me. I made some personal decisions. I engaged in an affair. My wife filed for divorce and got a divorce. That just contributed to the depression. It didn't make it better, it made it worse.

Glenn Richardson: 01:58:09 Finally by, I guess it was November of 2009, I had been treating with antidepressants. I was taking as many as six different medications. I had a psychiatrist. I took pills to go to sleep, pills to wake, pills to get through this particular thing, that particular thing. Frankly, I came home one day and said, "I had enough." I contemplated suicide and so I took hundreds of sleeping pills and pain pills all at one time. After I took those pills, I made a few calls to tell some people goodbye. I thought it was too late.

Glenn Richardson: 01:58:49 I passed out on the telephone with the last call. My mother and a friend of mine that I was dating at the time, they got here about the same time, opened the gate, let an ambulance in, and they somehow brought me back to life. I was down to a ... I was,
basically, not breathing. I was found passed out in my bathroom in the floor. They injected me, through my clothes, with a drug called Narcan that sped up my heart rate, and they started bagging me, breathing for me. Got me to a hospital, put me on a breathing device. They tried to pump my stomach and it was already too deep in me. They got some of it out. Anyhow, I somehow survived that, but then after I survived that, I thought I'd been given a second chance at life. I thought I was going to be okay, and three weeks after that my ex-wife went on television and talked about the problems that I had had. At that point, she and I'd been divorced for eighteen months. I don't know why that became relevant eighteen months after a divorce, but they got her on. She talked about stuff that I did during the marriage.

Glenn Richardson: 02:00:12 One thing about politics is, is that, frankly, most of the people are not nearly as good as they seem. They saw blood in the water. They had saw me and thought I was going down and they had started jockeying for who was going to take over for me. Then I seemed to survive that. Then Susan went on television, did that story. I'll never understand what she thought she was going to accomplish by that, but she did. The tide turned. Forty-eight hours later, I was still fighting to live. The Governor called and asked ... Brought me down to the mansion. They asked me to resign.

Mel Steely: 02:00:51 Did you know that was going to happen?

Glenn Richardson: 02:00:55 No. No, it was a bait and switch. It was a typical Sonny Perdue action. Call you in, stage it just right, have the right people say the right things. Make sure the threats were in place before the meeting got there. Get you there, pray for you. Tell you how much God is going to guide you through this situation, how he's going to be for you. Get you to resign, then forget about you. I saw him one time after that. He laid hands on my shoulder, prayed for me. Told me that all the resources of that office, all the contacts, I would lack for nothing. That if I would just resign, it would be ... If I didn't resign, Republicans would lose control of everything, and if I did resign, that they would take care of me. They'd find me a position.

Glenn Richardson: 02:01:44 I had now spent, essentially a lifetime, fifteen years getting to where I was, and I had taken the best years of my life, devoted to that and it was all over. Ultimately, I agreed, I resigned. Other than two or three in that room, I never talked to anybody ever again. All those promises that they were going to help me, take ... I don't even know who they are now, and so I'm a little angry-
Mel Steely: 02:02:17 Did you ask for the help?

Glenn Richardson: 02:02:18 Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. They just don't, they don't return the calls.

Mel Steely: 02:02:24 No response.

Glenn Richardson: 02:02:25 Well, their idea of help is, "I'll call somebody and ask them to meet with you." They would meet with me, and then they would tell me they didn't have anything for me. I spent the better part of a year and a half just trying to stay alive. Some good things out of that though. Within a few days of that, my daughter moved in with me, moved out of my ex-wife's house. I had to get her back to court, change custody of my, at that time, fifteen-year-old daughter, who lived with me through her graduation last week from high school.

Mel Steely: 02:03:08 Did you go to graduation?

Glenn Richardson: 02:03:08 I did. I made it to graduation.

Mel Steely: 02:03:08 Good.

Glenn Richardson: 02:03:11 My father got ill about a year later, had cancer and died 74 days after his diagnosis. I got to spend time with him.

Mel Steely: 02:03:17 Y'all were close too, weren't you?

Glenn Richardson: 02:03:21 We got closer in that period, that year that I took off. I say, "Out of bad came some good." I mean, listen, I don't like how it ended, but it ended. All those people that promised all of those things, they know who they are.

Mel Steely: 02:03:39 Well, it strikes me that you ended your speakership, effectively, with a group of Republicans who were consulting with you, much like you had begun it. I know you knew you were going to run as speaker, but there was a point when you had to sit down with the other leaders and say, "Okay, now who's going to do what? Let's arrange this." Tell us about that.

Glenn Richardson: 02:04:08 Oh, well, you have to do that.

Speaker 1: 02:04:08 Before you do that, let me just replace his battery.

Mel Steely: 02:04:09 Oh.

Speaker 1: 02:04:09 All right, I'm going.
Mel Steely: 02:04:09  You rolling?

Speaker 1: 02:04:10  Yes, sir.

Mel Steely: 02:04:10  Okay. I was asking you about the meetings, maybe more than one that took place. When you became Speaker, you met with the Republican leadership. I'm sure you didn't meet with the Democrats, but you did with the Republicans.

Glenn Richardson: 02:04:23  We met right here in this house.

Mel Steely: 02:04:24  Oh, tell me about it.

Glenn Richardson: 02:04:25  Right here in this room. Well, soon after ... We had planned to win for a long time and we had this set of rules ... We'd say, "If we ever become the majority, here's what we're going to do." For a couple of years, I had been keeping notes on rules that I would change and how I would do things. The first thing you have to do is rewrite the rule book. The governance, each General Assembly is its own governing body, and you meet and you decide what the rules are going to be. You have a tendency to default back to the old rule book from last time.

Glenn Richardson: 02:05:05  One year, we had one good, clean, clear chance to change the rules the way we wanted them. After the election, we came and we would meet at different places. We met here a lot at my house because it was big enough. In this room, I'd have eight or ten, twelve people, my closest confidants. We met and, essentially, rewrote the rule book. We were still writing it the Sunday night before the '0 session, '05 session, but we had it printed and ready to and put it on the desk and said, "Here are the rules."

Glenn Richardson: 02:05:39  Well, the first order of business after you're elected Speaker is to adopt a set of rules. You get those rules in place and then you can govern, and we did that. Some of them were punitive. Some of them were to make the House function more orderly. The whole idea of putting amendments up that no one had ever seen, while I had used that effectively, it's not a way to ... You can't govern like that.

Glenn Richardson: 02:06:05  I mean, I don't know why they had not figured it out, but the Dems told me later they had planned to change that rule. They were tired of us. We call it "lobbing grenades in the room," and we took that out. You can't have amendments, as a general rule, on an open bill. Because somebody will put up an amendment that says, "We're going to put in there that you
love your mama, God and apple pie." Then you vote against it because it doesn't need to be in the bill, and somebody uses that against you.

Glenn Richardson: **02:06:33** Well, in this day and age where everybody wants to hear it in thirty seconds, maybe twenty-five, because they don't want to hear all the details. "Tell me, are you for it or against it? You're pro-life or pro-choice. You can't be in-between. You got to do one or the other," and so we changed the rules. We changed the committees. We changed the structures. I had the electronic key cards activated. For years, we had on our desk a voting system where you just press a button, and somebody could walk along and press buttons for five people, and they did. I didn't like it.

Glenn Richardson: **02:07:11** I asked Robby Rivers what it would take to do that. It was going to cost some money. I figured up a way to come up with the money. When we voted for me for Speaker, we had these key cards. You'd take them and you had to push him in it said, "Glenn Richardson's card is now in the computer," and you could vote. As soon as I vote, take the card out, nobody could vote your machine. What a novel idea. They had never been used in the history of this state. Yet, we did that, I thought it was a big deal, and everybody went, "Oh, yeah. Okay. Electronic key cards. Good for you."

Glenn Richardson: **02:07:43** I put cameras in committee rooms, and I did that all in the first session. To this day, the State Senate does not have cameras in committee rooms. I thought this person that voted against the open meetings and open records bill, Roy Barnes, still believe that when you have a meeting, the public ought to be able to see it, and I think ...

PART 4 OF 5 ENDS [02:08:04]

Glenn Richardson: **02:08:00** ... still believe that when you have a meeting the public ought to be able to see it and if they can't drive to Atlanta, get on their computers. This was the year 2005. So I took private funds, I bought cameras, and I got a computer system and we streamed every committee meeting over the internet. Sitting today, if they're having a meeting at the capital and it's a committee meeting, you can log on and you can watch the meeting and listen. And you can see the deliberations, you can see the questions, you can see the testimony. That was some of the things we did early on.

Glenn Richardson: **02:08:35** And I had to develop a ... I had a pecking order. Mark Burkhalter had challenged me to be speaker all summer long, he had
compromised and was now speaker pro tem. Jerry Keen became the Majority Leader. Earl Ehrhart was Rules Chairman. Ben Harbin, Appropriations. Larry O'Neal, Ways and Means. And those were my trusted confidants.

Mel Steely: 02:08:58 Did you all pull straws for that? Or did everyone just kind of decided what they wanted to do?

Glenn Richardson: 02:09:04 No, not at all. I set up something and for the first time in the history, that's called a Committee on Assignments. And I appointed people and I had this system of voting. I had it fixed so that the speaker could veto the Committee on Assignments if he needed to, but I never used that veto power. After we had this vote for speaker, we went into closed session at an off-site hotel in a conference room, and for the next day and a half, met tirelessly with about ten people on a Committee on Assignments.

Glenn Richardson: 02:09:39 I signed a Speaker's Order, appointed a Committee on Assignments. They met, we had, prior to the vote, we had set up that Committee on Assignments in anticipation I would appoint them as speaker and we voted. We had private votes on who would be on certain committees and not, and sometimes the votes would not pass and then we'd break off into caucuses and we would compromise. Ultimately, I compromised on certain people got in that I wanted, certain people that didn't. There was a part of what I believe is how power works. The power of one man as speaker, you can exercise all the power yourself and you won't keep it for very long.

Glenn Richardson: 02:10:29 If you'll spread it out to people beyond you, and give power to other people below you, it'll come back to you ten-fold. So what happened is, I would entrust people to make decisions, and I would give them power, and it came back to me. So that when I really needed to do something, I could pick up the phone and say, "We're going to this or we're not going to do this." That didn't work on those really big issues, like property tax reform. By and large, I ran the House and I think it was an effective way of doing it. It wasn't a sham, Committee on Assignments, it wasn't who I wanted always. And that's how it happened.

Mel Steely: 02:11:13 Well after you resigned in November of '09, you were out of government in '10, '11 and the first part of '12. What I call getting your head together.

Glenn Richardson: 02:11:27 Right, I was healing.
Mel Steely: 02:11:28 Yeah, you were healing. In 2012, Nathan Deal had been elected governor in '10, and he appointed Bill Hamrick, Senator Hamrick, to a judge's seat, leaving an open seat. And you decided to get back into politics. Tell us about how you made that decision and what was [crosstalk 02:11:54].

Glenn Richardson: 02:11:55 Well I miss it, I miss it terribly. I feel like I still have something to give, but there's not many second chances in politics. Sanford, up in South Carolina, just proved that there are second chances. He got elected.

Mel Steely: 02:12:11 It's possible.

Glenn Richardson: 02:12:14 I don't know, I missed it so badly and I felt like I had something to give and all of sudden a Senate seat came open, it was where I lived, it covered county. It covered where I grew up, Douglas County. Covered where I was born, Carroll County, where my mother's from. I thought, hey, I'll run for that and I'll get elected. I saw it as a chance to get back in, I still had aspirations to ... I'd always thought that I'd run for governor. I felt like I could do, I felt like that it was somewhat of a destiny that I have a chance. And that might be a chance to get back in, but it didn't work out. I finished third in a field of four or five, whatever it was.

Mel Steely: 02:12:57 They had a special election, your opponents were Representative Bill Hembree from Douglasville and Jim Naughton and Mike Dugan from Carrollton. Talk to us a little bit about that race. What did you do? How did you approach it? Was it different than when you'd run for [crosstalk 02:13:17]?

Glenn Richardson: 02:13:18 I thought that my name ID was good. Somebody did some polling and found out that most people had forgiven me. It was over huge numbers, most people were like ... It's surprising to me at how quickly people will forgive you for personal transgressions. And they had sort of forgotten and forgiven and forgotten. Now a few people didn't, a few people they forgive no one. One day they'll be called upon for that, and they'll have to decide if they get forgiveness extended to them, but that's just life. I felt good about it, thought I was going to get in a run off, thought I'd win. I don't know what happened. I really don't know what happened. The best I could ever figure out, I started running into it, because it was a special election held in conjunction with a general election, at the November 2012 election, it was huge turnouts.

Glenn Richardson: 02:14:23 And strangely, I would run into people that say, "Who's running?" And I'd say, "Well, a guy named Bill Hembree," they'd
Glenn Richardson: 02:14:41 "That's what you said, Bill Hamrick," I said, "No, I said Bill Hembree." They'd go, "Well it's Bill Hamrick is running?"

Glenn Richardson: 02:14:48 "No, it's Bill Hembree."

Glenn Richardson: 02:14:53 Those names, I guess if you say Bill Hembree or Bill Hamrick, because you start with a Bill and a H, I don't know, it seemed that people thought Bill Hembree was their present senator. And he got, as you know, he almost got enough votes to win without a runoff. And it was surprising to me, so it seemed that was name ID and he wasn't the first on the ballot either. But he got it and got in the runoff with Mike Dugan, and I supported Mike Dugan. And I think Mike's doing a good job, it just wasn't meant to be for me to go back. I confused the message. I thought it was a chance to go back and ... I guess you, maybe you just can't go back.

Mel Steely: 02:15:39 I remember you and I talked at the beginning of the campaign, and you thought Jim Naughton ...

Glenn Richardson: 02:15:46 Was the person to beat.

Mel Steely: 02:15:47 ... was going to be the man because of the money factor, and the connections with the Richards family and Southwire and all that. Turned out not to be true at all.

Glenn Richardson: 02:15:56 It turned out not to be true at all.

Mel Steely: 02:15:57 Nobody figured that Dugan ... Little guy with no money or anything ...

Glenn Richardson: 02:16:04 That's strange. But if you go look, Hembree actually won Carroll County, and I'm convinced that is because a lot of people in Carroll County thought it was Bill Hamrick.

Glenn Richardson: 02:16:17 Name ID is a strange thing. I'd like to see that race if Hembree had not been in it. With Naughton, Dugan and myself. It would've been an interesting twist, but you never know. Obviously it didn't matter and as I predicted, Hembree's already mumbling about running back again. He's done that before. I don't think he can beat Dugan.

Mel Steely: 02:16:45 No he wouldn't beat Dugan, he might, if he goes back for his old House seat, he might could do that.
Glenn Richardson: 02:16:49 He might, but he's done that once before.

Mel Steely: 02:16:51 I know.

Glenn Richardson: 02:16:52 When he ran for a public service commission and Tom Worthan ran, and won, and then he came back and ran against Tom Worthan and beat him. Anyhow. That's not my concern.

Mel Steely: 02:17:08 Looking back over two decades ...

Glenn Richardson: 02:17:11 Two decades.

Mel Steely: 02:17:13 ... what do you consider your major accomplishments? In government? Legislative accomplishments, or just ... Not all of them are legislative. A lot of them was party organization, that kind of thing. And then, your major disappointments; things that you ... Legislative disappointments.

Glenn Richardson: 02:17:33 I mean, I don't think there's any doubt, taking the majority in '04 ... Getting us through that process to get the right maps, the right men, and the right money was a lot of work. And I worked ... I worked myself to death to get that done in '04. It was not a sure thing, no one believed we were going to win in '04. I say no one ... Very few believed we would really win. We went from 71 seats to 96 seats in one election out of 180. That's a phenomenal amount of seats. But, five of those seats were won by less than a combined total of 3000 votes. So, 3000 people stay at home, in those five seats, and now instead of 96 we're at 91 and it's a lot thinner than it seemed.

Glenn Richardson: 02:18:28 And it was the way we raised the money and the way I had that system of the MMV thing that I came up with that everybody thought had somebody's initials. I sat around and came up, I call it a gimmick. It was a political gimmick and what I did was, is I figured which races we needed to put money in and it was always hard to raise money and I had these people and I asked them, could I count on them to write me five $1000 checks. Or ten $1000 checks. Don't write it to me, I'll tell you the ten people to write a check to.

Glenn Richardson: 02:19:05 And I had this system set up where I knew how much money ... I needed, say, a Gene Maddox down in South Georgia to have. I needed Gene to have $25,000. Well, I would have ... Once I got enough donors that committed to write enough checks, I would write them a letter says I need you to write ten checks for $500 or ten checks for $1000 to the following people at the following addresses. And they would write the checks. They would send
the checks to me, I would assimilate the checks, package them up and say, "Okay Gene, here's $22,000 in checks from 22 different people."

Glenn Richardson: **02:19:44** I say that, I don't know if anybody else has ever done it in that fashion, but that's how I did it. I built that system where I gained supporters by telling them if I can get $100,000 I could win. But I needed them to write the checks to who I needed them to write the checks to. I didn't need them to write the checks to the Republican Party. I needed the money straight to candidates. Well they liked that. I would send them information about the people and then I came up with this thing, I called MMV. And everybody says, "What is MMV?"

Glenn Richardson: **02:20:16** I was sitting one day trying to think of a name to call our program, and I was thinking about majority makers, and making a majority and I wrote M, and then I wrote a M and ... That sounds so hokey. But all of a sudden, I'm sitting looking at it and I drew a circle around it. And I went M-M ... that's the Roman numeral for 2000. And I went, oh my goodness, the Roman numeral for 2005 is MMV. And I went, if we can take a majority at the election, for the first time in 2005 MMV will have Republican majority. And so I wrote M-M-V and drew a circle around it and so I adopted that as my pack, my name. It was a gimmick and I would use that and I would sign everything MMV.

Glenn Richardson: **02:21:07** We would become a majority, and that was the creation of me. I just made it up. But I got the money, we got it in place, and if it had not been for those extra few thousand dollars here and there, we would not have won. And that's my greatest accomplishment, is getting two a majority. Once we get a majority, golly, I think they got 120 Republicans now. When I was Minority Leader in 2004, we had 71 Republicans. Now we have 120? Shows you how, you got to win, and once you win, it's contagious.

Glenn Richardson: **02:21:46** My greatest disappointment, you know I don't know. I think it's probably not ending property taxes because we did a lot of things, but I felt like that Georgia was poised to do something really neat. And we could be the only state in the nation that had no property taxes on dirt, that it would catch on, but we would be first. I still believe that. I still believe that would be a good thing to do. I didn't just invent that, I came up with it, but I had some of the best economic minds in the country that helped me. And for now, his name will escape me. Doctor ... He did the Latin ... Laffer. The Laffer Curve.

Mel Steely: **02:22:35** Yeah. The Laffer Curve.
Glenn Richardson: 02:22:36 With Reagan. He's the one that helped me develop this. I remember what he told me. He said, "Well, people don't like income taxes, people don't like property taxes, people don't like any taxes. You got to have taxes. There's a blend between zero and 100%. Pick a tax that makes no sense, and if it's a monster, you don't kill a monster by just shooting it, you cut its head off." It's property taxes. You cannot justify it. I knew the total amount of all money that came from all property taxes in Georgia. I knew the total GDP of Georgia, and I knew what we could do by transitioning, and there was a way that we could have had one tax in Georgia that covered property taxes and income taxes. It would've been about 15%, and you'd tax all things and that way you pay one tax.

Glenn Richardson: 02:23:32 You go get a haircut, $10, I'm sorry it'll be $10 plus 15%. You go to buy a car, it's going to be added 15% to it. Exchange of money, but you don't have a tax on the tag, you don't have a property tax next year. You don't have a tax on your house, you have one single tax.

Mel Steely: 02:23:48 Just a straight VAT.

Glenn Richardson: 02:23:49 It's like a VAT.

Mel Steely: 02:23:50 It's not the same as a fair tax.

Glenn Richardson: 02:23:54 It's a high bit of a fair tax, it's an exchange of money tax. That's my major disappointment, that we didn't do that. Because I think that's where the tax policy should go in society that we have now where we exchange money so quickly and freely. It's a consumption because we don't plant crops like we used to. We don't build things like we used to, but we exchange money. And you got to tax the exchange of money, not somebody's accumulation of it.

Mel Steely: 02:24:26 This tax question, I think was the key element in spurring the rallies of the Tea Party. A lot of other things got involved with it, but what do you make of the rise of the Tea Party?

Glenn Richardson: 02:24:41 Well, if the Tea Party would stick to taxes, they would be a lot more successful. They had to venture off into every single field. They had to get in social issues and that's the religious right. Many of the religious right are also fiscal conservatives, but they couldn't just stick with the fiscal issues, they had to go for the social issues. And they nearly drove it into oblivion. This lady, this brouhaha with the IRS, has re-energized the Tea Party because people see that, frankly, you have to always fight
government. Government is just men and women that take power and want to get more of it. And you always have to stand up to it. The power goes to them and comes right back to the people. So, the Tea Party was founded for the right reasons, ventured too far afield, took a beating, now it's going to have a resurgence. I hope they'll stay with fiscal principles and let the social issues be handled in the social aspect. The churches will always have the sinners to save, but government doesn't need to be saving sinners from themselves. Let God and the church do that. And I believe that. I believe we ought to have the freedom to worship where we want, but government should take no part in those [crosstalk 02:26:04].

Mel Steely: 02:26:06 My Granddaddy was a Baptist preacher, so I grew up with that.

Glenn Richardson: 02:26:09 Listen, I have faith. I just firmly believe that people need to take care of that themselves, not government for them.

Mel Steely: 02:26:19 What's your assessment of the current situation and future of the two major political parties in Georgia today? Many people say that the Democratic Party's totally ruined, it's become a black party. They'll never be able to compete statewide, et-cetera, et-cetera, et-cetera. But there are those who have said about the Republican Party after Nixon resigned.

Glenn Richardson: 02:26:40 That's not true at all. The Democratic Party is sitting and poised to start eking back up and the way they're going to do it is because the Republicans have so much power now they've become a little apathetic, and they start messing with social issues. Abortion, in particular. It's going to drive those middle people away, the Dems are going to hold against it and I think you're going to see a resurgence in the Democrats. This is the year '13, it won't be in '14 or '15, but give it '16, '17. Give it about four more years and you're going to see it start to eke back up. What's working against Georgia Democrats now is Obama, and Obama is loathed in Georgia. I mean, he just is.

Glenn Richardson: 02:27:33 As soon as he's out of office, and there's a Republican president, you'll see a resurgence of the Georgia Democrats because now all you have to do to defeat a Democrat in Georgia is say, "Well, he's an Obama supporter," and that's the death blow. There's a group of people, even that are very Democrat, that they cannot fight that off. And that's because of all these social issues that are out there. All the conflict and the scandal that is going out there now is doing nothing but continuing to artificially suppress Democrats in the state. They'll come back and you'll see it equalize more. I doubt if it does by the 2020 census, but I think by the ... In the ten year range, ten years from now, you'll see it
start to equalize. Republicans are up here, Democrats down here, I think you'll see them start to equalize back.

Mel Steely: 02:28:31 Get back to the 45/45 with 10 in the middle.

Glenn Richardson: 02:28:35 And it's all going to be because Republicans pander to the religious right. Every party, when you pander to the fringes, for Republicans it's the far right. For Democrats it's the far left. It's the issues that are out there that when the Democrats pander to those, and they do those, that causes this middle group to break away from them and say, well we're not going to side with you, we're going to play over here with the Republicans. When Republicans pander to the far right issues, the fringe issues, this group that's in the middle, they'll move over here to the Democrats and they'll support them. And that's why you'll see Democrats get elected in marginal races in the next five or six years. It'll start coming back.

Glenn Richardson: 02:29:21 There's a second thing going on in Georgia, African American population in Georgia's still roughly, we'll call it thirty points. It's really 28 and change. Hispanic population has continued to rise which is a strange group, and they tend to, right now, side more closely with the Democrats. As we normalize more relations with Hispanics and as that number gets higher, now all of a sudden you're going to see a black, Hispanic population, if they combine, they're going to be about 35, 36%. And it's going to be hard to beat that because you're always going to have fifteen, twenty points of people that are going to side with the liberal ideologies of the Democrats.

Glenn Richardson: 02:30:14 And when they put all that together, now you've got a powerful force. The irony of that whole situation is, it's tucked away, and this is the one that I don't know how this plays out, as a voting bloc, blacks will hold the Democratic line but ... And Obama's helping holding them together, but there's something that's going on inside and it's this gay marriage debate. Because blacks, as a bloc, don't support that. And they're scratching their heads every day trying to figure out why in the world are we supporting a party that supports same sex marriage?

Mel Steely: 02:30:56 And a lot of the black preachers are opposed to the abortion thing.

Glenn Richardson: 02:31:00 Exactly. So you have this dynamic of blacks that are very ... More conservative than I ever thought about being. And yet, they're with the party that wants to have abortion, that will support gay marriage and they're going, wait a minute ... Here's what I think is going to come out of it. I think the state and this
nation, I think you're going to see somebody's going to figure out a way to bridge those social issues and physical issues and come up with another party. You know, historically, two parties don't last long. You know it better than I do, but I mean the Dems and Repubs have been around for over a hundred years now running things. Maybe 130 now, forty. That's a long period to have a two party system.

Glenn Richardson: 02:31:55 The Tea Party is not going to do it because the blacks aren't going to sign on to the Tea Party. Those conservative blacks are going to get in, say you know what, we got to have something else. And when they combine with a group of conservative whites that want some social issues and some fiscal, you're going to ...

Mel Steely: 02:32:13 And possibly Hispanics.

Glenn Richardson: 02:32:15 Possibly.

Mel Steely: 02:32:16 Yeah, you've got a lot of Hispanic Catholics that are very conservative.

Glenn Richardson: 02:32:20 [crosstalk 02:32:20] There's a possibility that Hispanic conservatives and black conservative can merge together with religious right conservatives and form a third, more conservative party. I've never understood why the religious right whites could not get with the religious right blacks and come together on social issues like taking care of the tired, the sick and the poor. Because I used to look and people would say, "Well, you're Republican, you're not worried about those old people and all that." No, you're wrong about that. I believe government and men's calling are to take care of those that can't take care of themselves. Here's the problem, figuring out who those people are.

Glenn Richardson: 02:33:06 You give me somebody that's in a wheelchair, that's easy. What about somebody that's a war veteran that's lost both legs? Absolutely. But, there's so many people that are disabled now, we can't take care of all of those. Elderly, mentally infirm, government needs to help them. But children? Mamas and daddies that conceived them and bore them need to take care of them, in general. And just to say, "Oh, well the children need to be fed." Yeah, they do, and mamas and daddies need to feed them.

Glenn Richardson: 02:33:40 The ones I'm worried about are the people that are physically and mentally unable to take care of themselves. And that's who
we need to be taking care of at government. I look for somebody to figure out a middle ground on social issues, a middle ground on physical issues and a limited government and go forward. And so that’s probably where we’ll ... I don’t know, maybe ten to twenty years from now. I’ll be too old to be in on any of that, I’ll be gone by then.

Mel Steely: 02:34:12 Might be a little longer than that, maybe. Do you plan on re-entering politics?

Glenn Richardson: 02:34:16 Well, I didn’t plan on re-entering last year. I would say, at this point, that unless I got some kind of an appointment, which ain’t going to happen, probably not. I doubt if I’m going to sign another qualifying affidavit. No. I’m not going to do it.

Mel Steely: 02:34:33 How about lobbying?

Glenn Richardson: 02:34:35 I’m not going to do it. I’m going to practice law. If something came open on a ... If there was some judicial appointment that governor asked me to ... If I was interested, I might be.


Glenn Richardson: 02:34:58 Yeah.

Mel Steely: 02:35:00 Has been quite happy being mayor, it scratches his itch for politics and yet, it’s not as consuming as some of the other things. So you never know, you didn’t know this Senate race was to open up. [crosstalk 02:35:14]

Glenn Richardson: 02:35:14 I didn’t, and I saw that as a chance to get back, but it didn’t happen, so it’s okay. I’m a good place with me. I was at a good place before, but the whole cancer thing that came on board, it came so quickly and then it went away so quickly and I feel good with where I am, what I’ve accomplished in life. I’m going to keep making a living.

Mel Steely: 02:35:44 You’re lawyering now?

Glenn Richardson: 02:35:45 I’m lawyering. I don’t get many people calling me asking me about politics. If they do I tell them. I believe I still have something that I could do to help them, but most people they think they have their own ideas and they think they got it solved. So I’ll just sit here and keep my opinions to myself and take time with my children and my family and if I never do
anything else, I went a long way. I went further than most people ever go. I intended to go further.

Mel Steely: 02:36:16 You’re one of the few who actually bear the term, the title, historic. There aren’t many … Of course every governor, every speaker, does something to leave a mark. But, you’re one of the few that really is historic. In a sense. Major change that you, personally, were involved in to make it happen. And it’ll be a footnote, but it’ll be in the history books.

Glenn Richardson: 02:36:44 It’ll be a footnote.

Mel Steely: 02:36:45 Yeah. It will be. It’s not national change, but if anybody’s writing about Georgia politics, politics in the South, you’re going to be in it. No way around it, and I’m hopeful that they’ll know that this tape … They’re not tapes anymore, but you know what I mean. That it’s here, we’re getting more and more people using them now, the word gets around we’ve got this here, they come over. I’ll need to get you to sign a release form.

Glenn Richardson: 02:37:16 A release for you, you got it. No problem.

Mel Steely: 02:37:20 There’s a place here to put restrictions, if you want to hold it for two years or whatever. Our archivist has a fit when people do that, but that’s all right.

Glenn Richardson: 02:37:28 No restrictions.

Mel Steely: 02:37:29 Okay.

Glenn Richardson: 02:37:30 All right.

Mel Steely: 02:37:30 Well, thank you.

Glenn Richardson: 02:37:31 Thank you for your time.

Mel Steely: 02:37:32 Good interview, Mr. Speaker.

Glenn Richardson: 02:37:34 All right, I appreciate it.

PART 5 OF 5 ENDS [02:37:35]