

**Oral History Interview of Esther “Essie” Davidowitz: June 1, 2018****Participants:****Dr. Christopher Breiseth (CB)****Dr. Francis “Mike” Michelini (FM)****Esther Davidowitz (ED)****Recorded and Transcribed by Mollie Rance (MR).**

ED [inaudible] was Mrs. Dorothy Dickson Dart.

CB: That’s right.

ED: And then who was Mrs. Franck Dart?

FM: Mrs. Who?

ED: Mrs. Frank Dart.

CB: Didn’t we have a man in the Education Department named Frank Dart?

ED: Yes.

CB: And he was related to Dorothy Dickson Dart.

ED: Right. But what I turned up, too, was, the interesting part: the family relationships. You know, remember when Frank Henry was Chair, the question became, should there be a succession of family to family? Which is really a form of nepotism, but on the other hand, it’s a very philanthropic vehicle that’s natural for the people that are involved so we had—I don’t know how they’re related—but I would venture to say that Mrs. Alexander Ehret was probably related to Mrs. Elouise Ehret. E-H-R-E-T.

CB: Elouise I knew well.

ED: And that had something to do with Mr. Carpenter, I’m quite sure.

CB: Well, she and—who did Carpenter bring on?

ED: Martha Deener.

CB: Martha Deener. They were all connected.

ED: They were all Dupont connected.

CB: Yeah, Dupont connected. And Elouise Ehret’s father was an Episcopal minister, and lived, I think, they lived right on campus. Not when it was Wilkes, but before that. And then they were

up in a very beautiful town, north of here. A very upper-class town. I'm just terrible on names. Anyway, I visited them up there.

FM: Like Shavertown?

CB: No, no. No, it's way up near the border.

FM: Oh, okay.

CB: It begins with either 'M' or 'W.' That's my dotage now.

ED: That's how I do things!

CB: But anyway. She and her husband died the same day.

ED: They did!

CB: And I had a—well, I don't want to take the time now, but if we have time at the end when we go off recording, I'll tell you my small-world story with Elouise Ehret, but it's not directly related to Wilkes, so I don't want to take the time.

So who else do you have [on your list]? By the way, we're here with Esther Davidowitz at her beautiful dining room table, on the first of June?

FM & ED: Yes.

CB: And we're talking about women, and the important role of women in the development of Bucknell Junior and Wilkes College to Wilkes University. So continue with your list.

ED: They're called the Women of Wilkes. We would say the Wonderful Women of Wilkes. We wanted another 'W.'

CB: Wow.

ED: And we have here—

FM: And of course, that permeated through to the student body. Wilkes was one of the few that accepted women as equals in the professions to be engineers, or to be physicians. Who was the first one, with the famous hats? And we also had Cathy DeAngelis, but we had some of the first famous women's doctors.

CB: Well, the woman who became head of the medical—was she head of the Women's Medical College?

FM: Yes.

CB: Polish name. She went right to the top of the profession.

FM: Yeah.

CB: But I think Essie's—

ED: And she came back to visit, too.

CB: Oh, she came back. We got her very involved.

ED: And they had articles on her in the *Quarterly*.

CB: By the way, when she had a little bit to drink, when she liked, she could get up on the table and do a can-can dance, which she did at an Alumni event, leaving all of us kind of impressed with the Dean, who was Dean of the Medical School.

FM: Back to her student days!

CB: And her daughter was there, who also was a Wilkes graduate, and very high up in medical things. Annette Evans you didn't mention.

ED: No, but, I have those down, but getting back to the relatives, you have Marjorie Henry & Frank Henry, and Eugene Roth, and his son.

CB: [quietly] The Maslows.

ED: And you have Larry Cohen, and his son. And you have—

CB: Your son.

ED: My son.

CB: And the Maslows.

ED: The Maslows. And you had Dorothy Darling.

FM: Did you mention Frank Henry?

CB: Yes, with Marjorie.

FM: His daughter?

CB: Yes. Marjorie Henry. Her married name Marquart.

ED: In any event, it has produced a wonderful group of people who are dedicated to the school, and committed by generational example. So that it's almost like the family has mentored support for the college. And now let's see, you want to hear the rest of them: Mrs. Edward; Miss Mary Koons. Was she a Miss or a Mrs.?

FM: I always heard "Miss."

ED: I think it's "Miss." Well, that part might not be correct, but the names are. Mrs. Paul Bedford, Miss Annette Evans, Mrs. Curry, Mrs. Eberhard Faber—she was amazing with numbers!

FM: I remember her.

ED: Do you remember her? She enjoyed her little drink, too. But boy, when she had it she was even more brilliant than she was without it!

Essie's Assistant: This is coffee. Do you like coffee?

CB: I love coffee. Just black.

Assistant: Do you like coffee?

Mollie Rance: Yes, please.

ED: And Connie Mayott, Martha Deener. I liked her. Mrs. Ehret. That's—there's Eloise in Allentown—and Kitty Darling. She's wonderful. Mrs. Aronstein, Patricia Davies—she's delightful. [inaudible]. Mrs. Hedy Rittenmeyer, Linda Fisher—remember her? She was really wonderful. Virginia Sikes—you had to admire her tremendously. Ellen Hall, Mary Rhodes, Beverly Hiscox, Elizabeth Slaughter—Dr. Elizabeth Slaughter, Cynthia Charnetski, Randa Fahmy, but I don't know if her—

FM: Cynthia Charnetski, was her father a faculty member?

ED: Yes.

CB: Carl. And she became an optometrist?

CB: I think so. It's in the medical [index].

FM: Or a psychiatrist?

Mollie Rance: He's in the Psychology Department.

CB: Is she? As is he?

MR: He's a Psychology professor. I'm not sure about her.

FM: Right.

ED: Patricia Davies; Hedy Rittenmeyer; Linda Fisher; Ellen Hall, Mary Rhodes, Beverly Hiscox—she's a wonderful supporter consistently. Dr. Elizabeth Slaughter, Cynthia Charnetski; Randa Fahmy—and she has a married name that I don't remember; Susan Shoval,

FM: And that's another legacy, since Norman Weiss is [Shoval's] father.

ED: Yeah. That was Aaron. That's the three-generation one. Aaron first, then Norman, then Susan. And each one of them was really able to take numbers, and have them have meaning. It's interesting that that characteristic carried through so strongly with every generation. And Marjorie Marquart—I wish she were still on.

CB: And Marjorie Marquart, Mike, is Frank Henry's daughter.

FM: Oh. Morquart?

CB: Marquart. M-A

ED: M-A-R-Q-U-A-R-T. And Colleen Gallagher, Connie McCole.

CB: Oh, she's wonderful. That's John McCole's wife.

ED: Right.

CB: She snagged him. He was the most eligible bachelor in town.

ED: For a very long time.

CB: She snagged him.

FM: I remember Con, and his reputation as a ladies' man.

ED: Well, most of the time, he had his niece

CB: Well, Con was his brother. He was the physician. And her father was the mayor of Wilkes-Barre. Gosh, I don't know why I remember all of this stuff.

FM: Yeah, you really—

ED: Well, I've got a lot of research here, and I—

FM: Are you a native of Kingston?

ED: No, I was born in Hazleton

FM: Oh, that's where my grandparents on my mother's side—Marquetti—there was a Marquetti [inaudible].

ED: Oh, yeah? And it was a wonderful place to live at the time. Now, it's not safe to walk down the main street.

FM: Well, they kind of redone an awful lot of it. It's a totally different city again.

ED: It's terrible.

FM: Yeah, Barletta [inaudible].

ED: He has a very attractive family—when they do pictures of it. It's so attractive.

CB: Well, he might be your senator.

ED: I would think so.

FM: Essie, I don't want to distract you from your list, but who was Mary Gale?

ED: Mary Gale is my very dear friend, and she taught Art at Wyoming Seminary. And the way she came into my life was that she was a gift. Miss Foster was in charge—Irma Foster—of the Math Department at Sem. And she taught [Trigonometry]; Advanced Algebra; all those kind of courses. Calculus. And I was deplorable at Math, and I stayed that way. But in order to graduate, you had to pass Algebra. And I never had the first year of Algebra, because in those days, they taught you general Math. And at Seminary, they were already at Algebra I. So now, I'm walking in on a case where [I had] no ability, no innate knowledge, and now I'm with a course missing, and Miss Foster was the resident [inaudible: 11:38]. And I used to go down every night, and where my father would cut up oranges, apples, and pears, she would do it with words trying to get me to understand what it was I was supposed to learn. We got [to be] very good friends. And

when I graduated from college and came back, I called Miss Foster. And she said to me, “Oh, Essie, I’d like to see you.” And I said “Wonderful! I’ll come on a Thursday. Is that a good day?” And she said yes. And so every Thursday I would go to Miss Foster. And then she became bed-bound. And Mary Gale used to go to visit her on Tuesdays, and I went on Thursdays. And we all loved classical music, so we had this discourse about classical music. And we got to know each other’s interests and tastes, because Miss Foster would relay from one to the other. And when Miss Foster, after many, many, years became ill, then eventually pass, she had told John Bagonia that when she passed, she wanted her ashes to go part of them in a [drain?] at Dundee [Gardens], and part of them to go on Mary’s hill, and part on my hill, and part on the window at Swetland Hall. And the whole point of it was that she was giving me a gift of a friend, that would be my friend for life. Because we actually knew so much about each other, and that’s how it started.

FM: Wow.

ED: And then when I would write things, Mary was marvelous at English grammar, and when Alfred was no longer available, and when Alfred was no longer available in our life—he got married, and all that sort of complication—

CB: Alfred Groh.

ED: Yeah. Then I became the person that needed somebody, and the person that I used was—when I wasn’t sure of something—was Mary Gale. And Dr. Farley, after Alfred was, well, when he became chancellor. He wasn’t with Alfred as—well, Alfred used to be his person who edited him. And when Alfred wasn’t available to him in the same way, because he was still working, and Dr. Farley was living at the farm, I became an editor. And that was it.

CB: Since we’re on that topic, tell us how the book came about.

ED: Well, it came about because—

CB: Essays of an Educator. Right?

ED: Yeah. The book came about because—here, we’ll start [eating] before it’ll get cold. It’s goat cheese because I can’t digest cow’s cheese. So that’s the reason for this. I hope you enjoy it. It’s made by Something Special.

MR: It’s very good.

CB: Delicious.

ED: The way it came about was that Dr. Farley had kept three copies of everything that came out in the college—in a dresser, upstairs in his house. And when he died, his children asked if I would take those papers and make a book. And I did. I asked Mary to help me culminate the information, and interpret it, et cetera.

FM: In those days, the president of a college, or a university had a quite different role than what we perceive now. I don’t think the contemporary world would recognize [it]. The presidents were supposed to be thoughtful, intellectual leaders. They were not administrators. That’s why we say Dr. Farley didn’t have an administration. Well, he didn’t. He had people who were

assigned jobs who could do, and assumed they would do them, and do them well. And the Whitbys, and Ralstons, and Grohs, and any administrator he had—the Chwaleks—went ahead and did that. And it’s fascinating to me, because he never really engaged in that activity in his office. And yet—at least that I knew—when I would come in into his office, it was also that we were discussing academic issues, and things of that sort. But to know that he loved that farm, and apparently, he did that intellectualizing, the writing of his thinking about the issues of the day, and others, and saved those in triplicate.

ED: And he kept notebooks. And in his notebooks, I found it really fascinating because—

CB: Were they like a diary, or?

ED: Well, the whole first part of the book was from when he was living. And then it was put together. And it was only the briefs that I put in.

CB: So how much of the book was something that he and you were planning?

ED: He was planning.

CB: He was planning it, but before he died, you had good conversations about what he hoped would be produced.

FM: The mere fact of the title itself, “Essays of an Educator” was very revealing.

ED: Yeah. The person who came up with that was Moran.

FM: Tom Moran?

ED: Yeah. I don’t have it right here, but in the book you can tell where the briefs start, and that’s where I put it together. In any event, the compiling was done with Mary Gale. Because we went out to the farm, and there was nobody else there, just Mary and myself. And I could never have done it alone, because to go back into the house alone, I wouldn’t have enjoyed that at all. But with Mary, I was okay. And then Alfred was the [promerian]?

FM: He taught me to edit the college bulletin, and the importance of every word.

CB: Alfred was a poet.

FM: When you had to register with the veterans in the administration because the veterans were getting their stipend, and you had to have a notarized issue of the college bulletin, and God forbid there should be any errors or anything in that official copy. That’s when I first got involved with Alfred in that editing phase, and he was good at it. Tom Norham was, too. With the Wall Street Journal, and that. Learned that skill.

CB: Essie, how did you get to know Dr. Farley.

ED: Well, I got to know Dr. Farley because first of all, I was working on fundraising, and I’ve had a lot of experience with fundraising because of Lou Smith at JCC. So my experience was the UJA. And Lou Smith was the director. And he really taught my husband and myself how to

solicit, and how to plan. And then I was invited to be on the fundraising program committee by Wilkes. I think Tom Kelly, at that time, was working with Dr. Farley.

CB: Mhmm.

ED: In any event, when—you'll see in the books that there's a photograph of me at the table, and Dr. Farley with a group of women. And that was for a fundraiser.

FM: Mhmm

ED: And so that was my initial introduction to him. But then, I was very good friends with Nada Vujica. Nada Vujica was the librarian at Wilkes, and she was an extraordinary individual. And I had a beautiful relationship with her as a friend, and I really enjoyed being with her, and her husband. Her husband, remember, was Stanko Vujica.

FM: Stanko.

ED: And he was chair of the Philosophy Department at Wilkes. And he used to swim at the JCC with Nada at noon. And Rabbi [Baras] and I, and we had the most intellectual swimming kicks and prances. There was such—if you were writing a short story, there was such wonderful symbolism! But in any event, that was how we got to be friendly. And then when Nada became ill, I used to take food over and then Stanko would prepare—you know, feed her individually. Because nobody took care of her: only Stanko. He didn't want anybody bathe her; you could bring her food, but you couldn't feed her. And she suffered a long time, and then she died. She wasn't Jewish, but for me, I needed there to be a Shiva—for me. And I wasn't related, so the whole thing was not allowed [as custom], but it was where I was. So I cooked for a week long Shiva. And I took it out to the boys—to Dr. Farley's, because Stanko was staying there with Dr. Farley, because he had no family. And we got out there with all this food cooked, and Dr. Farley wasn't home. And I hadn't had the good sense to call. So I said to [my husband] Jeff, we have to drop this food off. It's all cooked. And he said, the door's locked. I said, "I know the door's locked, but what we're going to do is, we're going to find a window that we can open. And he said, "No, you're not supposed to." [laughter].

CB: You learned more about Essie from this story than [other]! [Laughter]

ED: Well, the truth is that the law is against people taking things *out*, but I don't think it specifically addresses taking things *in*. [Laughter.] So we found a window in the kitchen that could be open. And I said, "Now, Jeffrey, you could just take this food as I give it to you, and put it on the counter, and then come right out." And he did. And then the kids are there—everybody's looking at me like I've lost altogether. But I just knew I had to—you know how you get attached to somebody? You have to have a physical symbol of their closure. There has to be something that makes it okay for me to—like to go on living if you have somebody very dear to you, there has to have been something that you did that said, this is where we are, this is what life is now, and it's okay, and you've honored her in the way that you should. Jewish people have Shiva. So whether you're Jewish or not, you get Shiva.

FM: That makes sense. You need it.

ED: You do. I really do. So that was how it started. And then Dr. Farley called. And he—

CB: He knew whereof that food had come.

ED: And I said—no, he said, “thank you very much.” He said thank you for the food. And I said, “You know, the children were so excited about the farm, and I was too. It’s really beautiful. And he said, “Well, if you’d like to come out someday with the children, you’re welcome to do that.” So I said, “Do you really mean it?” And he said, “I’m not accustomed—you could hear him say this—“I’m not accustomed to saying things I don’t mean.” I remember every word of that sentence. [Laughter.] I said, “Well, if you mean it, we’re coming!” And we did. And we went very often. And it was a wonderful experience for the kids, and it was a great experience for me. So that was how that—

CB: And I’m sure it was for Dr. Farley, too.

ED: I think there was a mutual enjoyment. It was like having a mentor, or a—you know when you had the opportunity to be with somebody that you considered to be, well, pretty extraordinary. And it’s something that you share with your children. It takes on a dynamic that otherwise wouldn’t exist in your life. And that’s how that happened.

CB: Essie, you made some comments on the phone the other day about how you saw the different presidencies at Wilkes. So I think it’d be interesting to have on tape.

ED: I felt that, for one thing, the different presidencies were fabulous in the order in which they were. I was having nervous feet, because I can’t remember any dates, and then I remembered this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary issue. And I didn’t have to come up with any. Here it is! I felt like I had—you know those books that they used to have? Like if you had to read Chaucer or something? What were they called?

MR: Cliff notes?

ED: Yes. The Cliff notes, I found them! Here we are! I don’t have to do it, it’s done! Did you see this?

MR: Yes.

ED: So if you have this, you’re made, you don’t have to remember a thing. [Laughter.] So what I did was, I went today. And then—there’s my notes. Jeffrey said it’s very important to have notes. My problem is that since I have Parkinson’s, I can’t read most of what I write. In any event, Dr. Farley was a founder and [laughter].

FM: That’s very interesting.

ED: My handwriting is so deplorable that when I had to make this list, it was like translating from a foreign language because I can’t write level. So that’s what it looks like. And I’m trying to find somebody who does hand therapy that might possibly know how you compensate for that. It’s really a challenge.

CB: Anyway, so you’ve got listed here—say something about—

ED: Oh yeah, so we had—

CB: The fit of each president.

ED: What we needed initially was a man of vision. And we got a man of vision in Dr. Farley. And he was the founder. And then we needed somebody who had the courage to take the school forward after that. And that man was you, Mike, because you were in charge of the flood recovery. Which really was like creating a new college. And there was so much that was hoped for in the beginning, when Dr. Farley founded it. But nobody had anticipated the fact that there was a flood, and there would be this kind of a challenge. There were no funds that were set aside for anything that would resemble the flood. And you thought that you wanted to strengthen the different academic programs, which you did. When it came time to balance the books, because it took so much money to do all this, and we had to wait for the federal government to give us the money that they had promised, and it didn't come right away. Then we needed Bob Capin because he had an Accounting background. And the CPA is the final degree—not the final—it's the—

FM: Terminal.

ED: Terminal degree for that profession. So even though he didn't have a doctorate—

FM: It didn't matter in that field of expertise.

ED: I didn't know that. Do you know who told me? Two other people that I can't name. Father Panuska from the University of Scranton. I tried to get a doctorate, an honorary one, because it's still a doctor's degree. And he said it's not necessary because. And I figured if he says so— [laughter]. And that's how that happened at that point in my life. And then Bob Capin and he became president. He had had already enlarged the academic offerings, and then Chris was required because we needed to develop an academic co-product. And have courses that were really professionally challenging. And have different fields, like medicine, and preliminary work done, so that they would be able to get into medical school, and then came the Hahnemann Program. Isn't that when we came up with that?

CB: No, that happened before. It actually started with you, didn't it, Mike?

FM: When I was Dean. But it's very interesting, as you recite that list. Dr. Farley of course, the founder. I came here my first job, as a Biology teacher/professor.

ED: And then you became the Academic Dean.

FM: I became the Academic Dean because Harold Stark got the Board to authorize him to talk to Dr. Farley, and say to him, and Dr. Farley told me this, Admiral Stark was like 5'7," steely blue eyes, shock of white hair. Did you remember Admiral Stark? [ED: No.] That was before your time. Chief of Naval Operations during WWII, and Pearl Harbor. So he was a strong man. And he was on the Board because of Walter Carpenter.

ED: Right.

FM: They were boyhood friends. And so Adm. Stark was Chairman of the Board in the '60s. And Dr. Heath called Dr. Farley, and after a board meeting he said, "Gene, the board has authorized us to talk to you and for the following reasons: If I'm the Captain of the ship, and I'm steering the ship, and managing the battle, and I'm shot off the bridge, there has to be somebody to step up, and take over.

ED: Right.

FM: If he's shot off the bridge, there has to be somebody prepared to step up, and take over for him until that can no longer be a fighting ship. And he used that analogy, and he pointed to Dr. Farley, and he said, "Gene, the Board has authorized me to give you one year to organize an administration. If you should drop dead tomorrow, nobody would know what's going on in here. There were no lines of assigned responsibility. You had Whitby, you had Chwalek. So Adm. Stark is looking at it from a structural, longer term which is not part of his [inaudible] to initialize that. I was the second President, and had no external experience at any other institution, other than as a student. Bob Capin, one of the reasons you've cited, was the perfect successor in that post-flood cleanup period, with the finances, and the books. The first three leaders never brought academic expertise to the Wilkes structure. We had only experienced—

ED: Yeah, but I think you can say, not that they were—I would edit the sentence, and insert the word "administrative." Because they had academic, but they did not have academic administrative.

FM: World War II. I want to get back to World War II, and the impact on leadership, because you had men coming back from the War, and women—Margaret Connelly was the first comptroller, and she had been a comptroller in the Navy.

ED: So she knew what she was doing.

FM: Yeah. She knew what she was doing. But that WWII generation is fascinating one for me, because I was not at Wilkes, and yet the basic administrative structure at Wilkes that Dr. Farley had was really built on two things: the WWII veteran leadership, experienced veterans; and the displaced faculty from European universities, like the Vujicas. The impact of that European scholarship, and expectation of excellence in the academics just fit Dr. Farley to a tee because he assigned roles to people, and assumed they were competent, and would perform them. That was—

ED: [Inaudible] was dealing with the body of people who had not had hiring expertise.

FM: That's right.

ED: They learned on the job.

FM: But Chris was—

ED: But you know, some people have the ability to do things, and that's why they're hired. Other people get the title, and the responsibilities, and as a result of their being challenged, develop the skills, absolutely. You know, you can see how their excellence is a product of their own skill

that's been harnessed as a result of their getting experience through a challenge that they weren't really prepared for.

FM: When you get to Chris, in my analysis that was the first—

ED: Academic—

FM: Outside experienced academic that came in with a fresh look at Wilkes.

ED: And he knew how to do it.

FM: And he stayed for 17 years.

ED: And he thrived. But a lot of that [inaudible]

FM: [Inaudible]. I always identify Chris as having the second most important—

ED: But it wouldn't have happened if you hadn't gotten him when you did. And then, after having all the programs approved, and making the place a better place, academically—and, after all, it was an academic institution—we had Tim Gilmour. And Tim Gilmour, he had a wonderful way of letting you rise. I'll share an experience I had with him, that I thought was marvelous. I went to a conference at the UN [inaudible] to Switzerland. And while I was sitting there, they were talking about how terrible it was for the women in Afghanistan, because they were treated so horribly, and they had no opportunity for education. And I thought, well gee, we can teach them things at Wilkes. We have that Shelburne [television] studio, and we could make videos, and we could teach them. And I said that, and then [Anne Glough], who was an astoundingly brilliant woman, Pauly Friedman's daughter, said "Do you think that you could get that done?" And I said, "I think I can." And we came back home, and it was late at night, and I was a nervous wreck because in front of an international body, I had said that I could do something, and it was highly unlikely that I had any of the skill to do any of it. I just knew that I had the way to get to the people who knew how to do it. So I called Dr. Gilmour, and I said, "I'd like to make teaching videos at Wilkes. And I'm not going to pay anybody anything, but it's for the women of Afghanistan, and I think that if we have teaching videos, they would learn how to run a business, etc. And he said, "Go for it." I said, "You mean, just like that, I can do it just the way I want?" And I said, "Let me just tell you what I have in mind. I'm going to have the man who does the photography, and I have to have a video man" and I went through all of the different things, and all the different people who had to be involved. And not only that, but this has to be in Dari, and Farsi. And I'm assuming that we have somebody in the school that can speak that way. And he said, "Go ahead and do it. If you're willing to do it, you can do it." So I contacted—what was his name—the man in charge of the Shelburne studio?

CB: Was it Carl Brigido?

FM: Communications.

ED: Carl Brigido was the man who worked with me because—I think he's the one that took the pictures, right?

CB: Right.

ED: But there's a very fine gentleman who was in charge. Whose name I'll get soon. And I got all the different teachers, including Bob, and [inaudible], and all different people to do the courses. And they recorded, and then we had different sessions, and out of that came the Beauty School of Kabul, and it became a movie. When I went to see it, there were exactly 5 people in the audience. And it was in Tunkhannock. And I kept wanting to stand up and say, "We did this at Wilkes. Right here in this place!" But it wasn't appropriate to do that. But, in any event—

CB: That's great, Essie.

ED: It was successful. And then we had programs for the women of Iraq. And that was a big burning lesson, too. And he was able to let you go and do. And he had confidence in you. And you didn't have to do a lot of paperwork, and all that sort of thing. And his wife was really independent. She decided that we should have the whole landscaping of the whole campus redone, and she did a brilliant job. It was very creative. And it was totally without any cooperation from the men whose work it was. She made them work much harder than they intended to work, and earlier. But today, you can still see the beauty of the world that she created. She was a very independent woman. And he was comfortable with that. Which [in a] conservative college, takes some doing.

CB: That was another grand theme that's your unique position to comment on. And it's kind of two parts: one is the relationships between the Jewish community to Wilkes over time, And the other is, I'm thinking of your sister.

ED: Sienna.

CB: Yes. How Wilkes, if at all, was encouraging the kind of incredible relationship you two had as you dealt with issues of women and justice. So let's kind of—two different [ideas]—but because of you, they're connected. So start with the Jewish community.

ED: Oh, the Jewish community? Dr. Farley had no hangups for anything that would resemble prejudice in any way. He just didn't. And it was so refreshing, because at that time people had barriers. Jewish people married Jewish people; Catholic people married Catholic people. Not only that, but you had the ethnic origin, that they were supposed to be. And Hungarian Jewish people couldn't And Hungarian people couldn't have their synagogue, which was the Ohav Zedek, and the people who had reformed had—predominantly from Germany—they were separate—there was so much separateness, Very little togetherness, and very little desire because people liked it that way. They were secure. They were in their own worlds. They had their own walls, but they were walls that they chose.

CB: Oh, in today's lexicon: in their own tribe.

ED: Yep. That's it. That's definitely the word. And that was very, very strongly present where I grew up in Hazleton. Because there the Italian people didn't relate to the Polish people.

FM: Northern Italian people didn't relate to Southern Italian people [Laughter.]

ED: So there was the separation between people that were of their own making, and you would've thought that with the Second World War, all that could have ended. Because we saw

what happens when there is prejudice and hate. And we saw it, and we're supposed to learn something, but we actually didn't. And it was persistent. And it's not present now, thank God, to the extent that it was. Now, there are a different kinds of arrogance. But those specific ones, you don't hear about anymore. In any event, the Jewish people were represented on the initial board with Aaron Weiss. And Aaron Weiss was the dominant Jewish figure in the community. And he was the major donor. And after him came a man by the name of Reuben Levy. And remember Reuben Bakery?

FM: Pastries.

ED: Yeah. And the rest of the Jewish community had them as leaders. Now, they never were elected, but. This is Lea.

Lea: Hi everyone. And Dr. Michelini, and Dr. Breiseth,

FM: Oh, I'm sorry. Thank you.

ED: And what is your whole name, dear?

MR: Mollie Rance.

ED: Mollie?

MR: Rance.

ED: How do you spell it?

MR: R-a-n-c-e. Like France without the 'F'

ED: Oh! Thank you. Mollie Rance. Anyway, Mollie, that's Lea.

MR: Nice to meet you!

ED: And that's an import from the Phillippines, from my son who lives there. In any event, the Jewish community had the Holocaust as its common experience. And because of that, they became fabulous at raising money. And there's an amazing round of philanthropy. And it's a way of life. And Aaron Weiss was the dominant figure at the time. Because he had a very successful business, with many unique shoe stores. And plus he had very good investments. And he had a big family. And that's where Susan Shoval comes along, as her father, Norman Weiss, was [Aaron's] oldest child. No. Herb Weiss was older, I guess. I'm not sure about the age, but anyway.

CB: I'm not, either.

ED: There was Herman, Norm, and Nancy. And then after the Weisses, there was a continuation of the inter[inaudible] Jewish community, because Dr. Farley would go and visit people. Like, he'd go and visit Billy in Nanticoke. Nobody came to Nanticoke just to listen! And he developed a friendship with Billy.

CB: This is Mrs. Davidowitz's husband. In the shoe business.

ED: Right. And Dr. Farley used to go down there to solicit him.

CB: Where does the Roth family fit in to this? The Roth family was in the Ohav Zedek, which was at the time, the Hungarian synagogue. And they had Eugene's father, [he] was the president of the synagogue for life. And he was the most charitable person in that congregation, and probably tied with Aaron Weiss in terms of long-term giving. He had some kind of railroad stock. Anyway, he had two marriages, because his first wife died. And he was a very interesting man. He wasn't polished like some. But he was very effective. For instance, I remember when my uncle, his judgeship. He was working on the UJA. The wonderful story was that Mr. Roth was the person who was in charge of the drive. And downstairs, Mr. Wiseman had an apartment house. Remember Wiseman Apartments on River Street? And he had all the people come there. And then he had the door locked to the basement, and said "You'll all get out of here when you give your gift to UJA. And it wasn't exactly the polished way that Lou Smith said to do things, but it was very effective. [Laughter.] And everybody learned that Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Roth was one of the people who really, really gave. Henry's father [?] And that lasted.

CB: By the way, you, early on, told me that that was the way Jewish fundraising was done, and that I need to do more of that. Lock the dorr. And when I was leaving here, and we were trying to raise money to get a name on an office building. I think it was Jerry Goldstein. They wanted an executive session of the Board, so I was left outside, and he did a similar kind of challenge from what I've heard. He said to the Board that Chris would not want his name on that building unless a million dollars was raised.

ED: Well, it was not only you wouldn't want it, but it wouldn't happen. And he would give the initial amount. But it wouldn't happen unless that money was raised. And so, I nominated you for the naming of the building. But the person who facilitated it made it happen. Because without the money, it wouldn't have happened. Because they made it that the person whose name was on the building had to have the backing, and the finances for the naming.

CB: Which is the way I had worked the campaign that we're not going to name that building unless we had a million-dollar gift. So those are some details I didn't know.

ED: Yeah.

CB: But given how Catholic this area is, even with all the different ethnic groups, what did Wilkes represent in terms of the Jewish community's relationship to the rest of this?

ED: Well, you had a situation where you had wealthy Christian people who were Protestant, and you had large numbers of Catholic children who had never gone to college, and their parents had never gone. And there was no first-generation there yet. And the whole point was that everybody realized that in what was the Protestant elite, the ones who were really giving the money realized that if the community was ever going to become anything, they had to have an education. So it wasn't like the Catholic people providing for the Catholic people. It was that the people who actually had the means were the people who provided education because they gave the gifts for the college. And the Jewish community was more than happy to do it, because they were in a still mode place academically. There were very few that had ever gone to college, and the only way

to facilitate that was to have scholarships available. So then they started. You started—and you had the scholarship committees. You had a lot of money from the government because of the flood recovery money. And Dan Flood got us money.

FM: We didn't know that was going to happen, but Max Rosenn was critical, and Dan Flood.

ED: Oh, he was really something. They did two books on him.

CB: We need your verbal portrait of Max Rosenn.

ED: Well, it's for publication, right? [laughter]. Max Rosenn was probably the most brilliant person in the community in terms of overall knowledge. Not just of politics, not just of legal matters, not just of current events, but practically anywhere you go, except in the worlds of music and art, in anything other than music and art and poetry, those types of things, he was—I interviewed him with Alfred. And we did it at the college. He didn't have one note. Nothing. No books, no papers, nothing. And when he was interviewed, by Al and by me—boy, we had every note you could think of written down, and he would tell you what happened in the world at that time. What happened in the country at that time, what happened in the state of Pennsylvania. And then he'd tell you what was going on in Wilkes-Barre, and where Wilkes was in relation to all of that. Every day was correct. I would obsessively write it down so that I could find a mistake. [Laughter.] Because I was getting to the point where I was so intimidated by his knowledge. You didn't know if you could function! And then he made me Academic Chair, and I said to George Waldner, I said, "Listen to me. The way we're going to do this so that I don't get embarrassed. He said, "What do you have in mind?" I said, "Every time we have a meeting, we'll prepare the agenda here, and then you're going to go over to Max, and review it, to make sure nothing's an issue. "Oh," he said, "we don't do it that way." I said, "Oh, but we're going to do it that way! I'm not going to be taken aback because of something I don't know, and I don't know much of what's going on. I'm learning on the job, and I'm going to do it right. And George Waldner said, "Is that the way we're going to do this?" I said, "Absolutely." And we did, and I never went in his office. George did. George was a Princeton graduate. He was very sharp. He was very proper. He never lost it; he was totally restrained. And after him came Michael Lennon, who was absolutely the antithesis of George Waldner. And I thought he was wonderful! But in any event, [Max] Rosenn. One night they were here – this is like a for instance—and Max sat here, and Joe Savitz sat there, and I sat there, and Max literally sat there and dictated—with no notes—the entire tenure policy of Wilkes University. Remember when he had to write a new tenure policy?

CB: Well, when I came I tried to do some of that, and I had to work with Max. That was how he and I got to know each other.

ED: You got to know him then!

CB: And I said, "Look, I know you're concerned about the quality of tenured faculty." Because if they have tenure, they're untouchable. I said, "I've just come from an institution where we've instituted a five-year review program of tenured faculty. And I said, "I'd like to try that here. If I can get the faculty to commit to the five-year review, I want you to back off on what in effect is

reviewable tenure.” And he did, and we worked that out. And the faculty went along. And that was in my first year. It was a huge breakthrough in terms of long-term—

ED: End to the adversarial relationship of the faculty to the trustees, which is not to say that didn’t happen.

FM: Essie, I only saw that side of Max once. It was at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Flood Recovery Task Force. And it was a dinner in the Wilkes gym. And I was at the table with Max, and Joe, and I forget who else. And I’m trying to find some way to start a conversation, so I turned to Max, and I said, “Judge Rosenn, what kind of cases are you working on at that level of court activity? His face lit up, and I have a very interesting challenge dealing with oligopolies. Well, he gave a 10-minute dissertation on oligopolies in business. They’re not monopolies. It’s a particular kind of thing. And do you know, we’ve evolved with five major oligopolies structurally? We think Russia’s the only country that has oligopolies. We have oligopolies in America now, too. But Max was writing a definitive case on oligopolies, and that’s a long time ago now.

CB: Essie, did you ever talk to him about his role in the Philippines?

ED: No.

CB: Well, I can only sketch it, but I’d like it to be part of the record, and I’m afraid it is beyond recall, because his sons—I’ve asked both Keith and Daniel—and they don’t know it extensively, but as the war ended, and we were in the Philippines, as part of the judge advocate work that he was doing in the Army, he wound up in a section—and I don’t know which part of the Philippines—and his commanding officer was a drunk, an irresponsible drunk. And Max, he told me this story at the Westmoreland Club one day. I came back from Hyde Park. I used to come back about once every six weeks to have lunch with Max. Including when he was last in the hospital, and the briefs were just piling up next to his bedside. He was still working.

ED: He was still working. And coherent.

CB: Very coherent. He wrote a major decision on abortion. That led to an editorial in the *New York Times*, favorable to what he had done in that decision. In any event, he realized that to deal with that part of the country, he just had to take it over. So he did. He assumed he’d be court-martialed. But he put in place a governmental structure under the umbrella of the United States Army. And did have trouble, because he was so out of line in doing that, but people above the folks judging this, decided this had been a heroic experience. And when I asked him about it, if we had a tape recorder, he would’ve had a chapter of America’s role in the Philippines. And I’ve asked each person I know who’s close to him. He never talked about it. I raised the issue. Because something along the way indicated that—I guess it was, you know, “Max, what did you really do in the war?” But it was the sort of thing that, in my view of him, as I’ve worked with him—and he was crucial—I took every big problem to him. And I did what you were doing. If there was an issue coming before the Board, and I didn’t go spend time in his chambers with him, I knew that I would get trouble from him. Because if he saw any thread, he would pull it.

ED: It wasn't just that he corrected you, you got shredded. Once, I disagreed, and it was time for Friday night dinner. And it was Shavuot, and I had my whole family every Friday night. And there was this conflict between college and faith. And I had to go home and get the meal on. And Max was having a vote. And he was emeritus; he wasn't allowed to vote. And Patty Davis was the Chair. And she wouldn't have a confrontation with anybody, let alone Judge. And Max was going over and over the details of what he wanted passed, which I'm not going to go into. And I finally had to leave. And I knew that I couldn't leave until it was time. I said, "I call for the question." Because in Robert's Rules [of Order], you can call for the question. It takes precedence of everything. I figured, this is the only way I'm going to get out of here to get this meal on! And his response to me was that I had to [vote?] And I thought, no. I call for the question. Well. Max said, "I don't need Mrs. Davidowitz to teach me Robert's Rules!" Jeez, I knew I did something wrong. [Laughter]. Really wrong. Anyway, eventually, the question came up, and there was a tie. And Patty had the vote. And the way it got resolved was, in order for him to win, Max had to vote. And Bill said to me, "Essie, he just voted." I said, he can't vote; he's emeritus. And Bill said, "Are you going to tell him?" [Laughter]. Anyway, Max voted. And because of his vote, he got what he wanted. But I was like, he didn't do the right thing, Max! But I didn't say a word. After dinner, I knew something bad had happened, because we used to go hiking after dinner. And Max would come over here and pick me up. And we'd go for a walk. And I'd listen as he's talking. And I said, "Tilly, I think that Max might be a little annoyed with me" She said, "Essie, you're in big trouble!" I said, well, maybe I can fix it. She said, "I don't think so. Not this time." And it took a long time before he got over it, because he was so furious. And I said, "Well, I didn't know that that was the issue." She said, "If you didn't know, then why didn't you stay quiet?" I said, "Because I had to go home to get dinner on. And I didn't want to be seen as a trustee that walked away from a vote that's so important."

CB: The last day, our house was all packed, over on 30 W. River Street, and we're getting ready to send the moving van off to Hyde Park. And at about 5:00, Max arrived at the door with this big box. We needed something else to pack. [Laughter]. But he came in. He was so affectionate to all of us. And it was an absolutely stunning lead crystal bowl, that's got to weigh 20 pounds. I mean, it was just one of the nicest things I've got. But that he did that, and sandwiched it in just before we left town was very moving. He and I were very close, and we could talk about anything. I dealt with Tom McGroarty, who was the bane of my existence, the mayor. The person I took my counsel from was Max. I said, "How do I deal with this SOB?" And he cautioned me not to hit him head on. He said you just don't deal with a guy like that in that way. Because he was doing things to our students that were just terrible. But Max was a man for all seasons, and all reasons!

ED: Oh, yeah. I'd call him for all reasons. You know, one night, we were out walking. Rita [inaudible] came home, and you remember Rita. She enjoyed a good drink. And she was looped. And I could tell right away. And Max is walking, and I'm walking, and Rita says, "Where are you going, Essie?" I said, "We're going for a walk." And she says, "Well, I think I'll come along. And Max said, "I think that's a fine idea!" And I said, "No, Max, I don't think so." And he said, "She certainly can come along!" And Rita comes. And we walked, and I kept thinking, if anybody sees this trio, and sees the condition Rita's in, and we're part of the scene, can you just

imagine the news sighting? I was so hysterical! I just kept thinking, don't laugh; it's not funny. But it was hysterical! But he was wonderful with George [inaudible]. He was wonderful with institutional decisions, and issues. And he was able to do it in very few words. And he would greet you by saying, "Hello, Essie. What have you been doing with your life?" And I thought, oh my God, what have I been doing with my life? And he'd come, you know, every month, and the question would have to be prepared. What did I plan on? Because if you didn't have something of merit, he would just shrug, and no words, and you knew that you hadn't quite made the scene.

Does anyone want tea or coffee?

CB: I've helped myself to it. Essie, there's one other situation that I know you were part of that I think would tell a lot about trustee relationships to the college. How you helped rescue Conyngham Hall.

ED: That wasn't the nicest thing I ever did.

CB: But it secured a major property for the college.

ED: Yeah. I was doing decorating at the time, and the way I was decorating was to go when people died, and get the family to give me furniture to put in the living room, or dining room, or in Mike Lennon's case, a beautiful table and chairs for a conference table, which was [inaudible name] Conyngham's mother's dining room set. Well, it happened that the Conyngham family wanted to sell the home. And I thought that they should A). give it away, and B). provide a way of fixing it, because it was never fixed after the [Agnes] Flood. So, Mrs. Conyngham was living on the second floor. And the Conynghams, historically, were very nice supporters of the school. In fact, in the initial formation of the school, the first buildings came through the Conyngham family. So it came time. And I was having a wonderful time decorating this huge campus with things that were coming from other people's houses, and giving them a new rescue. And the most wonderful building to rescue was the Conyngham building. And I went to see it, and the Board said that Norman Weis and I should go to look at it, and decide if it was worth fixing, and if so, how it would happen. Down in the basement, they had—just imagine—were you ever down in the basement of Conyngham? It's all laid with brick in arches, and making arches out of bricks is quite a feat. And it's very complicated, because they're shaped liked this, and the space is curved. And that basement was beautiful, but it hadn't been fixed since the flood. So there was [inaudible], but there was nothing else. So Norman and I walked down there, and I said, "You know, Norman, if we spend about \$100,000 or more on this, we could get this place fixed up, and it'd be wonderful for students. And he said, "I'm in favor of keeping the building." And I said, "Well, I am, too. But we've got to get some way to get the money. And he said, "Well, where do you think it will come from?" And I said, "Well, I think that if we say that the building is going to be named after the person who gives the money—say Maslow gives the money—we'll call it Maslow Hall." Norman said, "It's Conyngham Hall." And I said, "It's Conyngham Hall, but if we were to say that it will become the Maslow Hall [for instance], I think the Conynghams will pay." [Laughter]. "And if they don't, well, nothing lost, nothing gained. And so, when it came up at the board meeting—

CB: She's a new Board member at this time, by the way.

ED: We recommended that indeed the Board should have the voting say. And the Conyngham family wanted it ripped down. Because they wanted to take it as a deduction, not as a gift. So they would give the building, and we would rip it down, and they would get the deduction for the amount of money that the building was worth. Because everything has a real estate value. So we had the board meeting, and at the board meeting, they asked what we had decided, and we said that they would indeed be very well off, and we would remodel the building. And we would not take it as a deduction for anybody, because we would fix it, not take it down. And it would only cost about \$100,000, not too much more, because we wouldn't have to do anything to it. It's going to become a student building. It didn't have any other purposes. So you didn't have to have labs, or anything like that. And I remember Mr. Conyngham. He was furious. Because instead of it being a gift, it was a deduction. It would become the cost of the renovation. And so that's how we got the building. And that's how it became Conyngham Hall, and not named for anybody else. Because we said that it could be named for anybody who fixed it up.

CB: And the footnote to that story is that he never walked into that building again, which my wife found out about, because he was still mad. And you may remember that Jane used to, on board meeting nights, we would have dinner in different buildings, Waller Hall, and so on. And so she decided that we should have dinner in Conyngham Hall, which is a beautiful building to do it in. And Bill came. And I was up with him in Jane Lampe's office, which had been his parents' bedroom. And he came up. They had both died in that room. And he started crying. He was so moved to be up there. So from that point on, he was elated that it had worked out this way. And I've never said to him, "Well, thank Essie!" [Laughter]. But you know, that story is worth telling, because behind almost every building—

ED: There's a story.

CB: There's a story. And you could do a short book on Wilkes. Take every building, and figure out, how did it come into [Wilkes]? You know, Kirby Hall, we got the day before Pearl Harbor [attack on December 7, 1941]. On December 6, 1941. It's on the plaque. Kirby House Home of Education, or something, it says. I think the plaque is still there. But Chase Hall, the Stark family relationship, etc. And the ones that I got, while none as dramatic as Conyngham Hall. Some of them were pretty—the Fenners' property was—I worked several years on that. And every torch club evening was with that in mind. George always drove me, and Chuck Reif home afterwards, which I regarded as one of the major contributions that I made to Wilkes, because when George started talking, which he seldom did, he would get animated about it while he was driving. I kept thinking, we're going up over sidewalks! The first thing we did was take the Carriage house, which allowed us to open up the quadrangle, and that was while Hilda was still alive. She didn't want the noise in her backyard. So we had to convince her of that. And my daughter worked in the dress shop. And she adored my daughter, Erica. So I'm just saying, there were all these parts of it, with several of these properties, all kinds of commitments had to be made to secure the—

ED: We had with Franklin Hall, and when they sent me out to get a silver tray from Bob Capin because he was no longer going to be President, I didn't want to do that. Because he didn't need a silver tray, but a building would be fine. And so I went to the faculty. And I knew I couldn't recommend it, because the Board has to recommend it, not me. And so I went to the faculty and

got the faculty to recommend, and then to the Board. And the faculty recommended to the Board that the building be changed from Franklin Hall to Capin Hall.

CB: That's beautiful. I never knew that story. I'm glad that we go that. What is your sense of Board/President relationships, seen from a trustee's point of view?

ED: I think it's different with each president. I don't think you can make a common statement for all. Because the personality of the President changes things. I think that the President has to inspire the Board to adopt his vision. I think that it's unlikely that a Board is going to provide a vision, because you have too many people on the Board, and to get everybody to agree on anything, if it's starting out is just—

FM: What year did you go on the Board?

ED: Around '73 or '74.

CB: Right after the flood.

ED: Yeah.

FM: That's what I found in my records.

CB: So was Essie on the Board when you were still President?

FM: She was on the Board when I became President. Her name was in the hopper before the flood.

ED: Yes. But you put me on because you recommended me.

FM: Lou Shafer was my Board chairman.

ED: He was really an incredible man.

FM: Yeah. He was succeeded by Tom Kiley.

ED: He was a mess.

FM: [Laughter]. You are so polite, Essie!

CB: We won't get into that one. Wrapping up: My first week, it may have been the first two weeks, I went to Aaron Weis's funeral, and I went to the funeral of Corky Conyngham's mother. So my introduction to Wilkes was to the Weises and to the Conynghams. Two huge families in the realm of Wilkes. But it allowed me to at least touch base with that earlier generation that I never would have known directly. Well, we've reached 11:15, which was the time that we agreed to liberate you.

ED: I called up John Heinz [Center], and I explained that I have a previous engagement for half an hour. That's normally where I would be for speech therapy. And I really like speech therapy because the therapist allows me to read poetry. And so if I do the exercises, that's what the incentive is: I could then read poems. And when I'm not reading poems I'm reading Thich Nhat Hanh. He's a Buddhist philosopher.

FM: Well, we've given you good exercise in speech therapy. You've been very lucid and articulate.

ED: Well, I had a paralyzed vocal cord. But Dr. Barras got me back. So I'm talking.

CB: Good. You're talking.

ED: I don't have the world's greatest sound, but.

CB: Do you think it's recorded well?

MR: Yes.

CB: That's great.

ED: So there you have it.

CB: Well, you started on the topic of women at Wilkes. And I guess I would hazard the observation, which you can counter, that one of the unique things about Wilkes—Bucknell Junior into Wilkes College—was the fact that it was serving virtually every element of the population in northeastern Pennsylvania.

ED: Right. And diverse. Because the diversity here—even our motto is, “Unity amidst diversity.”

CB: Yeah. I looked and I haven't studied this recently, but the first Board, which was not a Board with fiscal power, was under Bucknell. It was started, I think, in 1937. And on that Board, I think there were five women. There were two Jews; there was a Polish-Catholic doctor—

ED: Dr. Kocyan.

CB: Dr. Kocyan.

FM: You've got a good memory!

ED: My body's not too great, but my head is doing fine! [Laughter].

CB: But it represented those elements. And that same year, at Williams, where I did my first teaching, they had a new President named Tyler Dennett who moved to exclude anymore Negroes, and anymore Jews.

ED: Oh!

CB: And they were still an all-male college. So those were two institutions that were very big in my life, in that period when antisemitism was rife, not only in Europe, but in this country.

FM: Every Ivy League school had a quota.

CB: That this little college not only was coed in an area that was single-sex—both women and men convents and seminaries—but it was with Dr. Farley's perspective, and Swarthmore, and—

ED: And Quaker ideals.

CB: Quaker ideals. He saw that you had to bring everyone together. And crucial to that were women. And I think because we're about to go into an age with dramatically increased women leadership, not just in this country, but elsewhere, that this is going to be another dimension of Wilkes's past that shows the prescience of equality in its original leader, Dr. Farley. And we all have been privileged to play out aspects of that, and be empowered as individuals for who we are. And I think, Essie, by having this book, pulling together, and doing it as she did really anchored that initial vision of Dr. Farley to be our permanent vision.

So what do you think about that, Essie?

ED: A plus! Excellent. 100 percent.

CB: I learned early that it was very important to please Essie. Because if I did, it meant I was on track! [Laughter]. I'm serious. Not the only one. And Gene Roth, and Max Rosenn, and Frank Henry. Those were my four lodestars.

ED: [Inaudible]

CB: I had a chance yesterday to talk to somebody about the earth conservancy. Someone who's known me a long time, and never heard me talk about it. And I think that the role I played there was absolutely in line with the role that Dr. Farley had established for the faculty, and for the college.

ED: To be part of the community.

CB: To be part of the community in a way that brought learning and professionalism, whether it was to the political organizations, or to the healthcare system, or to the engineering companies in Mountain Top. I felt I was doing that.

ED: RCN.

CB: And I went to Frank Henry, and Gene Roth, who were both good Republicans. And the only reason I was doing this, was because of Paul Kanjorski. I know they didn't really trust him. And I said, "This is a high-risk activity for me as President. It's a high-risk for Wilkes to take this on. And they said, "If you don't do it, it won't happen. So I felt backed for whatever was going to happen, and I ended up having to testify, under oath, in a federal bankruptcy court, with someone who wanted to bring me down for taking this initiative. That was my moment of doing something unorthodox for a college president, which I think each of our presidents has had to do, in this larger concept of service to this community. Which made us, you know, like a land grant college, a private land grant college for this area. And whoever that group was that went to Bucknell in '32 and '33, to get them to put a facility here—they were the ones that had the real vision, that we needed a Bucknell here, not a religious institution.

Essie, any final observations?

FM: Anymore notes?

ED: It was a privilege to go through the past.

ED: This is just the rest of the names. The rest of the names are: someone by the name of Carol Keup (niece of John Passan), And Shelly Friedman and Melanie Maslow Kern and myself, and [inaudible].

CB: And I'm very proud to have gotten Shelly on the Board.

ED: When she got on the Board, I spoke with her, and said, "Now, listen, Shelly"—I knew her as a child—I said, "You can say what you want when you're out of the meeting, but it's a very conservative group of people. And you really have to watch what you say, and think before you speak," and all that kind of conversation. And she said, "I hear you, Essie. I know what you mean. I said, okay. She goes to the first meeting, and she opens up her mouth, and I thought, "Oh, my God." And when she gets finished, she says, "You know, Mrs. Davidowitz told me I wasn't to do this. But here I am. This is how I'm going to be." And she let them know from the very beginning. Boy, that takes courage! [Laughter]

CB: She was a great force. She's Joe Salzburg's stepdaughter.

ED: And whatever hurt was given to Joe, she never forgot. And every time that something came up that had anything to do with Joe, like the keys to Stark. Sally wouldn't let Joe get in the building unless—this is really trivial—unless he was there and he facilitated it, because the keys were his domain. And you know how that went. And then Shelly had heard that something came up with him, and they were going to do something positive with him. Oh no, not over her dead body. And you knew that it had nothing to do with her, but it was the fact that Joe was hurt that made the difference.

CB: I had some of the same issues at the Darte Center with Alfred. And who was the set guy from Germany?

FM: Holm.

ED: Klaus Holm, yeah.

CB: And we wanted to recognize Klaus Holm, but Alfred was just really bent out of shape by that. There was antisemitism issues that were broiling. But the point is that Wilkes dealt with those issues. Because the people here represented all those different tribes, and learned how to pull the straps together. Sometimes better than others. But our history starts at the very beginning, with those commitments, and Dr. Farley deepened them. And he was here so long, and was so powerful that they became our—

ED: Do you remember Horace Parkhurst?

FM: Parkhurst?

ED: Yes, Horace Parkhurst was on the Board with me.

CB: Was this Corky Conyngham's brother?

ED: That I don't know.

CB: Because Betsy was married to Frank Parkhurst.

ED: Right, but that's a divorce.

CB: They got divorced.

ED: Anyway, I took sculpture at Wilkes. And there was this wonderful mock head that Mr. Simon made. And I said, "Gee, that's a great piece of sculpture! We ought to have that here." And he said, "Oh, we have no money for sculptures here. I said, you know he taught sculpture, and he was really good. But he didn't have like dashing self-confidence. He was a very fine artist. I said, "You know, I think it would look good on a building!" And he said, "Well, where do you think you'd put it?" I said, "Well, I think, on the outside of where the lecture hall is." And he said, "It'd have to be good." I said, "Now, here's how you're going to do it: the motto of the college is 'Unity amidst diversity.' All the different planes in here are the different ethnic groups, and the different people that are the different constituencies that the college represents, and educates, and that they make a difference, so there can be this unity. So really, the sculpture represents the college's motto, unity amidst diversity." He said, "I didn't have that in mind." I said, "Yes, for now you do! Because if you do, then we'll get the money." "And how are we going to get the money?" he said. I said, "You'll see." So we went to the Board meeting, and I said to him, "Listen, you'll come over to— Do you remember David Frey?"

FM: Yes.

ED: I said, "David Frey will come over to you, and he'll practice with you, and I'll practice with you, and when they bring it up, you'll know what to say." So we came over here, and we had him standing by the step, and practiced, and practiced, and practiced. "Remember, the reason for this sculpture is unity amidst diversity, the college's motto. And you're going to put it on the outside wall of the lecture hall." And he said alright. We go to the Board meeting, and I was on the agenda because I wanted them to vote. So now we had the mock head. And I said, "Remember, somebody's going to say, 'What does it mean?'" And that's when you say the college's motto. So we go to the Board meeting, and Mr. Parkhurst raises his hand. He was an older gentleman, and he said, "I see what it is, but what does it mean?" "Oh!" Mr. Simon said. "I knew you were going to ask that question because Mrs. Davidowitz said that when you ask that question I should say that it represents the college's motto!" [Laughter] Well, everybody got hysterical including me! I was like, purple! It was so silly! But it worked! And then they said, "How are we going to pay for it?" Well, the lecture hall wall was for the man who was the President of the Miners Bank. And I knew that if I said I was getting the money from all the banks, that the Miners Bank Bob Jones would say, "You don't have to do that. Miners Bank will do it." So when they said, how are you going to pay for it? I said, "Well, we're going to ask all the banks to participate." And Bob Jones raised his hand, and said, "That's not necessary. Miners Bank will pay." And they did! And that's how it got on. Now, he wouldn't put it on the wall the college's motto, he put on the wall what he thought it was, which was [inaudible]. But at that point, it was a rhetorical discussion; it was fine. And that's how that turned out!

CB: Well, to conclude the session, you've just seen Mrs. Davidowitz at work! [Laughter]. They're all parts of the Wilkes campus that reflect. She furnished my office the first two or three weeks that I was here.

ED: With a beautiful rug.

CB: A beautiful rug, and a beautiful couch, which in fact, was a daybed.

ED: It was a daybed, because I wanted you to be able to rest. Because it was a very taxing job for a young person, and I thought if you had a place to rest in between, it would be good! [Laughter].

CB: But also, it was a bed that pulled out, so that—

ED: If you really wanted to sleep, you could sleep!

CB: We often thought when we needed some extra room, when guests were coming to stay at the house, that they could go stay in my office! But I thought there would be rumors, and that would not be good. [Laughter]. Anyway, Essie, thank you.

ED: You're welcome. I had a wonderful time.

CB: People who listen to this on tape, need to know that we have an absolutely superb French brunch, complete with croissant, and quiche, and beautiful Wedgwood china. So this has been an elegant experience. Thank you, Essie.

ED: Well, thank you for coming. I had a wonderful time.

MR: Thank you!

ED: And I'm happy to have met you.

MR: Yes, very nice to have met you!