

Oral History Interview - Jon Lindgren 10/15/2018

Participants:

Christopher N. Breiseth

Francis Michelini

Jim Rodechko

Suzanna Calev

Bob Heaman

Mollie Rance

Transcribed by: Maddie McDonald, Fall 2021

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Francis Michelini: Tradition of a great deal of involvement and of say, and Dr. Farley was like the orchestra leader. He would say yes, bassoons, you know? Violins, cellos...and it was not a typical...and I had no idea what a typical collegiate structure was, I was a biology professor. But in retrospect we can see how so many characteristics of the college that were inherited by subsequent Presidents were really reflective of that evolution of that involvement of faculty, and almost everything to do in the community. In part it helped grow with the fine arts fiesta, they knew board members, they worked with them independently. This was not an institution hiring a President. This was an institution hiring a president manager, they were hiring an orchestra leader. That's my primitive interpretation about what we came to recognize. We put that into words, and Chris edited it and submitted it and then Jane had her issues, ultimately dying. That's when we lost a period of our history that I put together in that other subsequent notebook, and the timing was perfect. You lost communication with it because of Jane's illness and death. But, Tim did discuss it with his board chairman, and his board chair, Miller was it at the time?

Christopher Breiseth: Jack Miller.

FM: Jack Miller. He really used that.

CB: I didn't know that.

FM: Yeah, it's very clear where Jack Miller - Tim submitted that paper that you put together after our conversations almost word for word. He might have done a little editing -

CB: He added a section on his period as President, which we never saw until we saw the final copy.

FM: Jack Miller is really - without the board chairman buying into that and communicating to the rest of the board "This is what we have to do. This is what we have to splurge with the next President. This is what we've got to understand our role to be." The role I think of the board changed dramatically as a result of what we put together. And we worked about 2 years on that, and it was all confidential. I'm not sure it needs to be.

CB: I don't think we've shared it with anybody. You've never seen it?

[All talking over each other]

CB: There were some candid ideas about the faculty. But we didn't talk about Bill Stine.

FM: This is as much recapping for our benefit because this is the first time the four of us have been together in a long time. In his inauguration, I think Leahy just picked up a ball and started running. Because he built the history of the institution, and the presence of every living President Wilkes had ever had since its founding, back down to Farley, as part of his transition as part of his administration.

CB: He's gotten better and better at the Wilkes narrative. He makes sense of this place by incorporating all of the good things that have happened since he's been here. I mean, even the flags as you come in today that summarize the different things that are going on right now. It really is marvelous.

FM: I would love to know what the search committee was thinking about. But he was the Vice President at Scranton. So he knew enough about the culture to understand what that paper was trying to say to him. I think if they would have brought in a different person as the successor to Tim Gilmour this would be quite a different institution.

CB: So if you want a different concept of immortality, it's that John Chwalek was still influencing things after he died.

Bob Heaman: One dimension of this though is that you were the first outsider president, and the first person who had not come out of the faculty. And so, the faculty was from a certain point of view, delighted that we had somebody coming in and assessing things and evaluating things. And that was very important for us, for the faculty, that we had somebody with a different dimension.

CB: We started this in mid flight. Today is the fifteenth of October, two thousand and eighteen. We're here with Jon Lingren, a long-time librarian of the Eugene Farley Library. And we're welcoming Suzanna - your last name?

SC: Calev.

CB: Calev, who's our new archivist for this project. Mollie is continuing. Jim Rodechko and Bob Heaman. Dr. Mike and I are the old faithful for this project. And we've got in, and began this with a discussion about how the four presidents, the four surviving presidents after Dr. Farley came together to begin discussing where Wilkes has come from, and where it might be going. That has led to this oral history project. We now, and correct me, in terms of faculty members, we've now dealt with Les Turoczi, Ben Fiester, we just missed Welton Farrar. We literally were in touch with him to do this. Trustees - Gene Roth. And we've started the non-presidents with Clayton Karambellas.

Jim Rodechko: Tom Kelly?

CB: Right, we've been kind of representing Bob Capin. Tom Kelly.

JR: Paul Adams.

CB: We've had Paul Adams, yes. So we've had a couple of administrative staff besides presidents. And I thought, Jon, it might be interesting to start with your own background before you came to Wilkes, and where you were when you hit this funny place.

Jon Lindgren: My educational background is from a large Midwestern university, but I was a liberal arts major, an English major. Then I worked on some graduate degrees. I have a masters degree from Indiana, and then I did most of the coursework towards the PhD at Nebraska. Then I got connected with the small colleges, and the liberal arts tradition, and the first one was Albion College, which is up in Southern Michigan. It was clear to me after about four years that I was not a great scholar, and I was an okay teacher but maybe not a great teacher. So I thought to serve myself, my family, my students and my institutions, well, I better get out of teaching. So I made a transition to librarianship. I went to Western Michigan for a very compressed degree. At the time our second son was born, I was working at Kalamazoo College part-time to get some library experience. I was teaching at the community college in Battle Creek. So, that whole year was, shall we say, very dynamic for lack of a better term.

CB: Intense.

JL: Intense indeed. After that I got a job then as the head of reader services at the College of Wooster, which was also a liberal arts institution. I was there for four years and met a fellow from St. Lawrence University in northern New York, also a liberal arts school. Now, they had a couple of professional programs; education was one of them. But, surely liberal arts, basically. So when I was looking to assume a head job someplace I just looked around. Wilkes came up. Somebody sent my name to either you or George Waldner. George contacted me and I thought "Well, this could be intriguing." So I came down, and what I found was quite a different culture. It was not the purely liberal arts culture with a lot of wealthy, long-term, family "chips" who came because their parents came. I was attracted to that quite frankly because I thought the liberal arts and the professional schools really had a kind of natural need for each other. I think that the Wilkes students seemed to me more amenable, more serious about their education. Not that they didn't occasionally maybe imbibe [all laughing], but they really knew why they were here. And if they didn't, their parents sure knew, and they were there because their parents urged them. Many of them, of course you know all of this, were first-generation college students. So they had a kind of freshness that appealed to me a lot, because they seemed like a very fertile —

FM: What year was that?

JL: That was actually 1989. I started March 20th in 1989. Actually I interviewed, almost to the day, thirty years ago. Because it was in the fall and I had a commitment to stay at St. Lawrence until I could make a transition. Also, my younger son was a senior in high school and I wanted to participate in his senior activities as long as I could. So George and I kind of compromised on that, and settled on March 20th, which was toward the end of his school year. It allowed me to get out of all of the moving stuff and dump it on my wife, Alicia.

CB: You just wanted to get to a warmer climate.

JL: Actually, you're absolutely right about that. I was tired of the north country winters with temperatures ranging down into the lower minus 40s. 47, 48 below. These were not wind chills, these were actual temperatures. Since then I think they've had their warm spells, and they still have their cold spells.

CB: I heard that one day last year they actually got up to 32 degrees . [All laughing]

FM: So you were president when Jon came?

CB: Oh yes. He was one of my proudest hires.

FM: Transition for me from Nadja Vuica to John.

JL: There was a fellow, Rob Paustian[**Rob Postium 00:13:08**] was his name. He went from here to a place down near Lancaster. I'm not sure —

FM: Franklin and Marshall?

JL: No, it was not as—

FM: : Dickinson?

JL: No.

CB: Who was before Rob? Because I also hired -

JR: Was that **Nadja Vuijica**?

CB: I never knew Nadja. I think I hired Rob as well.

JL: Well then There was another interim librarian.

JR: And **Xiping Xiao**.

CB: Yes. She was here when I arrived.

JR: She must have followed Dale.

FM: Oh, Dale Buehler. I knew Dale. I knew Dale by reputation only. We won't follow that up. [all laughing]

CB: Between you and Mike, and let's start with Mike because you were here when the Eugene Farley Library was built, and had to deal with the damage after the flood. Say something just about the building and the commitment it represented in the evolution of Wilkes College.

FM: I have to go back to accreditation prior to my becoming involved in the administration at all. This is directly from Dr. Farley's recitation, that the accreditation of Wilkes in the 40s and the 50s always qualified by saying how inadequate the library was. And in those days, the library was in Kirby hall, and it was inadequate. Dr. Farley would walk them up to Franklin Street, and he would point at Weckesser Hall, and he would say "But that's going to be our library." Mr. Weckesser was a member of the founding board, and he donated that home with the condition that his wife should remain living in it until her death, and then we get the building. And the accreditation people would look at that magnificent building and go, "Oh, that's okay." And we'd pass. So that happened, to my understanding, twice that they gave that qualified approval. And of course Mrs. Weckesser knew that this was in her husband's will, and on nice spring days she would sit up in her room on the second floor. And when she would see Dr. Farley

walking up the street she'd lean out and she'd say "Oh Gene, I hate to tell you this but I'm feeling fine." [all laughing] How can you forget a story like that, you know? But that's how Wilkes passed the library requirement in its early accreditations. And by the time she actually died, it was inadequate to be a library. It still was like Kirby Hall. It was rooms in a former home, and so the first building, they had to build a gymnasium for Wilkes to become a four year accredited institution in 1947. So that was the first building that was built at Wilkes, and the library was the second building. The laboratories and things were all parts of Conyngham Hall that burnt down. The biology department was in the carriage house. The first floor had the walls taken out, it was the stables, and they converted that to a lecture hall for about 75 people and that's where the faculty had their meetings when I first came here. I remember sitting there with Tommy Richards who had his hearing aids in those days. Dr. Farley conducted the meetings. Every story digresses, but you've got to hear this. Dr. Farley would be conducting the faculty meetings. There was no structure administratively. There were maybe 70 people, oh, 35 people in the original faculty when I came here in 1955. And Dr. Farley would be saying something to the faculty, and he would realize that Tommy Richards was just sitting there with his eyes closed and his arms across his chest. And Dr. Farley would say "Tommy! Are you listening to me?" Tommy would open his eyes, lift his head, and say "The Yankees are leading the Dodgers 3 to 2." [All laughing] The quid pro quo of mutual respect for faculty and Dr. Farley was just unique, it's indescribable. But there was no other administrative structure. When I was hired, the only other person who could authorize a contract was [Al Bastress? 00:18:16] who had three credits on his teaching record as Academic Dean. But that was it. And it was later in that period of time, the 1960s, that the administration actually was required by the board to expand and become more encompassing. So the library was the first new building other than the gymnasium that really was precipitated by the board, recognizing that we had to have a more adequate library for our next accreditation. Weckesser had died, it was not a library, and they erased the funds for it.

CB: How did you fund it?

FM: Pardon me?

CB: How did you fund it?

FM: I have no idea. I was a biology professor teaching courses that I hadn't even had. And, really had not had much exposure. From 55 to 62 I was totally -

CB: Do either of you know how it was funded?

JR: When I came, I was interviewed by you in the summer of 68. They were moving the library books from Kirby into the new building. And when I came in September -

CB: So what year was that?

JR: 68.

CB: So the building had 4 years before the flood. But in the design of it, was there a faculty committee working with the administration?

FM: You know, I have absolutely no recollections. I do know that, the campaigns, it would always be the Farley library. The board recognized his role so much that it was going to be the Eugene S Farley Library.

CB: And those specialized rooms were a part of the original design?

FM: I suspect the typical powerhouses there, Walter Carpenter and Arnaud Marts, were still very active in fundraising. Those would be the names - are there any plaques anywhere in the library that identify donors? I was never a part of that.

CB: Yeah, you didn't do plaques.

FM: There was no major gift that built it like Stark Hall. In fact now I have to correct myself because Stark hall was built in 1957.

CB: Well, when was the new men's dorm built?

FM: Pardon?

CB: When was the new men's dorm built? Pickering Hall.

FM: That was here before I came. That was built before the Farley Library.

CB: Yeah, I think that was number 2. It was the gym, and then the dorm.

FM: Yeah, you're right.

JL: Was the gym on the same footprint as where the Martz Center gym is now?

CB: Yes.

FM: But that's all that's left is the footprint.

JL: Oh.

FM: Yeah, they've really expanded it. I don't know how they got away with property lines.

CB: Well we got that land from the miners. The little house that is still there was next to a larger hall, which I think had been a Wilkes building.

FM: Yes. Charlie Bait lives there, remember?

JR: Wasn't the math department down there at one time?

CB: Yes. And that got wiped out by the flood. It was triaged as I understand. Look there is food. Now that you've warmed up and you know what this kind of examination will be like.

FM: Let's go back to when we were really trying to trace the sequence of librarians up until your point. So you came during the early days, the early years, of the Chris Brieseth administration. And you retired from that job in 2003?

JL: Yep.

CB: I didn't realize that you retired that soon after. And I was going through my old locators -

JL: Yeah, I was here for about fourteen years.

CB: - and realized between 2002 and 3, all of a sudden you just evaporated. Poor Jon. And Alicia too!

FM: Did your wife work at the college too?

JL: Yes, she had.

FM: What did she do?

[The group takes a break from the interview to get food [00:23:00-00:26:35]

FM: So what did your wife do?

JL: When we came down here, she was a tenured professor at a two-year SUNY branch in Canton where St. Lawrence was located. So, she had divided feelings about leaving. When we got down here she talked to people here and at Wilkes. She's an English teacher, and they hired her at Kings for one year, and I think they might have hired her permanently after that. But Wilkes came through not in a tenure track position, but as an annual yearly contract. And she's a natural teacher, she's just born to teach, I would say. In fact, when we retired the same year in 2003, I was more than a little concerned that she was not going to transition well into retirement. She no longer talks about adjuncting, but she talked for years about it. Now that we've been retired, for what, fifteen years? Close. She's managed to become more of an artist, so she does a lot of painting. So she's done shows at the Marquis Gallery in Wilkes Barre. [in Kingston]. And there's a group called the Cider Painters that have an annual show in the fall coming up. In fact I think it's at the end of this week at the Main Street gallery on, what street is that? The other bridge street, not Memorial Bridge but —

CB: Pierce?

JL: Pierce! Pierce Street. It's right next to that pizza place. Sizzle Pi, if you know where that might be. So anyway, that's a big event. It's an international event. There's a lot of miniaturists from around the world, mostly they're English-speaking, but they submit. She's had a couple of minor prizes and a few sales. She has another one coming up the week after at that little diner behind the hot dog place over between Kingston and Forty Fort. Right near the intersection where you get on the cross valley.

JR: Mickey's or Michael's?

JL: No.

FM: Abe's?

JL: Abe's is the hot dog place, it's right behind there. You know one thing about getting older: I've found that groping for proper nouns, boy oh boy. I just struggle.

CB: Even a Swede, along with the Norwegians, is having the same problem.

JL: What, you think there's a genetic factor there?

CB: Well since Elizabeth Warren had her DNA test, it shows us she's 1/16th Indian.

FM: One of the things I'm going to suggest before we think about wrapping up this project is we ought to all describe how we aged, and what differences have come to our interests and understandings.

JR: Michael, all I have to do is take a picture of us.

FM: What's that Jim?

JR: All I have to do is take a picture of us.

CB: And a recording.

FM: It's an interesting part of life.

JL: So then anyway, she was here for thirteen years at Wilkes, and we retired at the same time.

CB: Did Pat work through their situation in the English department? Alicia's. Because I remember a strain.

JL: Yeah.

CB: Was she chair at the point of Alicia's employment?

JL: I don't know that she hired her. But she certainly worked with her, yes.

FM: I think this history part is coming to a conclusion as far as my role is concerned. And what would I think about what's important or not. And one of the things that I think is absolutely fascinating when I come back on campus is how the whole environment of being a faculty member - the role has dramatically changed. And when I walked through the library on my last visit up, just how dramatically the library has changed. The collections have become all electrified for better or worse. But how do students use a library facility now, compared to when you were a librarian?

JL: I've got about twenty minutes I could give you on that.

CB: Are we on now?

SC: I started to record when they got into another discussion as long as no one minds.

CB: No, that's fine.

FM: Because in your old age you begin to say "How could I function in this world?" And I can no longer function in this world without my daughter and her cellphone and doing everything. I couldn't make doctor's appointments anymore. I hang up the phone and it's out of my mind.. Seriously, the evolution of the human side of Wilkes College. I can understand the impacts of the faculty, who back in my day were the Rosenbergs, the Grove's, the Ben Fiester's, and I can talk that language. But I sure can't understand how in the world the library has to adapt and what transition resulted. Now when I walk in the library I

don't see a book! There's a historic shelf there just for decorative purposes but it sure as hell isn't where I would go in and take a book off the shelf and sit in a little cozy hole and read a book.

CB: And I had to preside over the beginning of that transition, sometime we should get into that. But if we're comfortable enough to get back on track while people keep eating, I think it would be interesting to know what you found in this library. What was its orientation based on your earlier experiences in places like Wooster, Kalamazoo.

JL: Well I would say that my orientation was much the same, but I saw it as a somewhat different mission because of what I was talking about earlier in this blending of the professions with liberal arts. I think if you've ever read Malcom Gladwell's book on the tipping point — he talks about different things that influence us. And one of the things that he mentions in one of his books, and I'm not sure if it's that one or another one, is the idea that people who were born in the 1930s had a natural advantage. Now being born in the 30s, I had a natural advantage. When I was in graduate school at Nebraska we decided to start a family, and I thought well, maybe I ought to start making a dollar or two. And I sent out two letters, because we had decided we wanted to go back to Michigan. So I sent out two letters. One to Alma College, one to Albion College. I had two interviews and two offers. You know, you look at a lot of things. I'm not claiming to be a mastermind of financial resources and family planning, so I was just lucky. Really lucky. Because at the end of my teaching career, which was about 1968 or '69, the whole thing was turning. And I could see it turning. The whole profession as an opportunity for young scholars dried up. So moving into librarianship was again, a very lucky kind of thing. Because the opportunities were there, I had the educational background, and experience as a teacher, and so on and so forth. Because of that combination, I think I saw the role of the library somewhat differently from purely the information, technology point of view. Or even from the old vision of libraries, the memory of civilization kind of thing. I had the idea, which I think goes back to Jefferson, you know this idea of enlightening the citizenry is important or necessary for a functioning governmental order. I could see as a student and as a teacher, that there was a vacuum in terms of the library. Because libraries have always been venerated as these wonderful institutions. But at the same time everybody expects so much of libraries, in a way they don't expect anything at all from them. It's an ironic situation, and you can see that because people didn't really address the question of how to integrate access to information and knowledge as a part of one of the basic human communication skills. And so throughout education, learning how to handle information sources became kind of a haphazard. And we all learned to use the library by stumbling around in the stacks, and finding one thing led to another, and so on. But there wasn't much systematic about it. So I got this idea that we really need to integrate the library into the curriculum and work with the —well, this is an ideal goal. It's not something that is done very well anywhere. There are few exemplary places, like Earlham College was one. And in fact I brought some people from Earlham College here shortly after I got here. Evan Farber was the library director there. He was at the time the guru of integrating library access to academic knowledge and information. So, to give you kind of an example of what I'm talking about, when people go to the library, if they are in a professional program they want the answer to the question. They want to know what's the best thinking nowadays about what the question is. And you can't deny that that's important, because you want architects and pharmacists and engineers and so on to really know what the best information is. But at the same time, as we got into technology it began to emphasize that information seeking may be somewhat opposed to knowledge seeking, if you can understand the difference that I'm making. Because knowledge is when you read a book about the media, and the impact of the media on children for example, I can find

a ton of books about that. But, if you read about child development separately, and biologically, and nowadays neuroscience, which has exploded as we all know. There's so much that you can bring from one field to another. And what the ideal, in my mind is, is that it attunes you on how to make a synthesis, and not just to go finding the answer to the question. Because when a student may find the answer to the question in a book, then there's a strong impulse to plagiarize it. And I know as a student I plagiarized, because I didn't know any better when I was an undergraduate. I remember writing a term paper on spices. I found a few books on spices and I pulled them together. That wasn't a research paper, that was just a mishmash of facts in some place. Now to go back to the technology thing, one of the pressures that I felt on me at Wilkes was the pressure to get the biggest bang for the buck, so that my budget would go the farthest to satisfy the needs of a diverse range of educational programs and faculties. And there were certain people who maybe tried to get more than their share. And I'm thinking now of Umid [Nejib], he tried to squeeze more money out of me than I felt they deserved. So anyway, I love Umid, I think he is a wonderful man and I cherished him. So I'm not trying to denigrate him. He was just looking out for his

CB: This is to his credit.

JL: It is. And so at the same time, it puts pressure on, how are you going to keep all of these journal subscriptions of the humanists, the historians, the biologists. And some of these things are becoming terribly expensive when you get into the late 80s and the 90s. We had a subscription to something called "Physics Letters" that we bought for around \$4500 a year, for one journal. Well the physicists didn't really want to part with that. But there wasn't any option, you know. So, in a way, what saved my situation I think was the technology and the digitization of resources like this, and the bundling or aggregating of them. We had a thing called Infotrack, I don't know if that's still around even, but Infotrack was something where you'd get several dozen subscriptions to journals for a flat price per year. And so that meant you could then cancel a lot of those journals. Well you could see these aggregators are cannibalizing their own products, their original print products in a way. And that creates more pressures and drives prices even higher. So it's a never-ending spiral, and a difficult way of trying to get the biggest bang for the buck.

CB: You brought the first computers into the library for the students.

JL: They were beginning, actually the choice had been made by either Rob Paustian? or **Xi Ping?** to go with the VTLS system, Virginia Tech's Library System, I don't know if that's still the one at the library?

SC: No.

JL: So, it may or may not have been the one I would have chosen. But it was one of the standard products at the time. Backing up a little ways, when I was saying how my library career has spanned the golden years, as I see it. When I was a beginning librarian at Wooster, it was the beginning of the OCLC system. Is that something that's still out there?

FM: Say that again?

JL: OCLC. It started out at the Ohio College Library System. About fifty-three academic institutions in Ohio collaborated in sharing the cataloging records. It went online in 1971, the year I started there. So I was there at the beginning. Now, the online catalog really didn't mean a lot to the public services librarian

like myself, because it didn't have keyword searching. It was nothing more than a labor saving device whereby colleges could share cataloging records, most of which came from the Library of Congress anyway, so you didn't have fifty-three different catalogers doing the same book in pretty much the same way. So all of this later then was part of the National Library System and the Library of Congress. Everything generally follows that automation trend.

CB: What do you remember in your own mind as a librarian thinking for us, for Wilkes? When did you have the greatest sense of the tremendous transitions reflecting going to technology from printed books and journals? When did that hit you, and how did you think about it for Wilkes?

SC: And also microfilm.

JL: Well the microfilm had been there for many years. I mean things like the New York Times when microfilm—

FM: I was fumbling through papers here because somewhere in that pile I found a newspaper article with a photo of me in 1967, and faculty members, there were about 4 of them, and 2 representatives from IBM who were here to talk about computers and COBOL (Computer Business Oriented Language) and Fortran. Everytime I see that picture I get so frustrated because this was Joe Wendell at the board, or somebody went on the board who would say "Mike, this world is changing, wait until you see what we bring." And he brought these guys up from Boca Raton, Florida research lab of Eastman-Kodak or whatever it was, to brief me on computers. And they sent these guys up for 3 weekends in a row to try to get the faculty to understand that this was coming down the pipe, and you guys better get ready! And I get so frustrated in saying "What did I do?" Did anybody even pay attention? And I have no idea of where our faculty went in terms of - I know we tried to trigger in 1967, and I have the picture to prove it. If there's one thing I can say at Wilkes, nothing changed in terms of computer sophistication until Lou came. Nothing.

CB: When I came, Rich Sours had just come back from a year with the FBI. And he got himself, he used the awful expression "upskilled" to teach computer science.

JR: Upskilled?

CB: Yeah. The math department became computer science literate, and began teaching other people and the faculty. I was very impressed.

BH: How about Joe Bellucci's contribution?

CB: Joe was incredibly important, particularly in education. I don't know how much he was taking in people of other disciplines the way Rich was.

BH: Well he's the one who brought computers into Wilkes, right?

FM: I bought my first laptop from Joe.

CB: Joe, he was -

BH: As did I. And he'd give them away, "Here, take this home over Christmas." And he educated us. And, I think Joe Belluci was in touch with people who got computers around the country.

FM: Is Joe still alive?

JL: Oh yeah.

FM: We need to get him on the list!

CB: We need to do Joe after -

FM: Oh yeah, oh yeah. That's a big gap in my kind of effort, to say how did Wilkes and it's faculty transition through all of these kinds of waves of change?

JR: I remember Joe at a faculty meeting, and it had to be an early one, standing up and saying "If faculty members don't know how to deal with the computer and teach their students something about the computer, the vanguard of---

CB: This is a real diversion but what was the interaction between Bellucci and Umid?

JL: It was wonderful.

JR: I think it was. I don't think there was any discord between the two of them.

BH: Well they challenged one another.

JR: Joe had his Bugaboos. He had two people over the years. One was George and the other was Paul. I never had to worry about either of them.

CB: To me they were two of the most creative people on campus. And they were the ones that led us into the computers. And Joe, training the teachers, I think deserves a major article on what he did to redefine our whole teacher education program with the use of Apple computers.

BH: I think we were way ahead of most colleges our size. Because Joe, well he was bringing the computers in, and Umid was giving them to his faculty and keeping that faculty ahead. So that combination kept Wilkes ahead of a lot of colleges our size.

FM: I would be very interested in talking to Joe because I'm not sure, I would have hired him I think?

[not JL]: Yeah, because Gene Hammer was the education department with part time people supervising visiting practice teaching. Who was the guy that used to travel a lot?

JR: Johnson, Bob West?

[not JL]: Yeah, Bob West.

JR: I think Joe came the year before I came.

FM: God, I hired some good people didn't I! Didn't know what I was doing.

CB: Back to the library, how did you feel the pressures on campus to make the transition. Where in your own thinking as a professional did you feel you had pushes to make a change?

JL: As I mentioned, I had this strong desire to integrate the education of the students towards finding—I call them knowledge, not just information resource—but knowledge resources. You know, to work with faculty to try and forget the assignments made that would not lead to the kind of a ho-hum term paper that I was describing that I had done on spices. But, to do something that involves some kind of testing them and pushing the students to make an interpretation. I call it an original synthesis. Not to just repeat what they found in books.

JR: As far as I can remember you were the first librarian we had that actually brought our classes — I remember bringing classes into the library and you were the instructor

JL: Yeah, and I had a staff. Joe Erdick, Brian Sacolic, and Fred Krohle were the three reference librarians. I think that Fred is less inclined toward the teaching function, but Joe and Brian were right with me from the beginning. We got to the point where we were doing maybe over 100 classes a year. So, to me that was some kind of an achievement. Not a massive achievement.

JR: It was kind of a fulfillment of your philosophy.

JL: Well yeah, that's really what I came here to do. But back to the question you asked about when I felt technology was really changing everything. It had arose not so much on our campus, but in following the news, I thought I saw it on television, the news story that had to do with Penn State. And Penn State had opened up a new library. I don't think that it was the one named after the football coach, it might have been.

BH: Paterno gave a lot of money to that library. I think it was four million dollars, and that was in my day when four million was a lot.

JL: But they built a new library, and I remember seeing on television, the local news, a report that interviewed the provost. And I can't remember, it wasn't President Spanier, but it was the person, the chief academic officer right under him.

FM: Spanier would have taken credit for it.

JL: He would have. This guy was gloating about how there were no books in the library, how it was all computers. And it's because everything is online, and it's all available. And this was, to me, a cause for pulling my hair out because these academic resources from journals that are charging, in many cases, thousands of dollars a year for subscriptions, they're not giving it away. The sources they are getting at are the things that are like Time Magazine, and well I don't know. I'm being a little dramatic.

FM: If it gives you any solace, Penn State caused me to pull a lot of my hair out too. They were very destructive in many ways in Pennsylvania higher education.

JL: And there was no regard for copyright. "All books are available online, don't worry about books anymore!" It was just nonsense from the word go. Yet at the same time, I could see this as kind of a harbinger -

CB: The train was coming down the track.

JL: So maybe to the end of that kind of story, it seems to me that things that offer the best academic resources. JSTOR, I don't know, do you have JSTOR?

SC: Mmhm.

JL: We have JSTOR now, but we couldn't afford it then because we were supporting a lot of print subscriptions still when I retired. JSTOR was founded by the Association of Research Libraries, ARL. About 15 of the major institutions. And initially it was housed in Chicago, and they sent all of their journals and back-bound volumes they didn't have room for to central storage and they would ship out - Well then the automation took hold and these things were all digitized. But if you go to JSTOR now, and if you're not an affiliate member through an institution like Wilkes, or like my son who frequents the New York Public Library a lot. The New York Public Library has JSTOR and he gets whatever he wants, and I've been known to have him print out a copy of something that I'm interested in. But I think that I retired at the right time. Because I feel very gloomy about the idea that, as I see it, and I'm probably overly pessimistic, maybe Molly can correct me here. Students want the easiest way to get out and get a good grade in the course, and that's not always true to some extent. But it's so easy nowadays to, not to plagiarize, but to get resources from anywhere because the internet as we all know -

SC: Well there has just recently been news about allowing faculty to use a secure browser for online testing, which would allow them not to, just to take online tests and not be able to go to google or something while they do that just to keep the integrity of testing. But that's been an issue too I know.

[not JL]: That's like the distinction between easy and efficient. It's a puzzle for me. I walked through the old science building. It's not even the old science building, it's a totally new technologically oriented building with lots of small rooms with a computer interface, limited to no more than four to six students. And apparently instruction is geared to, in large part, utilizing teamwork. And it's a very efficient way, you know I can harp them back to my undergraduate days at Seaton Hall and I can name you **Bob Poslanko, Ed Walski, Bill Callahan**, and somebody else, who were at my inauguration as president. We were so close, but we did work as a team basically, studying organic chemistry. I learned an awful lot about how stupid I was when I see **Bob Posolanko**, a bakers son, who was up at two o'clock in the morning stocking his fathers bakery pots with flour before coming to college, leafing through an organic chemistry textbook. And he's learning it, and I'm there studying it for a half an hour and thinking "what in the hell are they talking about?" And I learned that people learn in different ways. And to me I see this new library, and this new science building, it's not the library, I don't know if it's an extension library and I don't really care. But obviously, your interpretation of gathering information and utilizing it in more than an intellectual sense is carried over by the practitioner in the classroom. I hope. Am I constricting a fantasy world?

CB: No. When we set up the school of pharmacy and the computer systems there, the students had access to all of the pharmaceutical literature from that section of Stark which we set up. Which would have included books as well as journals, and research reports. Because that was what they were going to have to do on the job, to be able to look at a particular drug and find out how it's being used, how it's being abused. And I remember showing those to visitors as they got up online, as being a way to the future. And

it was localized. You had access to everything on your computer. I would argue, you know I've got the same nostalgia. What year were you born?

JL: I was born in '38.

CB: I was born in 36, so I've got the same nostalgia.

JR: I was born in 25.

CB: Well you knew more people from World War I than we did. And they still were around in my time. But you know, I think at its best, and again I trust that Wilkes is doing the best job it can on this. The notion of organizing knowledge around a particular problem is so much easier today. Even with your cell phone, asking google. You come up with a pretty sophisticated question, and you'll get an answer. Yes it's easier, and to some extent we probably feel that people are not paying their full dues knowing how laborious it should be to get information. Question, how do you conceptualize the process of acquiring knowledge, to use your word. And that fits a liberal arts orientation for people who are going into professional activities, which is the kind of student as you suggest, Wilkes has served right from the beginning. Our professional programs came in even before the war. So, it's getting through the concept to the younger student that there is a world of knowledge out there, and there are very efficient ways to access it. From the historians point of view, it's what are the questions you're asking them. And the biologists will have a little different slant on that than the literature people. But it seems to me that you were at the dawn of this institution. We had to start wrestling with the Umids and the Joe's were pushing the entire faculty. And if you look at our administrators, including people around this table, to see how we respond to that pressure. It was a financial pressure, it was a concept pressure, it was a disciplinitis. We know in music how the song is supposed to be done. And Joe Baruchi [Bellucci.] comes along and represents something of a threat, or a resource, depending on your point of view. And that becomes a leadership question. It's interesting, I came here from Sangamon State University which is a brand new institution. The very center, in our Butler buildings, was the library. And over the big central desk in this butler building was a huge sign that said "Get help here." And almost every course brought the students to look at how, and they were already using computers, even when I went there in 1971. The whole notion of that was you had to demonstrate knowledge management skills. It was built into a competency based BA that I helped design. One of the outcomes was that you had to demonstrate literacy in the library. It got married with your other assessments, so that in the particular assessment that you were presenting how to explain the contemporary world in terms of gender issues, for example, how did you use information. How did you acquire it? And you have to show in your final assessment how you used it. When I got here I thought that that was the most imaginative thing, besides the review of tenured faculty, which I consciously put in. I just found the power of the president to affect that kind of change in the faculty was very limited. I was aware of how your leadership role was helping reorient this library to be a, let's not say modern, but a contemporary library. I think my recollection is that you brought enough experience from the outside, from other institutions, that you got a lot of respect from the faculty. I remember Rob having some difficulties. He was a nice guy, and a lot of fun to be around.

JR: He ran into some problems, I can't remember what they were.

CB: He rubbed some people the wrong way, and when you're getting into this kind of application of knowledge to particular learning problems, if the personality issues aren't clicking well, it becomes a

barrier. And my sense of your years was a very positive one between the faculty and the library. Which set it up for your successors, at a point that the computer was beginning to move in. At the time I left in 2001, there was a whole first floor that had stacks and computer stations where people were learning how to access the card catalog. You presided over the transitioning of the card catalog to the computers. Which is, for a traditional library, that was a huge step. Where did you find, and you can include the president's office, where did you find the greatest resistance to making the changes that you felt were necessary.

JL: Well I don't think I was overwhelmingly successful there in integrating the library into the academic programs. I think I made some strides, so to say -

CB: Without using names, where was the challenge?

JL: I think the challenge maybe was in my own mind. As you were talking about the access, particularly in the professions, and particularly in Pharmacy. I don't know, is Barbara Nanstiel still on board?

MR: She left a few years ago.

JL: Two years ago?

MR: A few.

JL: A few years ago. Well Barbara was taking, who was the first Dean of Pharmacy?

JR: Bernie Graham.

JL: Bernie! Bernie seized on Barbara, and he hired her. She was very good at database searching, in a way that I never could become because I didn't have the, I don't know what, training mostly. Maybe I had other things to think about too. I mean, that was her job. And I don't know now, does database searching get done, or is it transparent enough? I mean I've been out of this game for a long time now, and in a way I think it's not a kind of great character that I have not kept up a lot of connections with the library staff. I don't go to the library, I don't look back. It tends not to be my way of -

FM: Did you deal mostly, or find in your experience that you dealt with mostly department chairmen in defining library needs for them, if they did at all care. Or was it primarily individual faculty members who would say to you, "I'm going to be teaching this course in German literature, can you put together a set of books that I can use for my students to reference?" I'm making that up.

JL: Well I would say in terms of getting the instructors to bring their classes over for some library instruction, and some of them would have a sequence of maybe 2 or 3 sessions because they thought it was important. At that level, it was pretty much a faculty on librarian. Let's face it, I mean Joe and Brian were very good at relating to the faculty as well. And so they would be approached, and so on. But I think in terms of -

FM: Choices of periodicals and stuff

JL: Yeah, I think I would mostly go through the chairs because a lot of people, I mean the chairs we relied on them to have the big picture for their departmental needs, and not to be too greedy.

CB: Just recall the processes. And I can kind of remember how this worked, how did you determine book purchases and periodical purchases on a year to year basis? Whatever your budget was, who helped make those selections?

JL: Well, it depended on the department, because a lot of them were very responsive and others less so. And at the same time we had some kind of an ideal, I don't know if you knew Heidi?

MR: Yes.

JL: Heidi was the collections development person, and she was a whiz at it. She did a lot of selection on her own. There was, if you want to look at a big trend in that period of time where I was there, and probably has continued. At the beginning of my library career, the idea was that we will select books just in case somebody needs it, so it's the "just in case." And then the transition became toward "just in time." We'll get it for you, just when you need it, through things like interlibrary loan. And that's why if you took a poll of the faculty the year I retired and asked them "What do you like most about the library?" They would say "Interlibrary loan and Mary Watkins and her sidekick", because they were crackerjacks at identifying the sources, verifying them for the lending library so that it wasn't a red herring for them to spend a lot of time on. And they would get the resources and so on. Now I don't know if that's changed a lot or if -

MR: I don't think so. Mary's still, yeah.

JL: A vital part of the service. So that's the "Just in time" approach to it. And that would be kind of the trend in the last 50 years.

CB: Did you have a feeling if there were certain individual faculty members who were building up collections that dealt with their particular interests?

JL: Yeah, that's always the case, sure. And it's hard to argue that point because they're the ones whose students are going to be looking for those resources. But again, that's the old school way of "just in case somebody needs this book." I mean, you're building it for a particular clientele. Whereas the "just in time" approach is, and I made it abundantly clear, whatever you need we can find it. We can get some resources that will be relevant.

CB: How much did you get into collaborating with other libraries?

JL: Other libraries?

CB: In the region.

JL: Yeah, in the region we met quite frequently. I was quite a good friend with Terry Mech at Kings and to some extent the other libraries. Charles at Scranton and what's her name, a wonderful gal who is now deceased who was at Marywood. We would meet. I think that the collaboration was never as effective as I had imagined or hoped that it would be. We did have our niches where we would try to do some collection development, but it was kind of a loosey-goosey thing.

CB: How easy was the access by our students using the library?

JL: Oh, there was no problem. None. No problem at all. They could go to Marywood or Scranton or Misericordia and - what was the nun's name out at a Misericordia? A delightful old gal.

CB: Sister?

JL: Sister, yeah. Well she was a gal, c'mon. She was just as earthy as you could imagine. [laughing] But she was a generous spirit and a wonderful person.

CB: Did many of our students get interested in Library careers? I know a couple who I'm still in touch with.

JL: Um, yeah. I am not aware. Well you didn't go to library school.

MR: No, that's a goal though.

JL: Oh, that's still a goal?

MR. Mhm.

CB: With you three ancients, say a little bit about our first major librarian, **Nadia Vujica**.

JR: I was on the library committee at that time, and the big thing - Dr. Farley was against any security system for the library. Until one day apparently, a student was coming out of the library carrying a load of books, and **Dr. Rawlin?** was coming up the stairs, and said "Boy, you've got a lot on your plate." And the kid dropped his books and ran. And at that point, he gave the order to have a security system. And **Nadia Vujica** was against that. Do you remember that? You attended some -

[not JL]: I probably do.

JR: We brought in a security system.

CB: Even he can block things out.

JR: We brought in security systems to test, and you came once. I remember it because people would say "Oh, this is really good." And you took the book and put it under your arm and walked out, and didn't set it off at all. But Nadia did everything she could to oppose that.

CB: Do you have a portrait of her? I never knew her.

[not JL. The discussion that follows was not my speaking. It might have been Jim Rodechko. My comments pick up with Chris asking me about the library committee below]: Her husband was a philosophy chair. He brought refugees from Germany, I believe.

JR: Croatia.

JL: Croatia. But during World War II days.

CB: So did they get here during the war or after the war?

JL: During.

JR: She was a very nice lady. She was a lot less authoritarian than her husband was.

JL: Her husband stopped though, that there were others on the faculty Yaragaslav Moravick? and I think a few others who were beneath him, he would never acknowledge.

CB: How about Bronis Kaslas?

JL: Pardon?

CB: Was Bronis Kaslas beneath him?

JL: I don't think they were friends.

JR: I don't think so. I have an interesting one with Bronis in the library.

JL: With what?

JR: With Bronis Kaslas We had a department meeting, this was the second year I was there, Berlatsky was on it, and it was a meeting with Cox and the whole group. And Bronis was the chair. And we were talking about how our holdings in the library in history were really good. And the conversation is going back and forth and somebody said "Well, can't the department order books? And Bronis is sitting there like this the whole time, shifting back and forth. And finally, he admitted we get \$5,000 a year for the history department. Which was a good sized chunk of change in 1968, and books were going for 5, 6, 8 bucks a piece. So we're all looking at him like, "So what happens to the money?" And he said "Well I ordered the books for the department." And then we find out the only thing he ordered were books on Lithuania. We had the biggest Lithuanian collection on this side of the planet. And nobody could read them because they were all in Lithuanian [all laughing].

CB: That's called oversight.

JR: This was an oversight.

FM: I had a different utilization of the library with my students. I found that as a young doctoral candidate I had very little, other than the technical side of my research, publications as they related to my research. I couldn't have cared less about the library. So when I came to Wilkes and I was teaching courses, I suddenly realized I found it very difficult to keep up with the journals and what was happening. So in the laboratories at the end of the week, there was always an hour I set aside from the laboratory time period that I had every student prepare a 3x5 card from any science article in any publication they wanted for review, and they wouldn't know who I was going to call on, of that subject on that Friday during that session. I did it selfishly to keep my own - I was trying to stay current but I didn't have time to go to the library. So I figured, make my students do it. [all laughing] It wound up that I think it was a more effective practice for them to learn that you had to go somewhere to find out some information. But I was using the library for purely selfish purposes. I think I only did that for about 2 years. But I really didn't teach for that long. I taught from 55-62, went to Washington, came back in 63, and I think from then on was mostly external. With that tempoed program for teachers that involved very much, but knew I was out of the research realm. When I came back from Washington we had the programs for teachers to use the new curricular materials in the sciences. They had biology, chemistry, physics.

CB: Jon, how about the library committee.

JL: Well, the library committee was functioning the first few years I was there. But then it just sort of withered on the vine. I'm not sure what the dynamic was. I didn't particularly blame myself, because I was certainly willing to have the liaison with them. That's the other thing, the individual librarians had liaison responsibilities for the departments. So they would occasionally bring concerns to them.

CB: What you two as deans remember about the library committee and why it may have -

JR: I was on the library committee for a while.

BH: You were chair.

JR: I think before Jon got here, and then I think I was on a few years after I got dean. We met once a month and, I can't honestly remember a darn thing we accomplished.

JL: Joel Berlatsky was part of the library committee in the years that I started here.

BH: They were very new in the department and there was the chair. And the chair would meet with their own department and have them determine what books they needed.

JR: We used those library, the choice cards -

BH: That's right, the choice cards.

JR: And we'd initial them if we wanted to do a sit down and find a fair way to -

BH: And it was fair because then if you had 20 choices maybe you'd only say it was 7. You know, pick 7 of them. People weren't greedy, but they knew what they wanted. So my relationship was with the department rather than as a faculty person.

CB: What would be the most controversial issue to come before the library committee?

JR: I think it was always the, as Jon said, the serial publications and the cost of them. I remember one in chemistry you were very upset about. It cost a small fortune and nobody seemed to use it, and the department wanted it.

CB: Is that the physics one you were -

JL: Well, the physics letters were certainly - but there were chemistry journals and I can't best remember the title, but they would be in the thousands also, not just hundreds. It was just very difficult to sustain, for such a limited use. Especially by the undergraduates. Now the faculty may have missed them more, I don't know the answer to that.

JR: I think we tried to support you in dealing with departments.

CB: The library committee? Working as a -

JR: At the time, I remember chemistry being a big issue.

CB: I want to make an architectural point, and we talked about this before, but in your presence. One of the creative jobs that I had over the 17 years was dealing with rehabbing old buildings, and securing properties that we needed long term. And I remember when we worked out with the Fenners, to get not only their house eventually, but also the carriage house. Which was George's garden shed in the back, which blocked any cross campus traffic from South Franklin to South River. When we got that cleared out, my thought was that I really want this quadrangle developed. And there were a couple buildings that had to be dealt with as well as possible. I remember when it was cleared out, I was standing in front of the library and I realized the library was the only building on campus that had its front door away from River Street or South Franklin Street. The fathers and mothers of that earlier era, like Dr. Mike, had a long term plan that there would be a quad. No one had ever talked to me about that. And it was only in that minute I looked at that lovely entryway that was not on South Franklin Street, and I said " Ah-ha, that earlier generation had a vision." I had realized that it wasn't my vision, I was just updating -

FM: It made a lot of sense though, because when you acquired a property, what was the most valuable aspect of the property in the 50s and 60s on this campus? It was a dormitory. You bought the home, but the carriage house was expendable. In the early days of the college, Chase Hall, Chase Theatre was the theatre where Al Groh built his empire of drama and music. Biology was in the Carriage house, chemistry was in the Carriage House. Those were all expendable as the campus would grow. I think we were very conscious of the fact that ultimately there would be a college on a square. We just didn't think it would be in three lifetimes.

CB: It opened up to Chase and Kirby, as well as to -

JR: And to what we would have called the student union at that time. I can't remember -

CB: The old Christsian Science Church.

JR: Well no, next to it was basically the student union. It was the cafeteria, it was the hub of campus.

FM: That was one of the early - they added to the carriage house to make the first student union. That was in 55 because I remember we used to sit there, and it was the Carriage House to Chase Hall. There was the Chase Annex, which was the theatre. But then there was another property there that was a Carriage House that had been expanded when you talk about construction. The conversion of the Cunningham Hall to be the biology department, with chemistry in the main hall, was accompanied by one of the famous family homes with an annex that was converted - Chase Hall. It was Chase Hall to Chase Theatre. But I remember when I first came here that's where the second floor cafeteria was, and the book store was on the first floor with Newly Gittins?.

JR: Okay. When I came the book store was in what later became the philosophy building, right next to Sturtevant. But that -

FM: Al? Chase's acquisition maps will show all those buildings.

JR: That first Student Union Building, and Mike and I and Bob so clearly remember, was probably more of a hub on the campus than any building since. I mean faculty and students used to go there collectively. And you'd actually have faculty sitting at tables with students. It was just a central meeting place.

FM: And it did have a second floor, didn't it?

JR: Yes, there was a second floor.

FM: Yeah, I seemed to remember that there was.

JR: And then they moved it over to Conyngham. But boy, that just didn't do it.

CB: That decision was made during my time here.

BH: Was that carriage house -

CB: Conyngham. William Conyngham as opposed to John Conyngham was the [one that burned down]?

JR: Okay, I thought that would be....

CB: We converted that Conyngham Hall into student services. When I first got here the rathskeller in the basement is where we would have parties.

JR: That never really attracted the attention of the other one.

CB: Because that was central.

JR: And the library was fronting it.

CB: The key buildings of the campus all converted to the point where the bell tower is.

FM: The other thing I remember every time I drive downtown and come down South Franklin Street is Dr. Farley telling me, "Mike, now you make sure that that library roof gets it's coating of oil every 5 years." I don't remember problems with that roof, but for any flat top building I would -

CB: That's because it was only 5 years old. You were only up there when it was 5 years old.

FM: I wasn't up there, but yeah I remember - I knew nothing about building there but the library was new. And for some reason that's stuck in my mind.

CB: Now with this group here today, although we've covered some of this before and was before your time, but it was your facility. I think you should say a little bit, all of you, about the flood and the library itself. And what you all had to do. I mean, I'm thinking of these poor people down at the pan handle right now and their recovery. This was a devastating recovery issue for Wilkes. In fact the man that went on to be president of the Sangamon State, and then at any age, and was in charge of sending the refrigerated trucks up that you put the wet books into, those valuable books.

FM: I am going to show you a picture of the library. This is a picture of the dining hall, and you have to remember that during the flood the dikes were not topped by the college campus, but where the steel piling ended the people that owned those branches did not want to have a steel wall between them and the river. So the end of the dike after the river starts curving, was a berm of dirt, rock, and soil for the rest of the way for the landscape down to the river, which I think it ends somewhere down there. So when the water came down the river, when it got up to the top of the dikes, it was putting so much pressure that it swung behind the piling and the mud came back up to the college. We did not get water from upriver. The

college got flooded from downstream coming back up South River Street, and it deposited all of this mud. So this was the dining hall with the tables covered with mud, and a picture of a whiskey bottle with footprints where looters had already been in the dining hall before, you know you had to get through the police and everything to get that done. Looters were ready and had that bottle.

CB: Where would they have found a bottle of liquor, Dr. Mike?

FM: Oh they looted it from the liquor stores.

CB: This is a storage unit I had not heard about.

FM: What were we talking about, the library?

CB: We're talking about the bottle of liquor in the student union.

SC: Would I be able to take some pictures of your -

CB: Absolutely.

FM: I know I've got pictures of the bulldozer somewhere.

CB: Is that a book that is coming to Wilkes, Dr. Mike?

FM: That's a question that Suzanna is going to have to discuss with me.

CB: I've never seen some of those photos, it's really - but back to - talk about as you began the recovery process, what faced you in terms of the library?

FM: Number one, Wilkes had inherited a number of collections of rare books, and when the library was designed and built nobody envisioned a flood. The security for rare books was a room in the basement, and I knew that. So when the flood came, and we were coming back up from Harrisburg I remember it going through my mind, "What do we have to do first?" Somehow those rare books got me, that's the only thing I could think of that was critical. So when I did get back on campus at about 10 o'clock, before the dike broke at 11, the first thing I did was head to the library and they were already starting to take the books up. So we had a chain gang passing the books out of that rare books wall up the steps. That kept going, getting them onto the first floor level, which didn't help because it flooded the first floor.

JL: First floor had about 18 inches.

FM: But, when the sirens blew to evacuate, that the river was actually topped, everybody had to get out. I was on the top step of the library passing the rare books up, and if I can find in a picture, that's where I was standing and those were the books that I put away. You know, envision that. But I have no idea, I'm putting together the pieces of realizing they were valuable books in the basement that could be flooded, I don't think I had any other perception about what the flood would do.

CB: It was good, Admiral Stark's papers did not - .

FM: I have no idea to this day.

JL: I assume those would have been in the Stark room, is that not true?

FM: If they survived.

CB: They did not survive.

JL: Oh, they did not?

CB: But the Stark room was flooded as well

JL: Well, to about 18 inches

CB: There was metal, glass, you know other things that could survive. But not paper. In talking to his daughter, the papers that were included were his World War I papers, which may have been even a greater loss than his World War II papers. They were all here. We had very few collections from private individuals.

JR: Is it possible that some of them are still here?

CB: Not that I know of.

FM: I remember very, very little focus was put on salvaging anything. We couldn't afford the luxury of it. I think the primary focus was, number one, get the evening classes started again. Because we had kids coming in when they had to have police passes to get back in and start cleaning up and have classes at night. Then the second level of thought was getting started as close to a normal starting time, and we did it. But, we did not prioritize anything -

CB: I'm sure you heard me, but the guy who became president at Sangamon State was working at the national endowment of humanities, and he supervised the refrigeration trucks that were sent up for the most valuable books. I don't know what the category, but there was several trailers -

FM: What year was that?

CB: It was following the flood. To freeze the books. I assumed those were the most valuable books.

JR: They were also coming up from the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society. I think that's where the bulk of them were probably going.

CB: Okay. He may have misinterpreted me.

FM: When you look at that, what's to salvage? And maybe I knew about the preservation of things, but it never would have occurred to me that we would have to manpower the time or the expertise to even ask them for help.

CB: So, from the beginning Mike, you assumed that the building was strong enough to just cleanup -

FM: Yes, it was new. The science building and the library were two that were structures that we didn't have to worry about.

CB: Any idea of how long it took before the library, first floor and basement, were back in -

FM: I'd have to guess.

CB: We made the decision while I was here, and maybe it was just before you got here, that because you kept all of these valuable things in the basement, we made sure that there was going to be nothing in the basement outside of desks and things that could be used for meeting rooms. And I don't even think we put computers down there. Did we in your time?

JL: Not in any large quantity. I think they were on the main floor, the ones for the technical services and so on were upstairs. But, practically the first thing anyone's ever heard who interviewed here was about the flood. That's the number one story. And I think what I learned, maybe I don't know, erroneously, but the decision was made to move the rare books up to the second floor. I don't know if they're still behind that cage where the new books are processed and so on?

SC: Rare books are in the treasure room.

JL: I'm sorry?

MR: They're in the treasure room, in the technical services between offices.

JL: I thought that some of them had been rescued from the basement. But then the decision that I had heard was made was that only current periodicals could go in the basement, because you had to use that room for something. And then of course they created that nice big media room at the south end of it. And then also I remember that, who donated the film collection? One of the trustees.

CB: Pearsall.

JL: Pearsall, yeah. So all of those films were tucked into a room there. Of course at the same time we're thinking, well we're not supposed to use those films for any purposes because of the copyright issues, you know. You're not even supposed to show them to a class. You could only use them strictly in the legal sense for individual viewings. Well that's not going to happen, you know. So I don't know what ever happened to that Pearsall collection. I don't know if it's worth anything nowadays. Do you know if they're still in that - there was a separate room within the media room that stretched the whole length of the south end of the basement.

SC: I think it's turned into a huge classroom.

JL: I'm sorry?

SC: It's turned into a huge classroom now.

JL: Oh it is a big classroom.

MR: Yeah, the basement was the first floor that they renovated in the library.

JL: Well I'd be curious to know whether those resources are worth anything.

CB: Mike, there's another memory I have which I'm sure is faulty. But when the building was designed, they assumed heavy storage in the basement as a part of the dynamics of the building. And there was

some worry that when you emptied the basement, that all of the weight from the top three floors, is that something you have any recollection of? An engineering issue.

FM: I don't remember that as a concern of mine.

CB: Then forget it. Scrub that part of the tape.

JR: Originally, when I got in, they were talking about putting a fourth floor on the library.

FM: That was a strong building. And the fact that the builder of the building was doing the construction and could take out a support pillar and not worry about it collapsing, would tell me that I don't ever remember consciously making any decisions about any of that. Sordoni came in and was responsible for -

JR: I had heard when I came in that the building was created with the idea that a fourth story could be added.

JL: I remember hearing that.

FM: It was a strong building.

CB: Stark is the same, isn't it?

FM: Not really. Stark was a very interesting structure. The original Stark Hall that was the gift of Walter Carpenter anonymously was for 900,000 dollars, which built and equipped the entire original building, with physics on the first level, chemistry on the second, biology on the third, and the basement of Stark. It's still the basic building, but Sordoni built the building without any deference to name. They really did build solid buildings. When they built for the college I don't know of any structural problems, and there could have been many. In fact, when additions to the building, when Dr. Farley made the commitment to RCA in New York City at a Board meeting...The only reason RCA was not built at a plant in Mountain Top was because they did not have, in the community, access to postgraduate education in the sciences, and mathematics, and the things that RCA was interested in. We only had a 2 year engineering and physics program, and he came back and I was already Academic Dean. And he said, "Mike, start to work on getting a bachelor's degree in engineering and physics and a master degree, we promised them to RCA to build their plant there and they made a positive decision so we've got to follow up on our end of it." We had 3 main departments in engineering, and physics, and biology that he commits to a masters degree. I would say they did the right thing for the wrong reasons. The bottom line was when we got the additional money to add facilities to that, it included some federal support which required public bidding. We could not get the Sordoni construction company to build the building, and they added the wing facing Chase Hall with the contractor Ray Pethick. A reputable contractor, he had a new technique in the building where they poured the concrete and reinforcement for every level of the building in one series before they could put the building up. So they had the steel beams, and then they had apparently a skeletal structure and they would pour the basement floor. Then they would pour the next floor above it, it would be the first floor. Then the next layer would be the second floor, and the next layer the third floor, and then the next layer would be the roof. Then they would hook it up to pumps and they would lift, I remember watching them lift the slabs and building that building. And so the building was built by Pethick. Except when the departments moved in they started to find out that, "Hey, this isn't leveled." So your lab bench has a slight tilt to it, and it wound up that they did not cure the concrete when they were

pouring it. They used quality materials and everything, but it didn't cure enough and when they jacked it up these floors began to sag just a couple of degrees. But in a science building that was all that was needed to throw a lot of things off. So when you say who built what buildings in what conditions, you took the bad with the good. It wasn't because Pethick wasn't a good contractor, but they were doing a technique that underbid based on that technology.

CB: So were they a subcontractor of Sordoni?

FM: No, no.

CB: So Sordoni did not get the contract

FM: He was a contract out of, I think Nanticoke or something. Ray Pethick.

CB: We had one building--

FM: Yeah, that's my point though. When Sordoni built our building, even Dart Hall, I mean that was flooded and that was a building with all kinds of odd engineering quirks to it. Because, you know, it's a big space and has lots of different architecture. But, basically all of our buildings survived the flood physically. Now, the new addition to Stark Hall at the time along the river was maybe a third done. The skeleton of the building was already poured, and in the pictures even some of the brick facades. But, all of the conduits for drawing electrical wiring, and we were having computer spaces reserved in the basement. We had a two year old computer that was supposedly state of the art for the air force, but two years later they gave it to the college. So we had all of that space designed. But then the water got in all of those conduits, and every one of those conduits had to be dragged dry with rags to make sure you had no mud or no kind of dips or curves.

SC: Does anyone want me to go downstairs to get more from vending machines or something?

FM: So, construction wise that was the only thing I remember, those two -

CB: Does anyone need water?

FM: Yeah I would love water,

SC: I can go down to a vending machine.

FM: So what questions would you have, if you had a chance to say "What did you do?" "When did you do it?" "Why did you do it?" or "I don't give a damn!" [all laughing] The only president you knew then was Chris?

JL: Well, Tim was here then for a year before I retired.

CB: That kind of inhibits him from -

FM: But I'm amazed that you were told about oiling the copper there. I thought I was the only one who knew that Dr. Farley said, "Mike, make sure every 5 years they -"

CB: That's a hands on executive thing.

FM: But it's funny how little quirky things stick in your mind, isn't it? I don't remember a damn thing about the library except that Dr. Farley said "Make sure they treat the copper in the roof."

CB: We were also supposed to oil the John Wilkes statue to keep from all of the green.

JL: Is that not in good condition or is it deteriorating or?

CB: Well, I walk past it everytime I'm here and it seems to have, well it's breathing.

JR: Greenish.

CB: A little green stuff that is coming out where it's breathing. I mean it's a very thin shell, it's not solid

JL: Oh really.

FM: I was reading something the other day - I keep going in and reorganizing my books. In one of the books I found something that was an email about WD40, and that the "WD " was water displacement, and it was the 40th try in the chemistry lab to find something for the space program, and that's why it's called WD40. Water displacement experiment number 40. And, this doesn't deal with the chemistry but it says how many things WD40 can be used for.

CB: Which is a lot.

FM: Oh my God! There's like 45 things. And, just reading through them yesterday and I'm thinking "Gee, why don't I do this or do that." And that may be one of the things that would be a very easy and nondestructive way to try and rehabilitate that statue. Or at least keep it from getting worse.

CB: I'm thinking about using it on my knees.

FM: What?

JR: Probably would work. [laughing]

CB: Using WD40 for my knees.

JL: I've heard of using that for arthritis.

FM: Oh! I didn't get it.

JR: You use WD40 for arthritis?

CB: I'm gonna try.

JL: I've heard of that.

JR: Well I wouldn't be surprised. It's the greatest cleaning agent I've ever used! It's incredible what it can clean.

JL: One thing, going back to what you were saying about the entrance of the library not being on the street. The story I was told was that this was to keep the undesirable elements from wandering in. Because the library was -

FM: That would have never bothered Dr. Farley.

JL: It wouldn't have?

FM: No, he would not have considered exclusion.

JL: Well I didn't either. In fact, there was a - who was the street person?

CB: Charlie Weiss.

JL: He would come into the library. And I had to finally say "No, you're not welcome here any longer." Because of the stench, and also the personal habits of his.

JD: That reminds me of when I was doing my dissertation search. At the New York Public Library, at a time when Christmas and New Years was before the end of the semester, all of us would go to the library to do our term papers during that two week period. And we would gather at the opening of the front door, and it would be a race between the homeless people and the college kids to get to the table! What drove you nuts though is when there [they?] were [filmed?], the homeless people would go into pay toilets and go under the door, and they'd stay there all day, and wouldn't let us use the toilet. [laughing.]

CB: Well, even in San Francisco, the homeless problem is -

FM: Seattle too. I was talking to a colleague many years ago after first going to Seattle, and I was amazed at the food out behind the hotels and it's just a terrible mess. And he said, "Mike, you've got to realize, the east coast may be covering a third of the continent of the United States. It has Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington." And he went all the way down through the south. And you disperse your homeless throughout a much different area. On the west coast you've got Seattle, you've got Los Angeles, and San Francisco. And they get the whole two thirds of the United States vacant population, and it really is a terrible problem.

CB: And the real estate costs are so high. Even people who have jobs are living on the street.

FM: That's why they're looking at Pennsylvania for Amazon, or -

CB: At the end of your time at the library, how consistent was your initial impression when you came here as a candidate, in terms of your take on Wilkes. I thought it was very astute, the way you described it. How much was that reinforced by your years of experience here, and how much did it differ?

JL: Well I think that it only strengthened. I'll tell you a large part of my perception comes from Alicia, because she loved teaching the students at Wilkes. She loved the night classes, she loved the professionals. I mean, you give her a class full of pharmacists and engineers, or any of the evening students were her specialty. But I think she was really reflecting to me, and strengthening the perceptions that I came here with. Maybe I wasn't - I mean I worked on the reference desk myself because I didn't want to lose track of the clientele. So I thought of myself as a player-coach, kind of. Maybe it was

because I grew up as a Cleveland Indians fan, and Lou Boudreau was a player-coach, and a manager. I don't know, regarding the entrance standards and quality of students if that changed much over the years. I think that talking to a lot of the older timers I was aware that Wilkes was more selective in the early years. I remember when they opened Minor hall over at the Y because there was an influx of students. You know, in terms of the library I don't sense a variation in quality. I think we'd be remiss if we concluded this without talking about Jim Berg. [all laughing] Because, you know, did you know him? You must've known him.

FM: Who?

JL: Jim Berg.

FM: Oh! Jim Berg. Yes, we started the radio station together.

JL: Is that right? Well you know, Jim Berg was eventually settled into the library before I came here.

BH: You have an evil mind.

JL: I'm sorry?

BH: I said, you have an evil mind.

JL: I have an evil mind? No! I loved Jim Berg.

BH: I rest my case. [all laughing]

JL: All I heard was the stories. And the man did have some personal issues. Well, the women who worked up in technical services where his office was located, he was your predecessor if I understand your role correctly. He was trained as a clergyman, and he was a very bright guy. He is one of the few people that I could use the word eleemosynary without even blushing—he would know. He had a huge vocabulary. He was a Swede, and when I looked at him during my interview it was an overpowering experience of seeing my grandfather with the white hair and same complexion. It almost bowled me over. Maybe that gave me the impetus to be really rather receptive to him. But I found him to be a - well certainly he tested anyone's patience in thousands of ways. For one thing, he could be fairly smug and self satisfied and maybe a little "holier than thou" and "I'm the smartest guy in the room" kind of thing. But you know, once you get past that he -

JR: He knew technology.

JL: He was what?

JR: He knew technology.

JL: Oh! I can testify to that enormously. We would have been lost without him. Because he would explain to me about technology in ways that I could understand. I'm saying I had a visceral sense of his identity as being on my father's side of the family. I just found him to be a very lovable guy.

FM: I gather he deteriorated mentally or physically?

JL: I left before he retired I think. I don't remember exactly when he died but it was probably about 10 years ago. I was out of town or something, I didn't go to his rites.. I remember when his parents died, they lived in Iowa City and he went to school in Iowa. I said "Oh Jim, you're an orphan now." Well he was like 70 or something. [all laughing] He had a wonderful sense of humor and I just found him - it required no charity on my part. I really liked the guy.

JR: I'll tell you, one of the things that when you first came, I considered it my greatest achievement as a department chair in history to get into the library. I was scared stiff when you came in! And you'd want me back. I remember you were delighted to have me! [all laughing]

CB: You've got a different definition of administrative success.

JR: I still remember the time my next door neighbor, you remember him, Dr. Will Broben he was the head of anesthesiology over at the general hospital. He was retiring and said "I'm going to take a medieval history course over at Wilkes." And I said, "Don't take that. You'll never take another one!" Well he took it. It was a night course, and he had come home after the course to tell me the stuff that Berg said. And then it got to the thanksgiving break and it was a Tuesday night class, and Jim said "And don't forget your papers are due next Tuesday." And the students were like "What?!" Well it turned out, Jim never bothered to tell them. So I had to call him and say, "Jim, why didn't you tell them?" And he said "Well it's an advanced course, everyone ought to know there's going to be a term paper! Why did I have to say anything?" [laughing] That's not right! That was also the last course at Wilkes that Broben ever took.

JL: Well when I came he would teach in the summer occasionally. He would have typically one or two students, and he would lecture for 50 minutes and that was that. But I didn't really know him in that environment.

CB: Mike, why did you hire him?

FM: We must've been desperate!

JR: We probably were.

FM: There was a period in the 60s where we could not hire a faculty member because of the competition

CB: This is the fortunate period that we grew up in.

FM: Yeah, the competition in the market and Wilkes was not exactly a high level job location at the time.

CB: I had three offers the first time before I had my PhD. I went out to the market, to the HH convention in December, and I came back with three job offers from all respectable institutions. It was just the way it was.

FM: And as I said before, I think most of the time it was the department chairman selection would finally come to the academic dean and all other things being considered you would accept their recommendation. They knew what they were looking for academically and what was compatible with the department. But I remember that Jim came in to see me, and I had obviously known him, and he said "Dr. Michelini, I think Wilkes should start a radio station." And I said, "Well, what's your reason for that?" He said "Well, the

growing trend is a student-run radio station.” And I said okay. We had to get approval from Dr. Farley, so we got approval and the students were all excited about it. And they came to me and said “What in the world did we do to run a radio station?” I said, “Well you’ve got programming, you can come up with different topics and things.” They didn’t know what in the world they were doing! But Jim was technically an expert, but programmatically it was not his strength. So those were the days when you had 78 rpm record players. I had the Time Life series or some Life Magazine series of recordings of all of these great World War II or post World War II bands-Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Jimmy Dorsey, Harry James. So I picked a couple of those records out and I said “I’ll put together a program for you.” And of course they come - and I still have them on my shelf - with, what do you call them? Lobretto or something, the technical explanation of everything. So I looked at those, and boy! It said things like “Notice how Jimmy Dorsey uses his instrument” and all of these things. And I thought “Hm, piece of cake!” So I pulled these records out and I said to the students “I’ll show you how to run a radio station.” I put together an hour-long program called “Mystery Disc Jockey.” Nobody knew what it was. [all laughing] I think I did 3 hours of that program and I thought it was wonderful! The artistry, now listen for when Benny Goodman plays the Clarinet, Harry James, Gene Krupa plays. So I think they thought by about the third program they thought “Huh! We can do this.” But I’ll never forget that. I had fun with the Mystery Disc Jockey.

CB: And it’s all because of Jim Berg? I’m glad we had this segment.

FM: He did all of the technical stuff.

JL: I think I started to mention- let’s face it, he was a terribly messy guy. But he knew where everything was. His office would be piled to the rafters, and then it would grow out of his office. And the women who were up there working in cataloging and those positions, every once in a while they would go in there and they would straighten the room while he was gone. He would come back, and he would never really become angry or anything. I never knew him to be angry. But he was clearly grumpy and disgruntled by the fact that they had now messed up his whole life, really. He couldn’t find anything.

FM: That’s an interesting byproduct of academe. Where you get real, I’m not sure if I should say, distorted characters. But I remember professor Edgar Gene Wary Jr. at Penn when I was a graduate student. I was assigned to be the graduate assistant to help Dr. Wary. He was teaching a course in the economy of poisonous plants to veterinary students who went to vet school. He had collections of slides, and he would project the slides and say “Oh yes, that was in 1926 in Delaware at such and such an intersection.” Just a brilliant recollection of every species. You’d walk into his office, and when you got to the door, and he had a big corner office at Penn, you’d have to go sideways. Past the shelves and the papers. His office was an absolute mess. Papers and things, and you know they were quirky! But he knew where everything was.

JL: Jim was the same way.

FM: And he had a prodigious mind. But there were weirdos in the profession.

CB: Well, now that you use this word I shouldn't say this but I’m thinking of Frank Sally, who when he came to retire, his office was stacked higher and deeper. And he taught safety precautions! He was into chemicals and gases. I met alumni at major state universities, who had relied on their training by Frank

Sally, and how to handle explosives. And we would get to the point of taking his office apart and here is a bottle of picric acid, which is kind of ready to explode. It creates a red light panic in Weckesser Hall. We ended up with a bomb squad coming down your way, and it was at rush hour. Lee and Amy apparently thought this was a political opportunity as mayor. So we had 3 or 4 fire trucks on South River Street. And of course the crowds run. Do you remember this?

BH: No.

CB: They had a container, and they very carefully took it over to the river bank. And it [explosion noise].

JL: It exploded?

CB: It exploded. They set it off. But it was just the fact that it was Frank Sally, a specialist.

JR: My wife was the specialist safety officer at Air Products and she could be insufferable. I mean really insufferable.

CB: Not at home?

JR: Oh yeah. Except when it was inconvenient for her.

CB: I think that's what affected Frank.

JL: That reminds me though of another chemistry department irregularity. The woman who murdered her husband.

BH: That's who I was thinking of when you were talking.

CB: Curly. Bob Curly.

SC: She just got out of prison recently.

JL: She just got out?

BH: She just got out of prison, yeah.

MH: What happened? A Professor?

JR: No. She poisoned-

BH: He worked at Wilkes.

MH: Ohhh.

JL: He was on a contract.

SC: Yeah, he was a contractor.

CB: He was an electrician. She was accused when he died - and what was the chemical used?

JR: Rat poison.

SC: Arsenic?

JR: No, it wasn't arsenic. It was something else, but it was basically rat poison.

CB: How could I ever forget? But it's what's in rat poison, and you can't taste it. But he was an addict for iced tea, so she sent the husband with his iced tea everyday here on the job at Wilkes. He ended up in the hospital, and we were then - this is probably the most urgent situation in my 17 years. We had a special task force to deal with this. The hospital, the contractor, who's name was Mickey Morgan I think, and the police, and the national press, and her lawyer. By the way, her first husband had died in a crash and she inherited several millions of dollars. So we suspected that this was a second opportunity. Her lawyer is now in federal prison as the -

JR: Was it Ciavarella?

CB: Yes.

SC: Oh, wow.

CB: Mark Ciavarella, whose offices were right across the street from the president's house on West River Street. And he had her blaming Wilkes for a shoddy control of the chemical storage place. So of course I was in touch with Owen Faut, and Owen went in and did a total inventory. It was in there, including a small bottle of this poison. He had good enough records that he could show what the level was the last time it was investigated, and it was at the same level. So we had a press conference, which was National. Her lawyer, dear Mr. Ciavarella, put out the word that Wilkes was unsafe for students to be attending because of this shoddy care of the chemistry lab. I was responding to that in front of a big crowd of newsmen. He went down to Danville because he got sicker and sicker. They couldn't figure it out because his levels of this stuff were going up and up. She was poisoning him down at Danville! Bringing iced tea to him. We never got freed from that period of suspicion which I think affected our enrollment the following year. Ciavarella is the guy that did harm to us. He made those allegations. So I have not suffered one minute of compassion for him as we discovered what he did to those students.

JR: They also were accusing his fellow workmen of doing it too.

CB: He does remind me of a particular public figure that we are dealing with right now.

FM: Wasn't he the guy putting the juveniles in the prison?

SC: Yeah, that's why I asked.

CB: He was the judge. He had an investment in the private prison where they were going to be put. So it was very important to keep the population up. It's like our whole private prison system in the country. There are incentives all over the place.

SC: The Wilkes grad program did a movie about that. They produced it. Maybe that's why, because he affected our numbers.

CB: It would be interesting to know whether the people who worked on that film put two and two together. Ciavarella was Curly's lawyer.

JR: I never knew that he was Joan Curly's lawyer.

JL: What was that?

JR: I didn't know that he was -

JL: Involves in the Curly case.

CB: At Bob Curly's funeral she was greeting people like it was a wedding party. And Morgan, who was the head contractor where Curly worked, said that they all referred to her as the black widow. This was before she was arrested. The assumption by the men on the crew was that she was poisoning him. There had been a story in the reader's digest that this was the perfect crime. She read about it and learned that this poison is easily available because of rat poison. But it didn't turn out to be the perfect crime.

BH: How was she caught? I don't remember.

JR: The doctors grabbed the iced tea that she was bringing into the hospital and checked it out.

[many]: Wow!

SC: That's pretty bold.

BH: So he had a hunch.

JR: Well, as Chris said, the levels were increasing despite the fact that he was in the hospital.

CB: Which to the doctors made no sense. I remember a whole bunch of us were involved. We were in Bob's office, and I was talking to the public health guy who was down at Danville. And he said, "We can't believe this, his levels are going up."

FM: Can't you copy right this for a story for a TV show?

CB: I will think of what that poison is when we walk out the door. I mean I can't imagine forgetting it. It was the bane of my existence for months.

FM: So it affected your enrollment?

CB: Yeah, we were a National story.

FM: How did I miss all of that?

JR: I remember that was a real concern.

CB: Well, do you have any other comments to make for history?

FM: Did you have fun?

JL: I did have fun.

FM: Isn't it fun to kind of relive -

JL: Well it was fun being here for 14 years.

FM: That's why I keep coming back!

JL: Today's been delightful.

FM: One of these things we've talked about, and I guess we've been doing it for a couple years now, is Wilkes' connection to the community. And that seems to be a very profound connection, and somewhat unusual. How did the library deal with the community, or was there a - we had the Polish Room.

JL: That was a real asset I think in terms of Mrs. Znaniecki and her sidekick. They were a delight, they really were. The community, we often had high school groups come in, and Brian or somebody would give them a tour and welcome them to use the resources. We had, going back to my misunderstanding about why the entrance faced the campus, we would get quite frequent druggies, people that really were a nuisance to the students trying to use the library. So security was very responsive to those needs to get them out of there. You mentioned Charlie Weiss, yeah he would hang out there for hours down in the lower level. We finally had to tell him he was no longer welcome but I think that our overall, like Mark the street photographer -

CB: Mark Cohen.

JL: Cohen. He was a frequent neighborhood person who loved the library and used it a lot. He gave us a picture that he had taken, he was a professional photographer, and it was in what we called the cafe. Now, Cafe was a bit of a stretch of the imagination but there were vending machines down there. Sharon Bowar had her students do a large mural, which I assume is still there, which was a lovely piece, and massive. At least as big as that wall. Anyway, Mark gave us, out of appreciation, a photograph of a Newark, New Jersey Bookstore which was just piled high with used books. It was a used book emporium, and we had it framed over at Marquis. I don't know if it had an extraordinary relationship with the community but I think there were people - who was the world class physicist who had some physical problems during the end of his -

JR: Hawkins?

JL: What is it?

JR: Steven Hawkins?

JL: No, our guy.

JR: Oh, yeah. Hostler.

CB: Levere Hostler.

JL: Hostler! Levere and his wife would come in here after retirement, and she was trying to research his conditions and trying to see if there were some - I don't know. He was a part of our community for sure. I think there were a lot of people like that who I didn't get particularly exposed to. We didn't ask people who they were or where they were from, you know. If they came to the reference desk looking for assistance we did it. One of the great things about technology was that it got rid of all of the gaming

questions. Way back when the bane of a reference librarian would be to get somebody in here, and they would consume any amount of time, finding the answers to trivia questions. Nowadays you don't need reference books anymore. I don't know what Gale Research does anymore, or if they're still in business. Because they published reference books that were rather pricey where you would have to go and look up things and find out answers to questions. Now with google that's all over, and that's good. I love google.

FM: One of the flood stories about the library was of course those pictures of bulldozers. I'll get my book out to find the international headlines.

CB: [Talking to Siri] who was the first president of Wilkes University in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania?

Siri: Interesting question, Christopher.

CB: Well interesting, but can you give the answer? The first president of Wilkes College? I've never used this before but I thought it was appropriate.

JL: It didn't work?

CB: Didn't work.

JL: Well if you went online though, and I was talking about people's perceptions of libraries, anything that is between two hard covers is a valuable artifact.

BH: You would like my basement.

FM: Paper covers!

JL: These gifts following floods like that are just a liability and not an asset. They're just getting rid of their junk, you know.

CB: NPR had a thing, I think on Saturday, for the anniversary of the fire of the LA public library. Which I forgot was in my hometown. It destroyed everything. Total loss. Millions of volumes.

BH: Who?

CB: The Los Angeles Public Library. 30 years ago.

FM: The one in Turkey just recently. Was it Turkey or Italy?

CB: I think it was Turkey.

FM: Turkey.

CB: When you go back into the ancient world, there was total destruction of the Library of Alexandria, and destroying books was important to control thought.

SC: There was a recent fire in Brazil at that museum

CB: Oh, yes.

SC: That was awful. Indigenous languages completely lost.

JL: I think the one thing I might throw out is that I've always felt that students needed to learn how to evaluate resources. Now part of the burden for that lies with the faculty, the major burden perhaps. But libraries do have ways of helping students learn how to be critical minded and think critically about the resources that are up there on the shelves and online. I think that that again is one of those educational functions that often falls through the cracks.

JR. Which is especially important today.

JL: Yeah, more so than ever. Because there's just a flood of material as everybody knows.

CB: Any final thoughts, Dr. Mike?

FM: No, but on this recent topic of what do you believe anymore with this new age of information available everywhere. The Economist just within the last two issues is dealing with how does society or culture evolve from this massive instrument of communication where scientific truth or veracity has no meaning. You can't design an algorithm to tell truth from fiction. I got more stuff on the internet that I really don't know what to believe. So I pulled this out to put in a notebook somewhere, but that subject fascinated me because it was a covered center portion of the Economist where they're dealing with that. We no longer enjoy the luxury of trusting what we see in publication. There's always someone who will be cheating in the sciences and making up the data. But they were such rarities that it never became a matter of concern when you have a publisher with reviewers who did not perform.

BH: Our president is on top of all of that. He knows truth from fiction.

JR: I think there is a particular problem in what Mike says about the study of history, and what is happening. Even things, on not only the internet, but also the history channel. They are creating falsehoods of the past in order to sell history.

JL: And to sell products too.

JR: Oh yeah.

JL: Well I think, generalizing about technology, is that it seems to be that the problem is technology outrunning our ability to handle it responsibly. And that isn't getting any better, is it? I think we all remember, well not all of us, the males in the room remember when the big menace was the atomic clock, and the threat of nuclear Holocaust following World War II. That was a very real threat. The idea that we could devise instruments of destruction that we weren't morally or ethically equipped to handle responsibly. And now it's a little more insidious than that even because it's more invisible and more untestable. But I don't know, I think the academic community has a pretty good grip on things like peer review, but maybe that's just my faith in the scholarly community.

FM: Well, it's very interesting. In 1994 I was appointed to the state board of education. I remember one of the first issues we were dealing with was, what's the black college outside of Philadelphia?

BH: Lincoln.

FM: Lincoln. The president of Lincoln University was appointed to the board and was in higher education, and was my consultant basically. One of the meetings came at the time when one of his faculty members was a Holocaust denier. And it was really big in Philadelphia newspapers, and I didn't quite know what my role was supposed to be. When I was asked to bring the subject up, the President of the university was there at a reading. I said something to him, very politely, "How are you handling this situation with the Holocaust denier on the faculty who is making such headlines in the Philadelphia newspapers?" And he said "Oh, well we had a faculty committee to examine that issue and he feels that he has a right with his academic freedom to disagree with the historical reports that we see in the media. And I've had that to the faculty three times to review and they all support - he always wins the intra faculty battle about whether he could teach Holocaust denial." So, you know the days of politically being totally anti-something you know is wrong, like the way we are experiencing now, they've been around but they didn't get the attention like they do now. And as far as I know he probably retired from that faculty.

CB: Jane Mayer has got a piece in last week's New Yorker on the new book by Kathleen Hall Jamieson who's at the Annenberg School at Penn, and she has done research in all of the available public information as to what the Russians actually did in the 2016 election. Her conclusion upfront is that they in fact controlled the election outcome. That the Russians elected Trump. And you know her, she's very cautious. She's probably the dean of journalism school people. And what she describes in great detail is how they, and I don't want to use this language, but I guess they created trolls who were essentially Americans, some black and some white, for particular constituencies. And they created stories and total fabrications that would stimulate fear and anxiety against Hillary, urging people in the Black community not to vote and recalling all of the bad things that Bill did when he was president in terms of criminal justice. It goes on in some length describing what these things that came on social media, but directed to your particular instrument. And they just had this kind of comprehensive view of what you and your fear, what you're angry about, and it just went into key constituencies and just massaged our minds.

JR: I've read several articles to the effect of what the Russian's strategy is. It's not that they liked Trump, but they will support anything in America that is a vice and will disrupt democracy. They're trying to move people to the far right and the far left, and it's working.

CB: It's working. The center cannot hold.

JL: But what's new it seems to me is to have the public display of trading on fear, and anger, and hatred so out there. We are just, I think, beginning to understand our President in terms of, well I mean a year ago people started talking about how he was a narcissist. Well, yeah. There's got to be some element of truth there. And then the business with separating children from their parents, the immigrants. If you read, and I haven't read deeply into the history of our president, but I can't help thinking about the fact that his parents sent him away because he was unmanageable and uncontrollable, had no morals or something. Whether they had it or not. I mean that didn't just magically appear at the age of 12 or whenever it is they sent him away. That had to be, because they were estranged from him, they rejected their child and this is the fruits of it. And the fruits of it - no wonder he thinks it's okay!

BH: Did you see 60 minutes last night?

JL: No I did not.

BH: Well anyway, that would confirm what you're saying.

JL: What I was saying? Oh with Trump. Did he talk about his childhood?

BH: No, not his childhood. Just his notion of what's good in the country.

CB: This morning, since Elizabeth Warren did her DNA test and learned she's part Native American, he came out and discredited that and hopes that she's the candidate because she'll be easy to beat. And he said if she wins she will turn this country into Venezuela. I mean, just pulled it out of the air.

JL: Well I forgot to mention why. Anger, hatred -

CB: And that's where we go back to scientific evidence and facts. That's what his left is. What he's doing of course is self reservation. It's a situation when the Muller report comes out he's going to say it's fake news. And his base is going to believe it. Even though his people are going to jail, and have confessed the felonies, but there's a whole issue of how that report can be legally, technically fit into the system where we have to relate to it. And if we can't do that he will discredit it and his people will believe it, and that's where we're not able as a country right now to sit down around a problem and agree on facts.

SC: That's where information literacy comes in. That's why librarians are so important. Because it's our job to teach students how to evaluate, going back to what you were saying, just how to evaluate the information that they're getting.

CB: Recently we have the exam now of course with students, Suzanna, for students to say, "You're going to be inundated with the information 24/7." And what we used to do in the old days is take newspapers and say "How do you analyze this story for it's credibility and it's factual basis?" You've got to be able to, with all of that information flowing into you, how to discern what is relevant or how do you check it out. Again, you have all kinds of tools to check it out. You have to encourage the inclination to say "I've got to test this." And who's that really, kooky guy who Trump occasionally believes who has one conspiracy? Alex Jones? Is that his name?

JL: Could be. Yeah, he's one of them who does radio.

CB: The talk radio began it all, so they lost the FCC strictures that came out of World War II and a potential espionage being sent over the radio waves, so that people could start lying. I remember the first time I heard Rush Limbaugh I was driving through the desert to Deep Springs and he called Hillary Clinton a liar. She was the First Lady at the time and I thought, "On the airways, the man is calling the president's wife a liar?" I mean now that wouldn't even--I mean it would be a little blip because everybody's calling everybody else a liar. That's when I started honing in on what the talk radio crowd is able to do. Which is just creating stuff on a whole cloth and feeding it to millions who wanted the conspiracy thinking to satisfy their grasp on reality. It's exciting if you're a conspiracy thinker to think that.

FM: You're too young to remember Walter Winchell. We've had these around all the time.

CB: And Gabriel Heatter. And Drew Pearson.

FM: It's not that the human species has changed in its -

CB: But Walter was gossiping. And it was gossip about particular people and things you could check out.

FM: See now that's an active faith.

CB: Yes, but I think we all had that faith back then.

FM: You think that contemporaries of this generation couldn't say "I believe Russian bodies." That that's an active faith with them?

CB: Oh I think people are saying that. But Walter Winshell was constrained in what he did compared to what Alex James did. And they now have a headwind behind them for a very large part of the population. We haven't had this kind of discussion on tape yet.

FM: Is that still on?

SC: Yes. I can edit it if you'd like. [All laughing]

CB: I think this is a great record to have. Again, this is the thirteenth of October, 2018.

FM: Just don't put it on Twitter.

JL: I'll stand behind whatever I said, and I'll say one more thing. Where we really turned a corner was when Newton Minow was the head of FCC and we had the equal time clause, is that what it was called? And then deregulation became the watchword. And we no longer had the equal time clause, and anybody could say anything for as long and as loud as they wanted to or they could afford to.

JR: I think one other thing is happening too. The talk shows, which by the way have penetrated now sports and other aspects. You yell and you shout and you have one argument. And there's no alternative, there's no reasoning or middle ground. This "I'm right and you're wrong." You know you have football coaches yelling at each other, and politicians, and the talk shows.

FM: One of my favorite things, and to end the session. Is talking about climate change. I read the statistics of Mount Pinatubo. Do you remember Mount Pinatubo? I believe in 1918 or something, but there were dates where the temperature for 3 years was changed by the ash in the atmosphere and physics of that in dealing with where did it go, where did the ash cool. Farmers and millions of other people starved because there were no crops and things. And then they're worried about whether I recycle the plastic bottle? Come on. Big deal. But I pay sixty cents a gallon more for gasoline which has ethanol, which they get in corn, which is taken from feeding meat stocks. And I say to myself "Doesn't anybody look at the whole spectrum instead of just looking at CO2 in the atmosphere, or just looking at the changing of the oceans?" Can't they see a broader view of climate change and take it a little more seriously?

CB: The UN report that came out last week does that. And just before I came here I read a summary from a friend of mine who did an article on it. And it does all of those things you just asked, and it's showing that it's happening much more rapidly than the specialists thought even 10 years ago. And that the melting of the ice cap at the base in Greenland and Antarctica is bringing up this warmer water from the bottom, which is having a transference effect. Which is a part of why we're getting rain storms. The question is, I think they give us until 2030 we've got to cut our greenhouse gases by fifty percent. And a

hundred percent by 2050, or the process is underway and it will be irreversible. We will be flooding our coastal areas, New York City, Miami.

FM: But for 20 years we've let the culture convince us that if we just do A or B, then C will occur.

CB: Or nothing. The argument out there for some people is that this is nature, and we can't possibly have an impact on that change.

BH: What I was saying last night was that it goes in cycles -

CB: This morning he [Donald Trump] acknowledged climate change when he was down in Florida.

FM: The Anthracite age wasn't created by a simple excess of CO₂ in the atmosphere. I mean there were forces that worked that compressed the whole plant life and anthracite hole -

[02:57:00 everyone talking over each other]

CB: He doesn't think he's wrong. And of course this is in Florida, where the governor, now running for the senate, has disallowed the use of global warming or climate change in any of the state documents. Even Florida EPA, the scientists have been forbidden from using it. Now this is 4 years that he's been doing this. So the issue of truth, and how you establish it, is probably as precarious an issue for our culture as it ever has been. And that's a big one when you think about working with the students, how do you frame this in a way that is not partisan but gets what's right in front of us, the elephant in the room.

FM: The whole point of the standard is how do you distinguish between right and wrong.

CB: With that, we will end this session. On a high note [all laughing.] Dr. Mike, you were right. Thank you Jon.

JL: It's been a pleasure, thanks for inviting me.

CB: Suzanna what are your thoughts now that you've witnessed this for the first time?

SC: It's very interesting. Lots of topics were discussed.