

## Interview: Robert Thayer and Bernard Linden

BL: . . . undergraduate career than I had in high school. I had topnotch ear training. You had to spit out the solfège like catechism.

RT: Fixed do?

BL: Moveable do. The influence at that time . . . was Columbia.

RT: Talk a little bit about students. Do you stay in touch with any of your former students?

BL: Well, a few, a few. A few stay in touch with me. I recently . . . Got a job in Portugal after I left. And has been public school in Oakland California. From Toledo. Whenever she comes here, she stops by. Ginny Blakeman. She's over in Fremont. She was principle of the Rochester Symphony, then she went to the San Francisco Symphony. She had to play some place and she saw me for half a day. "My rehearsal. Come on down, I want to see you." So I went down and visited her rehearsal. And [Evan] Chambers, I saw him the other day.

RT: I remember Evan. I haven't seen Evan for years. He's still in Ann Arbor, and doing very well.

BL: Apparently, apparently.

RT: Having a lot of performances of his music, winning prizes.

BL: I don't know about prizes.

RT: He's gotten some very good acknowledgement of his work. I can't be specific. During the time that you were here, during your career at Bowling Green, were there changes in the qualifications of the students? Was the quality of student performance . .

BL: I think, I don't know about requirements. I think the school developed a reputation as a performance school, and as a result, better students applied, and they still had an obligation. I never had a full load in viola. There were still not that many people [who] applied, so some of the ones that probably we should have rejected, we accepted. And in that sense, the standard, the published standard didn't go up, but the expectations of the students themselves went up. So you had a better brand of student.

RT: Another thing that I'm sure must have helped that was the growth of the graduate program. Of course, when you came, the graduate program was in its infancy.

BL: No, no. There wasn't [RT: There wasn't] there wasn't one. I was on the development committee. Yeah, that probably helped a great deal. The more [and] better performances you have around going on, the higher the standard is going to get. So if you have good graduate students coming in and playing, the undergraduate students hear what good [performance] is. The tide will rise.

RT: I read something just a day or two ago—in fact I read it yesterday—about what do we say to young people who want a career in music? What do we say to them today? Do we say “Go for it”? Do we say “Go for it but here are some of the things you need to be aware of?” Do we discourage them?

BL: I’m uh, I’m getting a little limited in my enthusiasm. But I really think the kid should do whatever the hell he wants. If he thinks he want to become a poet, go for it! Go for it! The worst that happens, he’ll flop and go in another direction, but you should take a chance. Without fooling yourself. I mean you should know where you stand.

RT: That’s exactly what I would have expected you to say. And I’ll bet, if you think about some of your former students who have gone into other fields, they’ve probably done so with no regrets for having been in music.

BL: Well! I was going to say, I had rather complimentary experience last year. I got a call from a former high school student of mine, Bill Foster. He’s assistant principal of Washington National, and he said, he was at a contemporary music concert in Washington, and Evan’s music was being performed, and on the program, and on his biography, he listed his teachers, and he included me. So after the concert he went up and had their tête-à-tête, and then Bill called me.

RT: They had not known each other.

BL: No, no, no. Then Bill called me. You should know that Evan wouldn’t call me. I was very flattered by that.

RT: Well what I was thinking about when you said “Go for it.” There are people who do go for it, and even if they know what the odds are or know how they stack up, they, for one reason or another, may change and do something else.

BL: Yeah, and in a sense I had the same thing with Evan.

RT: He became a composer.

BL: Because halfway—he was a damned good violist—and halfway he said “You know something? I have to cut back on my viola time because I’m doing composition.” And I said “Well give me as much as you can.” So he took a different tack. What I did was I got playable contemporary music for him, so that he could experience what he potentially might be wanting to do. I didn’t know he was would become a professional.

RT: He didn’t either, of course at that point!

BL: At that point it was wishful thinking. He was sort of like my daughter Louise. Went to Ohio State, and I think, I keep saying “She broke the record for majors.” I think she had more majors than anybody I ever heard of. Every Tuesday and Thursday she’d call and say “I wanna become a Russian Literature major. I just had this wonderful experience.” And a month later she called and said “I just read this book. It was so boring I couldn’t pick it up.” She went to Engineering, she went Physics. And at the end of three years, she got tired of learning, she got tired of being a student. So she sat

down and figured out enough courses and went to catalogue and figured out, and she took this course and this course and this course, so she could finish. And she wound up with two degrees. Double degree in physics and geology. None of it was a waste.

RT: When I was, after I retired, I did development work for three years for the College, and one of the things we were able to do during that time was create a scholarship to honor Mark Kelly. In the course of the development of that scholarship I met some of the former band students, some of whom were never music majors, but who enjoyed being in the band program, and almost every one of those people that I talked to, spoke highly about the experience of being in music, whether or not they ever aspired to a career, but they talked how this helped them, how this was an important part of their lives. And even some of the people we know were majors and went in another direction were never sorry about that.

BL: No, no. John Kendall—do you know John Kendal?—he was very gifted,

RT: Suzuki? Yes sure.

BL: Suzuki. Anyway, he told me once at a conference, someone asked Suzuki: “What happens if a kid just takes two weeks worth of lessons and then decides he doesn’t like it any more?” And the answer was “He had two weeks of experience.” You never can tell when that’s going to come back. I gave my daughter violin lessons when she was an infant, you know. [And] she said “Gee I always wanted to play piano.” And just as soon as I said “Okay, why don’t you try piano, and if you can’t play piano, the violin . . .” She wound up at Interlochen, the Academy there, and they had a program where they had two weeks, three weeks, where you could pick anything you want, wood carving, or spaghetti making, these type of things, you take two or three of them. And she took violin lessons. You know I’m talking about pre-school violin lessons and the bloody thing came back.

RT: She was a high school kid by this time.

BL: Yeah, yeah, maybe she was a senior, and she said “It came back!” and everybody was flabbergasted because she hadn’t studied since she was five years old, four years old, you know, the bow work, stuff like that.

RT: Talk a little bit about. You were talking about the issue of the music education, the tradition of the institution, of course, going back to 1914, was teacher preparation, and around 1960 there became a greater interest in performance.

BL: Say late 50s.

RT: Yeah, Late 50s. Do you remember, apart from that, issues that were topics of discussion with the faculty. What were the issues? What were faculty concerned about? What were faculty meetings devoted to? Besides all the stuff that goes on in every faculty meeting.

BL: I really found faculty meetings quite boring so I don’t remember the details.

RT: Yeah, most of what goes on in most faculty meeting is . . .

BL: Yeah, trivia. I do remember someone would say "I'm having trouble with this student." And someone would say "Well, I'm having trouble with him too." Which is probably a positive approach, but it's also an invasion of privacy. You know: If I don't get along with you, I don't want anyone else to know about it, because I don't want you to recruit your friends against me. And there were some times people would say "I don't get it. He's a great kid." And so I never felt that they really solved the problem, because it's done in the smaller groups. Maybe found out that those people who were involved had a coffee klatch type of thing. So that bothers me. The idea was okay, but I didn't think the faculty was psychologically trained well enough to do it intelligently. It usually happened, one of the most defensive people defended the kid more and everybody else gave less. You could tell just like like, he was going to be on the side of the kid, not side of the faculty, he was going to be on the kid's side.

RT: I'm not really surprised to hear that. This question about staying in touch with former students, Dave probably has as much of a network of contact with former students as anybody I ever knew. Still keeps up with a lot of them. Maybe that question ought to be, instead of what went on in the faculty meetings in terms of discussion topics, what went in coffee sessions? What went on in hallway conversations? What were the educational issues? One person I've interviewed, for example, said the question of recruiting students was always . . .

BL: Well that's always there. That's built into the position in every department.

RT: And not only numbers but quality.

BL: He [Kennedy?] was more interested in quality. The administration was interested in numbers.

RT: Well the administration, of course, is faced with budget issues that are enrollment driven.

BL: Right, yeah. And James Paul was always interested in growth. So it didn't matter how many good ones you had, you had to fill out . . .

RT: On the subject of the administration, was the administration fairly stable in your years here?

BL: Well you know about the revolution, 1960?

RT: I don't know that I do.

BL: You know, they had riots, they booted out the president.

RT: Oh this was MacDonald.

BL: Black Jack MacDonald. That was my first year. That was hell of a baptism.

RT: Welcome to college teaching!

BL: And it took me a couple years to figure out what the prerogatives of the faculty member is, and the power of the faculty member, so that, as the revolution was taking place, I could not step forward and raise the flag, although I was thoroughly in favor of backing down. And the faculty was split, because MacDonald was very, very favorable to his favorites. If you were with him, you did well, and if you were against him, it was very dangerous. And if you were caught in the middle, not caught in the middle, but you were, sort of not involved, you were almost a non-person, so far as salaries, promotion.

RT: There was an unspoken but self-pressure to be on one side or the other.

BL: Yeah, very much. At this point it's a little comical, so I hate to accuse, but I think, well James Paul was very definitely one of MacDonald's boys, and I think Benstock was. I think.

RT: The faculty was small enough that people knew each other.

BL: Yeah, oh, of course. I meant the whole faculty. You're talking about the University faculty.

RT: Yes.

BL Oh yeah.

RT: Which of course is not at all the case any more.

BL: Oh not at all. I used to study the in-coming faculty members, new name, where they were from, what they looked like, they got their picture in the paper all the time. And we were close enough in the old Union.

RT: So you saw them.

BL: I saw them, I met them. Very often people I knew in other departments would have parties, invite me. Without knowing them all personally, I knew who they were, their reputation. But by the time I left that was impossible. It's impossible now, right, within the music faculty?

RT: Well it's changed so dramatically over the last fifteen years, last ten years. The institution weathered those years, and MacDonald in fact leave.

BL: He did in fact leave, and there was a year or two of treading water with President Harshman. Animosity was livid, they were revolutionary years, somebody, new-conservatives, stuff like that, little by little it changed. And I think it was Jerome who finally said "Okay forget about all that stuff, we're going in another direction."

RT: He would arrive in the mid 60s.

BL: I would guess so.

RT: And this did affect, there are places where music faculty is more isolated from campus politics.

BL: Well, I think, in general, they were, at least when I was present. I was on the Liberal Arts Committee—I was the token art person—and it was terribly difficult to get anybody in the Music Department interested in the problems. You know, I'm talking about even academic problems, much less political problems.

RT: Yeah. That's not unusual.

BL: I distinctly remember the chair [of the Liberal Arts Committee] saying "Have you aired out your faculty? What does music think about this?" I said "I did speak to a few people, and I got the loudest shrug I've ever heard."

RT: Part of that has to do with the very fact that music faculty tend to be busier, tend to be more--

BL: They have more--Hour wise, that's true.

RT: It's easy to be concerned about this, that we're not participants.

BL: And to a large extent, a musician, or an artist, or a poet, can prove themselves without politics. Either they can or they can't. But in a lot of the academic areas, politics plays a very, very important role, especially in promotions, and sometimes you get people with promotions, and you're not sure if they're really that good. I don't mean [good], of course, I mean with prestige. You get people with a lot of prestige, and you hear them speak, and you're not sure if they're really deserving of their reputations. But the politics are there, and that's I think part of it—you have to know them, the campus politics.

RT: And as you say a lot of music faculty don't really need to do that, don't need to play that game. That's an interesting thought. I guess I never thought about that. I suppose if you're a distinguished research professor or nationally known (BL: Right) in any field (BL: Right), you're pretty much above those practical politics, but a lot of disciplines, that not as easily distinguished.

BL: Right. And even in some of the academics in music. I've got a lot of respect for a lot of my colleagues. People, performers, don't rate very much because of what they've written, if they've written anything.

RT: Yesterday, what I was doing—I worked at the polls yesterday—and it was very slow, because I work on the campus, students didn't care whether or not the Bowling Green school levy passed or not, so they didn't vote. So was looking through some old magazines—not old, but two or three years old—[in] one of them I read about a book just published by Mary Natvig. I didn't know anything. Well we were in the union, so right next door to where we were is the bookstore, so I went into the bookstore, and there's Mary Natvig's book! And it's a book—it's a very interesting book—it's a

collection of articles by musicologists on how to teach music history at the college level, which is a subject that probably hasn't received enough attention. Certainly music history teaching at the college level has been uneven at best. And this is very interesting book.

BL: It's personality driven mostly.

RT: Oh, often. And often people who go into musicology, go into it because of a passion, or a personal interest, but they're terribly not interested in communicating it, or terribly skilled at communicating it [BL: Lots of times]. And so I think it's an interesting book, but it illustrates your point.

BL: Yeah, I didn't even know Mary [had] . . . I have a lot of respect for Mary [RT: I do too], because I heard she'd done a great job.

RT: Yes, and she's one of those musicologists who can teach.

BL: Right. And I was going to say, I am aware of her enthusiasm and her caring.

RT: Yes and her rapport with students.

BL: And her rapport, but whether she's a good scholar or not, I had no idea.

RT: Well, anyway, she's just published a book and apparently it's needed. Let's see, I had another one here. Oh, how about communication between faculty and administration, at the college level and at the university level.

BL: Throughout my career?

RT: Yeah, yeah. Throughout your career. We talked about one aspect of it, [that] when the school was smaller, there was a lot of interpersonal communication, but talk about it a broader sense.

BL: I'm not sure we had a lot of communications with James Paul. He's a wonderful character, you really ought to devote a chapter to him.

RT: I wish I had started this project while he was still around, while I could be talking to him.

BL: And he loved to send memos, and sometimes he sent memos in alliteration.

RT: I got letters from him. [BL: Oh did you?] Yes, so I know a little bit about what you're talking about.

BL: He had books behind him on his desk, of quotations. He's a minister's son, so he probably was using those techniques. When they built the, when I arrived just after the building of, what is it? West hall?

RT: West hall.

BL: West Hall. And it was a horrible building. The air was not—ran out at 4:00 in the afternoon. That kind of stuff. And of course everybody . . .

RT: Acoustically probably terrible.

BL: Well it wasn't acoustically anything. If there's any acoustics, it may have been in that little auditorium, and it was an accident. They had a hole in the floor, they called it a pit, you know, they had a hole in the floor.

RT: In the auditorium?

BL: In that little auditorium, you know the . . . ?

RT: I never was in . . .

BL: That lecture hall?

RT: Well, I've been in it, but I wasn't in it while it was still music.

BL: Yeah, well, I haven't been in it much since then, I don't remember, I don't really know how much they've changed it. But there was a hole in the floor, and I never could—it wasn't much bigger than this table, and I couldn't figure what the hell it was doing there. They couldn't put one musician in there, I mean, much less a pit band, and the University wouldn't let them use it, because it was dangerous. They had to cover it up, a kid would fall in, and sue. Anyway, he would send memos over time, and one I do remember. I used to save his memos, and he was the only one who sent memos. There were others, but not very many. And I had little cardboard box full of memos, higher and higher and higher and higher. Eventually they asked me why I did it, and would say, "When it gets this high, I'm going to take it over to the Administration Building and demand my tree."

RT: The tree they cut down . . .

BL: Turn it in for a tree. So it was a question of over-communication. Well, talking about the air in the building, everybody complained about it of course. And we used to, I used to, we used to teach as early as possible during the day, because by the time the afternoon [came around, the air ran out]. And he sent a memo around once asking, what could we do about it. So I suggested that everybody in the building be issued a canary and a brick, and when the canary died, the brick goes into the window. And he sent me back a note saying, "Well, we'll consider it." I wasn't sure if he thought of it as a joke or he really took it seriously. I didn't communicate well with Glidden, I never had much rapport with him. Probably my fault.

RT: I know one thing. He spent a lot of time raising money.

BL: Yeah, that was after the first year. But even in the beginning. And as soon as the building put on, a model of the building was put on the table, and everybody was enthusiastic about it, and I told somebody, I think it's terrible, it's a terrible design.



RT: And you still feel that way?

BL: Yeah I do. But the reasons are different. It may surprise you, it's because there's no room for expansion. You build a building, you've [penned in] in the department, that's it, there's no place to go. You can't go up, you can't go out, it was a self-contained building.

RT: That's a good point.

BL: Somehow leave an escape hatch from here, a couple buildings out that way. And almost immediately, the moment they started infringing on the practice rooms to make offices for graduate students, you could feel it, all things kind of moving in. Anyway I don't think he appreciated it. As far as I know, I'm probably the only one who said anything negative about it. I got along quite well with Wendrich. But you're not talking about departmental . . .

RT: Yeah that kind of thing too. You already talked about—an aspect of communication certainly was one you found in 1960, when there was an explosion within the ranks, too much communication. And now of course communication is entirely different because of technology.

BL: Yeah. I was never there for the e-mail era.

RT: Nor was I. It was just beginning when I left.

BL: I was around before you, but I imagine it's a completely different set-up. I remember Evan, when he got to Ann Arbor, bitching about it, because you can't claim you never got the message.

RT: Well, finally, do you think that education in music is different now than when you started?

BL: Oh yeah, it's much more sophisticated, it's much more specialized. As I said I can't compete as a theory teacher, and if I were to compete for a job as a theory teacher, I never would have gotten it. I got here because he wanted this quartet and I played viola.

RT: But people in other institutions were doing exactly the same thing.

BL: Well you said now, and now you would never do a thing like that.

RT: I was just suggesting maybe there's a downside to overspecialization. You know the old saying we know more and more about less and less. The whole business with one's peers about music and about making the musical experience more comprehensive.

BL: That's where performance comes in. Puts people to working together. But I know departments, where certain specialties just don't bother to talk to other specialties, either they have nothing good, which it a mistake, because . . .

RT: You were talking about the young student who comes in wanting to be a band director, and how the institution has failed that student if the student leaves with the same impression of what band directing as when he came in. And that sometimes can be fostered by overspecialization, if he's dealing only with the specialists, he's not as likely to pick up the rest of the world as he goes along.

BL: Well that's where conscience . . .

RT: There are ways to get around it.

BL: There are ways to get around it. And if someone is a living, breathing musician he will get around it. He will gravitate to where things are happening.

RT: So one of the ways this changes the specialization of the faculty, now we don't just look for a musicologist, we look a musicologist with a specialty in a certain period, or certain genre, or certain set of composers, and so on and so forth. And I guess—has the role of music in society changed?

BL: You know, the Toledo Orchestra is constantly in a campaign to enlarge its audience. I think every orchestra is that way, it's not a local problem. We are constantly being told about how old the audience is, and when they die, there may not be anyone to take their place, which I've been hearing for the last 50 years, anyway. It doesn't take a hell of a lot of—a large percentage of a population to fill a concert hall. You know, it's not like you have to fill the stands, 100,000 in the stands, night after night, you know. This is once a week, and if you get two percent of the Toledo population going to concerts, you have got a very successful season [RT: Yeah that's true]. And the trick is to develop an atmosphere where this is meaningful and to make it available. I was thinking that prices were kind of high, but I'm looking at a lot of other prices all over the country, and it's not that high, it's probably in the ballpark. That is the status of music. I think the quality of music in this country has jumped by leaps and bounds. The Toledo Orchestra, I have no reason to be complimentary to them politically or otherwise, but it turned into a damned good orchestra. You're not going to hear a wind section play that much in tune [RT: That's right!]. Nine tenths of your professional orchestras, I was about to say 'and most orchestras,' are really quite good too. And that's because, I think, schools of music have been turning out very good students. And the pool has gotten so large, that top-notch people who, when I was a kid, could look forward to the major orchestras, if not major orchestras but near major orchestras, with assurance, if they were interested and played well. Now the competition is so bloody hard, if you get a permanent job in a place like Toledo, there's no sin. You're playing with a damned good orchestra, you're not making the kind of money you should be making, but that's not the fault of . . .

RT: And it's interesting in that regard, how many of the principal players are—how low the turn over of these people, have come to Toledo and have made a career.

BL: Well Bob's [Robert Bell] done a good job, that's been part of it. He goes out of his way to help people get settled.

RT: Now that you're leaving the orchestra, and you're retired, talk a little about your experience in Portugal. You retired here, you actually retired here before you . . .

BL: Very early, yeah.

RT: And you went to Portugal.

BL: I had twenty-five years here, which sounded like a nice round number, and I had this opportunity to go to Portugal. I had some very good connections, and I was, while I not particularly interested in Portugal—I was hoping to get something in Southern France—but I didn't have all that ambition, I just wanted a nice situation, a place where Dossie could work, and I was hoping to stay. But a couple things got in the way. One was the devaluation of the American dollar. Because when I first started there, I was making enough money to live, there, to live a low / middle class life, so a little bit of my retirement money could get us a trip to France once in a while, and a little bit of this could buy us maybe a little better apartment than low / middle class could afford—you know—there were certain perks of being retired, but basically I could have saved three-fifths of my retirement money. Once debts began to pile up, I could have lived on maybe one third of it, or even less, plus what I was earning there. Then suddenly the American dollar took a nosedive, which meant the Portuguese experienced a big inflation, and I dipped into my retirement, and it wasn't so much it was—the thing I wasn't willing to do, but it was so unpredictable, you really did not know what tomorrow was—I bought a car just at the beginning of this. The day before the American dollar dropped, lost its value, I bought a car with the American dollar. It would have cost me twice as much if I bought it a week later. Literally twice as much. I paid a good price for it, an automobile's expensive, but a reasonable amount. I sold it for exactly what I paid for it two years later, exactly what I paid for it, and he was getting a bargain, because the dollar to the Euro had changed so much, that the . . . was much more then. So that became a little spooky. And also I found it very difficult living in some one else's country. I'm not a good expat. My daughter is, she's a pro at it. When she got back to this country, she was sold to get back to the picture (??). And my parents were getting old and they were getting sick. And the [Gubenkian] orchestra did not blossom. When I got there, I had a lot of optimism that the orchestra was going places. They had a concertmaster who was a friend of mine, who got me into that, even though I did have to audition.

RT: Was that an American?

BL: Yeah. Max Rabinovitsj. But he was not a builder, he was assistant conductor.

RT: Have you followed it since then?

BL: Not really , not really.

RT: Is he still there?

BL: I heard he's not, but it's been a long time. He may have gone off to bigger and better things. But I don't know.

RT: That was in the mid 80s, wasn't it?

BL: 85 to 87, yeah.

RT: Now you're ready in the next adventure [New York].

BL: Yep. I already contacted a couple of the orchestras in the area. Some of them sound interested, but with the caveat that perhaps I may be disappointed in what they have to offer monetarily. I know enough names of people who belong to that area, that when I get there and make a lot of calls . . .

RT: Now you're not terribly far from Albany.

BL: It's a little bit out of commuting range. Do you know people over there?

RT: No I don't. I'm just trying to get the geography.

BL: Well, the Hudson Valley Orchestra is in Poughkeepsie, and I would guess that's about a three-quarter of an hour drive. There's an orchestra in Woodstock, that's the one I was talking about, about the money, there's a chamber orchestra in Woodstock, and they have six concerts a year, and it's about a half hour drive north in the summer—in the winter I don't know. And maybe more I don't know about.

RT: Oh in this area I'm sure.

BL: See I'm interested in the wintertime more than the summertime. Summertime they bring in a lot of festivals; there are festivals all over the place. But I'm not too sure I'm looking forward to another season in Chautauqua. I spent twenty years in Chautauqua.

RT: Oh you did?

BL: Yeah, an orchestra. That kind of ties you up for the summer. I'd like to do some things.

RT: Does Vasile still go over there?

BL: As far as I know.

RT: I think he is. Why don't you talk about . . .

BL: I lot of these people stayed one year. Left a really good impression. Like James Avery.

RT: OK.

BL He was a wonderful pianist, went to the University of Iowa after one year. Teaching job there. He was fantastic. Benstock I've spoken about. Boris Brant?

RT: I knew Boris.

BL: Were you here when he was here.

RT: We overlapped a couple of years.

BL: Cardon Burnham, did anybody mention him? Choral Director.

RT: I remember that he was.

BL: About the same time, and he was at loggerheads with Paul Kennedy. Paul was choral director before he took over the department. [Can't understand]. Bob Chapman?

RT: What did he do?

BL: He was a pianist when I came, a very good pianist. He died rather suddenly, apparently quite healthy at the time. Oliver Chamberlain?

RT: I knew Oliver.

BL: Cleon Chase?

RT: Oboist, I know that.

BL: Oboist, yeah.

RT: He would have, I guess he would have followed Dick Ecker. Did Ecker do the oboe?

BL: Oboe and bassoon. Yeah, Ecker went in 65 and Cleon came in 65. He did a nice job. He was a nice kid, but he was not a great oboe player. So very quickly Paul [got rid of him.] Regardless of whether he did a great teaching job, the standards of performance were very important. Although I see that he lasted seven years, which kind of surprises me. Herb Chatzky came the same year I did. He was a pianist. Out of his mind. I think he went to Hartt School after he was here. Arcola Clark—she was a—came in 68—about the right time, she was a harpist, black harpist.

RT: Okay, I remember hearing about [her].

BL: She was very good. I think, there again, like viola, the school didn't need a harpist on the staff. You could have done very well by bringing somebody in for an afternoon.

RT: He was able to get the line.

BL: Probably it was a budget coup. She went to Holland, she got a job in a radio orchestra in Holland. Fiora Contino?

RT: I certainly know of her. She followed Burnham?

BL: Fiora was orchestra conductor.

RT: She would have followed Benstock.

BL: No, Harry Kruger followed Benstock. She probably followed Harry. And Gigante was [next].

RT: Yeah, I know of him. He was in Iowa when I was, in fact. In the quad cities, Davenport.

BL: Is that where he came from?

RT: I don't know whether it was before he came here or after.

BL: No, no, he died here. He became sick, he had a cancer. He had one good year, and after that he . . .

RT: Oh well then he would have been . . .

BL: Mary Duffus. Bill Duvall? You know Robert Duvall the actor?

RT: Yes?

BL: Brother.

RT: Oh. I met a Duvall who was the brother. I bet that was. . . He was in Milwaukee. Went here and went to Milwaukee. Okay. I've met him.

BL: He was a nice chap. Anne Fagerburg?

RT: Cellist?

BL: Cellist.

RT: Who is in St. Louis now.

BL: I assume she still in St. Louis.

RT: Last I knew she was in St. Louis.

BL: Since the 1980s. She's the grand old lady in the orchestra by now. Gigante? Fred Hamilton? you know about Fred?

RT: Fred had just left as I came. He was a guitarist.

BL Yeah, jazz. You know I never knew what instrument he was, because I only knew him as a band director, jazz band.

RT: He was a guitarist, I'm sure.

BL: Yeah, now that you mention it, you're probably right. His bands would do the way out, most modern . . .

RT: This was pro band, not a student band.

BL: A student band. And whenever there was any outdoor festival he'd have a band there, they'd be giving it the Woodstock treatment. I mean really far-out arrangements. It was great. I think he, I understand he went to Canada someplace, to teach in a small community, kind of idealistic. And then a couple years later he tried to get the job back.

RT: Might have even happened after I came, he tried to get back. I think, maybe he was an applicant when Chris Buzzelli got it.

BL: Yeah, that's possible. Was He here, Chris here, when you were?

RT: Yes. Chris started I think my second year.

BL: Joe Himmel? Joe was here when I came. He went to some place in Colorado.

RT: Yes. In fact, Bill Alexander still keeps in touch with him [BL: Really?] Bill told me he'd had a correspondence with him fairly recently. [BL: Oh that's great.]

BL: Paul Hoelzley? He was the tuba-ist before Ivan.

RT: I guess that's right. Dave Glasmire talked about playing with him.

BL: He was a wonderful tuba player. He also was an idealist. Went to Israel or something, to work on a kibbutz. I'm assuming because I know he went overseas. I never knew Peter's [Peter Howard] name was Arthur S. I though it was Peter Arthur. I didn't know his first name.

RT: His first name was Arthur, I think.

BL: Yeah. [Sachiya] Isomura, you hear about him? (RT: No) He was a cellist. Preceded Anne.

RT: Followed Peter.

BL: He must have followed Peter. And, there was again James Paul's tendency to call the teacher and say "Who's the best you have?" Because he didn't necessarily want him to have a big reputation, he didn't want to pay much money, but he wanted the potential. And he sent this Japanese boy, who couldn't speak English. I could communicate with him. If you wanted to you could understand what he was talking

about, but you get these kids in cello, first of all, they're looking for an excuse to fail. And, "I can't tell what the hell my teacher's talking about." It's a pretty damn good excuse.

RT: Now during this time, during the Fagerburg and [Isomura], did the quartet continue on?

BL: Yeah. The quartet . . .

RT: So you would have played with all these people.

BL: Right. I think the quartet continued . . .

RT: The quartet did not exist when I arrived, because Boris was not interested.

BL: No, what year were you there?

RT: 83.

BL: Yeah it was . . . We had a trio. Alan was here.

RT: Alan was here. All the people were here, but Boris wouldn't play in a quartet. Or that was the reason I was given there was no quartet.

BL: I don't think Boris was a quartet player. He was a good violinist, and apparently he was successful somewhere else as a teacher, but I don't think it would have worked out, because I don't think Paul got along too well with Boris. You don't hire somebody and say "Okay, you're going to be in a quartet. Make the best of it."

RT: That's right.

BL: [Clyde Johnson?] . . . a wonderful kid, he's in Minneapolis now, or he left here to go to Minneapolis. But they were going to fire him anyway, strictly on a legal basis, because as far as Peter Jones (??) was concerned he was wonderful, a good friend. Warren Joseph, he was a choral director . . . (Young Nam Kim?) He probably had more influence on me than anybody. He worked with very good teachers and he understood what they were talking about, and he was a good teacher, he could teach all the time, and we were very *compare*, I understood what he was talking about.

RT: He had no language problems.

BL: Nah, no, no. I didn't know Bill Klickman taught here. I guess that must have been Creative Arts. He had Suzuki class in Toledo, so they probably brought him down. Harry Kruger, you know about Harry? He was the orchestra director that followed Benstock. 61. He had something to do with the Atlanta Symphony before he came. And then he left to takeover the orchestra in Columbus, Georgia. He left in 65 . . . around the 90s. We were driving south when my daughter was living in Texas, and we were visiting a friend of Dossie's in Auburn Alabama. coming through that general area. At Columbus there was a public service announcement, like a GTE announcement



about concerts coming up, and Harry was getting back. My God, he must be 50 years. Well, he's not old, but he was there since 1965. That's a venerable tenure in office. He also taught flute, only he couldn't play. Something was wrong with his lip, so he could explain it. After playing it, you'd have to practice. Some names are very familiar. Horace Little. John Lundy, you know John? He was in Composition, I think. He was another black who came in under this program. And he had this, we were in Johnston Hall at that time, by the chapel, and he had the studio next to mine—I think he taught theory, I'm almost positive. And he never got his doctorate. He had to play a recital, and he had some compositions that he wrote and was ready to play, he wrote and he knew it for himself. But he needed more on the recital and he never did do the recital, just kept putting it off and putting it off until it never happened. And it was also during the Black Awareness Era, and he thought he was being picked on because he wasn't given a fair chance—I thought he got every chance in the world—Paul Scott, playwright, is he still around?

RT: Yes.

BL: Black man?

RT: Yes. He was here when I came.

BL: Anyway I was a very good friends with John. We got along very well. He would come over to the house. Used to bring me things back from Georgia like razor strops (??, and I remember he brought me that once. Paul told me he owned a barbecue pit type place in Atlanta, and when I was down there in Atlanta last time, tried to look him up.

RT: Couldn't find him?

BL: He didn't have his name on the barbecue pit, and he didn't have his name in the phone book, but Atlanta's got a lot of small communities. But he was a wonderful guy, I loved him. Sort of got caught up in the system.

RT: When did he leave?

BL: 76 was his last semester. Elizabeth Mannion, you know Liz?

RT: No.

BL: Oh she was a fabulous contralto. She was only here one year. Jean Deis I think brought her. You know Jean? Fiora Contino \_\_\_\_ She came from Indiana. She was assistant to the opera department.

RT: Fiora?

BL: She went to Texas as Chair. She brought Jean. Jean is a fabulous tenor. We still have contact with Jean. He's retired now; he's living in Indiana some place. Christmas cards, more than anything else. Fabulous tenor, except he was 300 pounds. His opera career was limited by the visual . . .

RT: Yeah.

BL: But his specialty was opera. He could belt out an aria like nobody. Mannion was an alto that Fiora brought probably from Indiana. And both of them. . . well, Jean was here a good time, 64-67, three years. And he went to Indiana. Mannion went to, I think, Michigan and then went to Indiana, or went to Indiana and then went to Michigan, I don't know. Those were two fabulous musicians.

RT: And was Mannion here about the same time?

BL: Yeah, 65-66. When they did the operas, they took the stage apart.

RT: Of course in those days faculty performed?

BL: Yeah, more than they do now. Because Fiora really wanted to put on good shows more than the idea of [using] the kids. Louie Marini, you hear about him?

RT: Yeah, I met Louie.

BL: Still around? Still alive?

RT: I think he is, down in North Carolina.

BL: Yeah, I'd love to see him. He had a son, he has a son, who was a dear friend of a cousin of mine, or nephew, cousin, you know, my cousin's nephew, my cousin's son, whatever relation that is. And think of sending regards through Google. But Lou was a fun guy.

RT: Lou used to keep in touch, close touch, with Wendell Jones.

BL: I think, if he's still around. But it's interesting, I think Roy brought him, Roy Weger? 64, I guess Roy was still around.

RT: Roy was here till 66.

BL: Yeah, and he brought him here to write band scores, charts, for marching band.

RT: And he continued to do that long after I came here, by mail. Mark Kelly would [use him].

BL: Right, because Lou is very good, really a fine . . .

RT: He did a lot of arrangements, through the 80s.

BL: But for that you don't need . . . but he was the sax teacher too.

RT: Yeah, before John Sampen.

BL: Before John Sampen.

BL: John's very good. Kelly Martino, you know Kelly?

RT: No, I just knew of him. He was string education.

BL: He was string education and that was . . . When Hansen, DuWayne, took over the music education department by that point, he was one who didn't like—I got along wonderfully with DuWayne, so this is not a personal negative—He [Hansen] did not like the idea of the faculty, the performance faculty, teaching instrumental classes; he wanted specialists. A lot of logic to it. But I questioned, I mean a lot of logic to the idea, but I questioned about the logic of the situation. You know, because this guy [Martino] just sort of came in, and he was neither fish nor fowl.

RT: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

BL: You need bigger school, at that point I think, to have a specialist. And he wasn't happy here from the very beginning.

RT: Well I guess, he was here till what?

BL: 83.

RT: Yeah, see Victor Ellsworth came in. Victor followed him.

BL: Victor was different. First of all, Victor played bass.

[TAPE ENDS]

**Interview: Robert Thayer and William Alexander**  
5/01/03

RT: Biographical Information. What was your schooling and how did you happen to get to Bowling Green?

WA: My Schooling. I was very fortunate because the caliber of student [at Mount Union] was excellent and the director of the department was a very fine person and his wife taught biography quite well, quite well.

RT: What was his name? What was her name?

WA: Walter Hodgson. She was . . . RT Mrs. Walter Hodgson! . . . And it a fine experience. And they left after three years and the director was a professional organist and a marvelous chap, and the violinist had been with Oberlin for many years and after that the leading violin. Marvelous teacher.

RT: She followed Mrs. Hodgson?

WA: Mrs. Hodgson. I was very, very indebted to her. She had been soloist with the Chicago Symphony. [I had] my college experience there, and after teaching in the school system [of the] county just a year, I went to, I had a teaching scholarship [at North Texas State].

RT: Did Hodgson go there? Yes of course I know that name

WA: I had been accepted by a college in the east and when I wrote to Walter Hodgson for a recommendation he immediately suggested that, "but if you come here to North Texas it won't cost you a dime, and not only that, we'll put you on salary to teach straight classes." And it just great so I received a lot of money. And I had a wonderful violin teacher, and very, very great leadership, none other than . . . Everywhere he succeeded, he left I think a year or two after I left, where I got my master's degree, and he became director of the [Indiana School of Music].

RT: Bain. Wilfred Bain.

WA: Wilfred Bain. So I came under the strong influence of that wonderful man and had two courses with him, and he was very, very nice to me. And I was fortunate to have had a very fine instructor in violin there, following the one in Cleveland [Mount Union].

RT: Did you grow up in the Stark County area?

WA: I grew up in the city of Canton.

RT: I've never known exactly where Mount Union was.

WA: Only about 14 miles from Canton.

RT: Oh. OK.

WA: In Alliance, Ohio

RT: Alliance, yes. I knew it was in Alliance, but I never quite found Alliance . . never had a picture of where it was.

WA: It was a very fine school.

RT: Yeah. And still is, I think.

WA: After that, I taught . . .

RT: Don't worry about it. There'll be some gaps. That's fine. You have to take time to think. Now you had taught, did you say, in the county schools before you went to North Texas.

WA: Yes that's right.

RT: How many years were you . . . ?

WA: I was in the county school only one year, because I was anxious to get on, get my master's degree. But I had a fine experience. The superintendent wept.

RT: Oh Really?

WA: Yeah.

RT: And the fact that Hodgson recruited you so actively was a tribute to you as well.

WA: Well I was very fortunate, very, very fortunate. So I taught at Greentown and I had the band, chorus.

RT: Greentown Ohio?

WA: Greentown Ohio.

RT: Is that also in that same . . .

WA: It's in about, I would say, from Canton it's about 12 miles. So that was a fine experience, although it was quite . . .

RT You did everything.

WA: Yes I did. I had the chorus, I had seventh and eighth grade history of Ohio, and wonderful, wonderful kids, wonderful.

RT: A rural area?

WA: Yes. And then I had also an orchestra plus a band. And that was great experience, and the orchestra was really a delight.

RT: Really?

WA: Yes indeed. Because that area, at that time, was plentifully endowed with violin teachers, and the city orchestra in Canton Ohio—I played with that orchestra, even as a kid in high school, I was the only high school kid who played in the orchestra. But it was a delight. So I made a little money there. And I also played in the hotel and I made more than the teachers made, in the Onesto Hotel in Canton.

RT: Would this have been for dinner, dances?

WA: I would start, it would be at the cocktail hour, and then I would start in again at 9:00, 9:00 until midnight.

RT: Was this a solo performance?

WA: No, I was a pianist and also at the DeVelda (??) hotel we had a very attractive soprano. And so I had to truckle around, you know, and watch my energy level, because I had an 8:00 class.

RT: Was this every night or just weekends.

WA: Just every night. I was a tough character.

RT: And when you went back to teach then at Greentown did you also continue the hotel?

WA: I started that after that, so that did not interfere.

RT: But you did while you were in college.

WA: Getting back to the college situation, I taught at . . .

RT: After Greentown.

WA: [Tape skips a lot] Yes, after I got my master's at Texas. And interviews to get a job. My recital. He had heard me play before . . . Gave me a great push. Well I need to get a job. And Miller said, and Bain too. To the point where, after my recital, Oh, and my accompanist and my coach the year I was there to study violin was ????. He himself was looking for several years . . .

RT: So you went to—was it called Western Kentucky College or University?

WA: Western Kentucky State Teacher's College. Then it became Western Kentucky University, several, many, many [years later].

RT: What was your assignment there?

WA: I had the orchestra.

RT: It was a teacher education program.

WA: And I had the Methods class.

RT: Was this the next stop, you went from Bowling Green to Bowling Green?

WA: That's right..

RT: And how were you recruited to come here? How long were you at Western Kentucky?

WA: Two years. And it didn't pay very well, and it was eleven months a year. So I contacted a friend here. Called me back in the afternoon. He said "We have a young ??? who teaches . . . Very likely . . . I really should say, I don't need to say . . . I went, I got off the train and came to Bowling Green.

RT: The rest is history. Now when you came here, did you come as the violin teacher?

WA: No the thing about it, they just hired, before I spoke to them, they hired a part-time teacher from Toledo.

RT: Oh, that would have been McLaughlin?

WA: That's right.

RT: Okay. I picked up his name from the history.

WA: And so this was to develop an orchestra, and I didn't mind that, actually, because I had an orchestra in high school. It something when you go from nothing. My sweetheart at the time . . .

RT: Oh, you weren't married.

WA: No.

RT: Where was she?

WA: She had just finished, she had received her bachelor's degree, there at Bowling Green Kentucky. I told her about it. Very attractive. I had to be in Bowling Green. Longest month of my life.

RT: And you, by this time, were pretty well committed, you'd made up your mind,:

WA: Yes, that I was going to switch. And so I did.

RT: She came up?

WA: Yes, we married on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September and then left.

RT: You had your fingers crossed.

WA: Well if you want me to go on about this.

RT: Go ahead. It's very interesting.

WA: So as soon as I came here they said I'd have to . . . course. Merrill McEwen. I said "In all my life I have . . . man . . . confidence. Very tall, very handsome, a heart, jovial heart. His sons took after him, and his wife was a doll. [He was a] violinist, violist, great singer. [Sang at a church at Toledo.]

RT: Collingwood? No, not Collingwood, don't think I know it.

WA: A woman founded the church and he was the soloist.

RT: Oh, okay.

WA: So [I started with nothing.] Actually there was a leftover, about seven, eight students.

RT: Because there had been an orchestra at one time.

WA: Yes, there had been.

RT: This was during the war, of course.

WA: That's right, I think so. And this was very challenging for me. So [I got] faculty members to play in my orchestra. It was non-existent. Then I chose to talk to Jack (?). I got in touch with fraternities, sororities. I had learned from this chatting that, often times, kids came from schools where they'd had orchestras. When they came to college, that was the end of their orchestra interests. You know, I don't know how I did it, but I ended up with an orchestra of 32 students.

RT: My goodness!

WA: No, that would include the three ringers. These kids who were majoring in speech or business or something or other, sent home for their fiddles, and they joined with us. Well, then I had to look [for music?]. Boy that was a tough year. A gal who came on new on the faculty just as I did [Betty Troeger]. But she was from, oh I think, somewhere in Ohio. Charming girl. And she was a pianist. "If we ever develop an orchestra you might like to perform." I worked on the orchestra. In the month of, I think it must have been March, I got there in September.

RT: Remarkable progress.



The University Orchestra was reorganized this year after being inactive for the past two years. Also the first orchestra concert in four years was presented by the group. The orchestra started with four members and has grown to an organization of over thirty members.

The main purposes of the organization have been to provide a source for soloist material, and to give good performances.

The highlight of the orchestra's work this year was the concert in which Beethoven's First Symphony was featured. Talented students and faculty members were featured soloists.

Proving that the organization was not "all work and no play" the members occasionally took time out for social gatherings. Although the University Orchestra was very new it steadily grew in worth and popularity.

Officers for 1947 included Howard Micken, president; James Dunn, vice-president; Patricia Sanguinetti, secretary; Jean Graham, treasurer; and Monroe Rappaport, librarian. The orchestra was under the direction of William D. Alexander.



*Last minute tune up.*

## University Orchestra



**FRONT ROW:** Howard Mickens, Jim Dunn, William D. Alexander, Monroe Rappaport, Glenn Walker, Ben Langell, Eibel Marie Hall, Jean Graham.  
**BACK ROW:** Mari May, Patricia Sanguinetti, Marion Payne, Richard Chadwick, Paul Sackett, Gloria Billett, Robert Borough, Nancy Baughman, Marcia Lemmerman.

WA: We went on the stage, we opened with an overture by Gluck, [then] Beethoven's First Symphony, the whole thing. Then we played the first movement of the Schumann Piano Concerto. This young woman had salt, then we did an encore.

RT: This would have been, your first year was from 1946, so it would have been the Spring of 1947.

WA: That's right. I walked up on the stage and [they] applauded. We have an orchestra, a conductor! There was tremendous discipline because you've got three faculty there.

RT: Were they all string players, the three faculty?

WA: Well I used . . . the concertmaster was the new violin teacher [McLaughlin] which was a big help, you see.

RT: Sure, of course. And did McEwen play?

WA: Oh yes. He played viola. And it was his wife who came in.

RT: Oh it was his wife!

WA: What a doll she was. And she said "I can't believe it." And then I did something I shouldn't have done. About three, four weeks later I appeared on my own violin recital, and that wasn't smart.

RT: Why?

WA: They'd already hired a violin [McLaughlin].

RT: Oh. And he didn't do a recital, I suppose.

WA: No, so that wasn't very . . . and I didn't mean it, I didn't want to do that. I should have . . . it was an orchestra I was responsible for. I played and then there was a tremendous . . . The pianist, not the gal pianist, but the fellow [Hadley Yates]. I can't remember the name.

RT: It's probably on that list.

WA: He was my accompanist. And we played the Chaconne by Bach, and then I played the . . . big program, tremendous program.

RT: Now were you teaching violin, or was the other man doing all the [teaching].

WA: The other man was teaching violin. Oh yes.

RT: Of course there wouldn't have been very many, I'm sure.

WA: No.

RT: Did anybody say anything, did you hear about this from anybody as a *faux pas*?

WA: Well let me tell you about that. Contracts came out, I was promoted with a 20% raise, promoted with tenure. So, you know.

RT: Pretty good work for one year.

WA: But the tragedy was this. [undecipherable] wanted to keep his job.

RT: What else were you teaching?

WA: I was teaching solfège.

RT: Of course, the principle thrust of the program was the preparation of teachers, I'm sure.

WA: Exactly. That part I loved, I liked.

RT: That leads me to, well let me just run down my [list]. I think we've covered a lot of the things on my standard list of questions. What aspects as your job as a faculty member, did you find especially rewarding? Certainly you found it an enormous reward to have the orchestra develop as quickly as it did. And you just mentioned you enjoyed Methods classes.

WA: Yes. I truly did. And there was another [part to the question]

RT: What aspects of your job did you find especially rewarding?

WA: Well I had the string classes, and I studied cello on the side with the . . .

RT: Did you go up there?

WA: No, he was with the Toledo Orchestra, and I would go an hour early for my lesson.

RT: Did you play in the Toledo Orchestra?

WA: Oh yes. Yes, I was assistant concertmaster.

RT: Now was McLaughlin here? He was in the orchestra too, wasn't he.

WA: He was in the orchestra also, but when he was in the orchestra, he was the concertmaster and that's another story.

RT: So you were sitting side by side in the orchestra.

WA: Yes and so there was a lot of [tension].

RT: I can imagine.

WA: It didn't bother me, he was the concertmaster.

RT: You were studying cello and teaching the string classes here.

WA: I was teaching the methods and actually I instituted the methods [course] for [non-music students] who were going to be schoolteachers.

RT: Sure. And there might have been brass players, or singers, or pianists.

WA: Right. And so I instituted a methods within our methods course . . . be on the scene when they didn't have enough to do. I had to teach the classes.

RT: Oh, so you went out in methods classes.

WA: Sure did, but they were good teachers. That was a plus.

RT: Now did you go into the schools yourself with your students. Not that you say you didn't have enough to do. When you had a student during the day, you had students preparing these music appreciation to teach to third and fourth graders. Did you ever go into the schools and see one of your students teach a third grader?

WA: No, no I didn't.

RT: For one thing, you didn't have time, I'm sure.

WA: Yes, and the ones [teachers] who were in the county [schools], they were free to do something on their job.

RT: Because they were already employed.

WA: They were a delight.

RT: But you found out what they did because they wrote you reports.

WA: Oh yes, oh yes. So that was a delight. So that's why I always thought that playing the fiddle was one thing, but that I had affection for seeing people teach children, and I had regular classes—they were not music majors, they were . . . [undecipherable]

RT: Let's talk a little bit now about students, your students. Do you keep up with any of your former students?

WA: I have, but it's getting that they keep up with me. It's just like that.

RT: What pleased you about those contacts? What do they remember about you and what do you see about them.

WA: They remember my breadth and my joviality (?). It was like that. One fellow said ". . . a teacher . . . went down the hall and I heard this laughter, and he said just like turning off a faucet, there was this silence, and somebody's reciting.

RT: Balance.

WA: They said I was tough but always fair and, in a manner of speaking, I respected every one of them.

RT: Did you use the word 'joviality'? A sort of a human . . . I don't think I every heard a good teacher who didn't say what you just said, that you respected your students, you respected every one of them. Because I think that's a critical part of what made you a good teacher, that you respected the students. And of course that was reciprocated.

WA: That's why I loved classroom teaching. Far better than just teaching a fiddle lesson in a studio. And then I was inclined somewhat, how to grab a kid by the ear and throw him out. Came really close. That was a marvelous piece of music he'd not practiced. This happened with a former member of the faculty who was a brilliant trumpet teacher. He was first trumpet in the Houston ????. He got this guy actually by the ear and tossed him out the door. "I don't want to see you." I didn't have to do that.

RT: It's interesting that you say that, because, in the conversation we had with Dave Glasmire two days ago, I asked him what he thought challenging in his teaching. And he said: motivation, motivating students to do their best. You're alluding to that now, I think. How do you respond to that challenge?

WA: Well I had a class with elementary ed. teachers. They were . . . And I think [one student] failed or got a D, and [had] to take the course over. I think that was the way it was. So he came in a told me about his [problem] that he had to take the course over.

[Interval devoted to changing tape.]

Well it was ??? And he had his cap on, always had his cap on when the class was empty, turned around toward the blackboard, and [removed] his cap, turned around, looked to me and smiled. I had a marvelous time teaching that guy. He was so responsive. He went from a D to an A.

RT: Wonderful story. During the time that you taught, and maybe even up to now as you can observe the educational scene, did you feel that students changed? Was there a change in the preparation of students, their attitude, their productivity, their talent, that sort of thing?

[Interval on pausing the machine]

WA: I taught summer school. These were non-music majors, and I did notice the change in the attitude. It's rather unpleasant to behold this. And it wasn't, uh, they had the attitude that, I got the feeling that . . .

RT: "I challenge you to teach me," that sort of thing?

WA: They just kind of released themselves from any responsibility, which was highly discouraging, highly discouraging (disturbing?). And I found that it was rather uniform throughout the [class]. There was one class, it was small, and we had it in the

morning, and they were a delight. [In the afternoon class] they were [sleepier]. I don't know whether it was numbers that did it or not, or also it was the possibility that it was in the afternoon. The morning class was a delight. I didn't know how to lean on them. Having had a pleasant experience—well I didn't have any unpleasant experience with these guys. I'd like to make a small change in the attitude. They smiled less, they looked at you with an attitude that "Here I am. Now, I dare you to teach me."

RT: I think sometimes, I don't know that it's a consistent pattern that I can say has changed systematically over the years, as much as it is the classes you're given, and I always wondered what's the chemistry, what is the factor that causes that turmoil. In other words class has sort of a personality, and some classes have a wonderful outgoing personality and some of them don't.

WA: I think too perhaps the afternoon classes are cursed. So I kind of gave up. I mean I was getting older and I didn't have the stamina.

RT: What about your work with majors? Did you notice any change in the talent level over the years?

WA: I would say the talent was stronger.

RT: David said exactly the same thing.

WA: And then it was very, very rewarding for the teachers, the talent rising.

RT: Do you have any idea why that is? Is it that the University was able to be more selective? Is it that the quality of public school teaching went up? Is it a combination of a lot of things?

WA: I think it is a combination. I think private instruction is stronger than it used to be.

RT: A second on that subject to your own school schooling in Stark County when you were a student. What was the public school program that you went through like? Did you have an orchestra?

WA: Oh yes, indeed. I went to Canton/McKinley.

RT: Which is a big school.

WA: Oh heavens yes. There were 9,000 in my graduating class. You had 110 in the orchestra. Sad to report on that, because, in those years, the orchestra was very prominent. The strengthening of football . . .

RT: Oh. Of course Canton was . . .

WA: That's right. And so after I graduated, I was talking to people, to teachers, I said "How's the orchestra?" They were lucky to have 35.

RT: Did you have in those days what we today call General Music classes at the elementary level? Or Music Appreciation kinds of experiences? Or was it mostly just the performance aspect? At the elementary level.

WA: No in those days if the teacher was interested in music, they were free to do this.

RT: Okay. Pretty much depended on the classroom teacher.

WA: That's right.

RT: Their skill and their interest. There was no official music teacher for the elementary, probably.

WA: She came . . . Which came about . . . too late. And I always remembered her as a very charming lady, beautiful, beautiful voice. And I was just delighted.

RT: Did she sing actually?

WA: She would sing phrases and she would always come down the aisle, and put her hand on my head, and she said "Now William, this is how it should be." I never took my singing seriously.

RT: But she did. Well now lets talk a little bit about the people that you worked with here. You mentioned Merrill McEwen, you mentioned his presence, the fact that he inspired confidence. What were some of the other experiences with your colleagues.

WA: Yes. I remember [Leon Fauley]. Very, very charming man. Very, very full of music, full of love of music. Taught any kind of music. And he would always, at Christmas time, he'd always go to the Metropolitan Opera to hear one of the operas.

RT: What did he [do?] Was he a voice teacher? Oh I met , shortly after we came here, we came in 1983, I met his wife, his widow. She lived here many years after his death.

WA: That's right.

RT: I never got to know here very well, but I did have the pleasure of meeting her.

WA: Young man . . . was a friend of mine. Very, very fine. You don't want me to go into detail on anybody?

RT: Oh just people that were, sort of stand out in your memory, yes, teachers or friends or colleagues or musicians.

WA: Yes we had Joe Himmel, Joseph Himmel. Very, very intellectual fellow, very charming personality. And delightful attitude.

RT: He's still living?

WA: Yes he's still living.

RT: Where does he live now?

WA: He lives near Denver . And Helen Kwalwasser Wadeen and her husband [Harvey Wadeen].

RT: I don't think she's on here.

WA: There were here only four years.

RT: Didn't they go to Philadelphia?

WA: Yes. They went directly to Philadelphia, and they remained there. Harvey Wedeen was her husband, very accomplished pianist.

RT: I didn't know her name before I knew she was here.

WA: Her father was famous.

RT: That must be where I first heard the name. Do you remember the—some of the difficulty in compiling lists like this, like the one you have there, is that it's out of the catalogues, and for a while the catalogue listed every member of the faculty, and in early days the catalogue listed their degrees and their schools they went to, and in the case of music faculty with whom they studied. So you go back to the teens, or the twenties, you find that kind of information. Then of course the presentation of the information changed and now there's not even a list of faculty in the catalogue, and so you have to go to other sources, like directories and things like that, and they're not always as complete as they could be. One of the question I had for David and for you too, what year did you—you were doing the supplemental program when I arrived in 83—do you remember what year you retired from full time teaching?

WA: I think it was 1980.

RT: 80. Okay. Dave thought it was 1982. I think that's right. I just sort of guessed at it because I couldn't tell.

WA: That's alright. Then you see I taught about six or seven summers.

RT: Yes, I knew that. You were doing that when I arrived. At that time there was this so-called supplemental retirement program, which I think was a five-year program, but taught beyond that.

WA: Yes I think so, I think so. But I loved that teaching.

RT: And that teaching, at that time was the course for elementary music, or elementary teachers I guess. I don't remember exactly. I remember Pat Tallarico used to come in and say "We'd like to have Bill teach again this summer."

WA: Is that right? Oh that's right, you were here then.



RT: Yes I came in the last few years of your part-time service.

WA: Pat and I were good friends.

RT: Yes, well I know he thought so highly of you and always wanted you to teach, and I said "That's fine. Let's do it."

WA: Well I was fortunate. I was fortunate.

RT: What do you recall as—I had mentioned that I had asked David this question—what were the issues in the faculty? What were the things people were trying to accomplish? What were the challenges? What were the obstacles even? Nobody likes to remember faculty meetings maybe. But I'm asking you to think back to faculty meetings, and what were the—?

WA: Subjects.

RT: Subjects, yes.

WA: Sometimes there were those, I'm one of them, I'm kind of soft. There were times when somebody had a passion and had an outburst. And I thought "My God, what was going to happen here? . . . [Seymour] Benstock . . .

RT: We're on again now. What were? For example David mentioned scholarship systems. Were there curricular issues—I don't want to lead you. I can tell what he answered but I like to hear your . . . What were the issues in the curriculum, or where there any that caused conversation and faculty action or debate, that sort of thing? Maybe there weren't any that stand out.

WA: (Sigh) Difficult. I had courses that were substantial and . . . traditional.

RT: Then there was no question about it.

WA: There was no argument.

RT: They were pillars of the program. In a number schools that I have visited or have been a faculty member in, there was a tension, and sometimes it was a healthy tension, it wasn't necessarily bad, between performance and music education. Institutions that primarily were dedicated to preparing teachers, but who had fine performers on the faculty. And these fine performers wanted performance standards to be high. Was that an issue here during your time, or was it accepted that, if you're going to be a good teacher, you're going to be a musician and a good performer?

WA: And I think it waned a little bit, the emphasis on performance. The preeminent responsibility is performance, and while I thought that way while I was at Mount Union—I didn't feel like, I wasn't gonna, if I had my druthers, I go there and just take fiddle lessons. But that doesn't make a musician. Does that do it?

RT: I haven't asked this question systematically of any group of people. But just My sense is that if we were to ask our colleagues in music "Why did you go into music? Why did you choose music as a career?" it would be because of performance. We didn't become teachers to teach, I mean we didn't become musicians to teach initially. We didn't know what joys there could be in teaching. We certainly didn't become musicians to study theory or to study music history, or to do all the other things go to make up a musician. We became musicians because we loved to perform.

WA: And thankfully that's the way it ought to be.

RT: Thankfully that's the way it ought to be, that's right. And those of us, and you're obviously one of them, who have found the joy of teaching, have found that later as we matured and began to see the larger picture.

WA: That's why I kept on playing recitals, even though I wasn't teaching violin.

RT: Yes, sure. That's why you played that first recital that you talked about. The one here. Because you were a musician, and that's what musicians do. At the same time you also indicated that your classroom teaching became so important to you, because you didn't want to just be teaching violin.

[Recording ends, although there is still a lot of tape left.]

Interview with Robert Thayer and David Glasmire  
4/29/03

DG: **Harry Spangler** was a piano teacher, in the early school. You see the date. He was hired and he was one more of those who did one year. **Andras Szentkiralyi** was a violinist and that's about all I know about him.

RT: We remember him.

DG: **Tallarico. Bruce Tolbert** was a vocalist. **Betty Jean Troeger**, I not sure what she did. **Ivan Trussler** flew down to Florida. **Richard Webster** was a clarinet teacher (RT: Oh sure), went to the University of Toledo (RT: Oh yes) when he left here. **Harvey Wedeen** was a wonderful piano player and teacher. He and **Helen Kwalwasser** married. In fact she is on the list of part time.

RT: She's on the list as a part-time and Wedeen is faculty.

DG: Marvelous. Both very fine pianist. **Roy Weger** came here in 1953, replaced **Arthur Zuelzke** and he came from a little town called Durant, Oklahoma (RT: Oh yeah), and if you would have heard his high school band it would have put most university bands to shame.

RT: I heard about that band.

DG: He had a cracker jack of a band. It was unbelievable. And he was solely responsible for teaching all those instruments. He used to say, "Roy, you got a conservatory out here in the public school."

RT: There wasn't any place nearer it to have anybody else to help.

DG: He was a fine band conductor. One of the strong parts about Roy Weger was that he got out of his students the utmost. He was capable of getting the best out of his students in band. A very fine conductor. **Ken Wendrich**—do you know who he is?—former dean. **Francis Wilcox** was the trumpet teacher in 49 and I knew him quite well. He left in 58 and that's when I got the job. He left in 58 and went out to Scottsdale, Arizona, became an arranger, and taught mathematics, and arranged for the high school band. This is just a little aside. He didn't have a job when he left here, he had a school bus, he took all the four seats out of the school bus, he and his wife and three children, off they went, to Scottsdale, AZ. That's what you call faith! **Don Wilson** we know. **Christopher Scholl**, I don't know who that is. **Bob Wykes**, we stopped to see him, he's at is at St. Louis University, University of St. Louis, he was theory and flutist.

RT: I went to school with him.

DG: **Hadley Yates** [Piano], I didn't know, because that was again in 46-51 and I didn't know too many of the people. **Fred Young**, clarinet teacher, very fine. He took—who was the clarinet teacher at that time at Oberlin years back?—George Waln's place when George went on sabbatical. He came here and taught about seven or eight years.

**Art Zuelzke**, he came from Fostoria, Ohio, and was a graduate of Cincinnati. He took over—I'm not sure who the band director was before Zuelzke came here. Have you research anything beyond that?

RT: Yeah we go back all the way to 1914.

DG: Tunncliffe. Merrill McEwen replaced Tunncliffe as the chair of the department.

RT: Right. We have that history

RK: Did you ever meet Tunncliffe

DG: No, I never did. **Richard Alleshouse**, he's a graduate of BG. He's still around. They bought a place right over here, one of the little condos off the North Shore Blvd [at Lakeside OH]. **Harry Boileau** was an insurance salesman in downtown Bowling Green but a very fine percussionist. He taught part time percussion for us until we hired [**Wendell Jones**]. Arcola [Clark], we talked about her. **Richard Dean** was the vocal teacher at Anthony Wayne High School; he was a tuba major at Bowling Green. He's still living as far as I know.

RT: Which one of this?

DG: Richard Dean. **Francesco DiBlasi** was the third trumpet, I think, player of a symphony in Michigan. He came down here and taught trumpet. That was when my load got to the point where it was getting too much so we hired a part time trumpet teacher before we hired Ted Betts.

**Marius Fossenkemper** was also a clarinet teacher part time

**Mildred Pietschman McCrystal**, she was one of the first ladies I got to know in the music education department when we came to Bowling Green because I became active in OMEA at that time and she was the director of arts music in Sandusky.<sup>1</sup> We used to always call her "the lady with hats." She wore hats anywhere she went. Bless her heart she was at an OMEA Convention years ago and went stepping off a curb and somebody hit her and she died. **James Middleton** you know; **Kay Moore** you know. **James Pellerite** was a flutist out of Cincinnati. How he ever got up here I'll never know but he was a flutist. Helen Kwalwasser you know.

RT: That's a great help to us because we just can't tell from the available documents in all cases what people did. Now some of these people are, as you say, probably still alive.

DG: When it comes to former students that are still in this area some would be John and Janice Searle who live in Perrysburg. He was a graduate and a minister's son and a band director; he played French horn in the band. The band director, I won't mention

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<sup>1</sup> Beginning in 1946, extension programs of the University were offered in Sandusky, Ohio. During the next two decades, course offerings there were expanded, and in 1965 a regional campus of the University was established to serve Erie, Huron, and Ottawa counties. That campus is BGSU Firelands, in Huron, Ohio. BGSU Firelands, which opened for classes in 1967, offers career and technical education leading to associate degrees in 13 areas, as well as the first two years of baccalaureate degree programs. (2014 University Undergraduate Catalogue)

his name, used a couple of swear words. John went up to him and said “I can’t play in your band”; Janey and Dave Melle are graduates of Bowling Green. I taught Janey Melle violin in a broom closet in Church Street School. You could ask her about that. I was always one step ahead of her.

RT: What did you find most challenging about teaching?

DG: I think early on was motivation—on the part of the students, trying to get them motivated to be better. **Jerry Reed**, who was the counselor at Anthony Wayne for years, was the first tuba recital on the University campus, back in the early 50’s. I’m not sure whether it 1952 or 53. He was motivated to the point that he got to be a pretty good (in those days) sousaphone player. Upright tubas. We got upright tubas after Roy Weger came. And let me point out something about Roy Weger. I think I mentioned this in one of our meetings some years ago. **Roy Weger** was instrumental in getting scholarships. He couldn’t believe that no wind player was on scholarships. And he became fairly acquainted with **Dr. MacDonald** at that time. He went over to **Dr. MacDonald** and made out a program of what we should have in terms of building the college of music student body. I’m not sure what the monetary valuation was but he came back with ten scholarships and, of course, as you know, it’s grown considerably since.

RT: Were there scholarships for pianists and singers or were there just no scholarships?

Dave G: There were no scholarships that I know of but I’m sure that there were. But it wasn’t a general encompassing of the whole student body you didn’t have wind players, pianists, vocalists, string players, all that.

RT: On the other side—we talked about what you enjoyed and what you found rewarding—what were the frustrations, the disappointments?

Dave G: My part was a frustration of trying to do a good job in the public schools as well as the University for the first eight years. It was [difficult].

RWT: How?

Dave G: What time you have to spend with the university and I was quite involved with the band and orchestra at that time and also sharing my time with the elementary schools as well. In fact, **Jim Grabill**, bless his heart, was one of the people that were on a committee when I auditioned because I was not only auditioning for the university but also for the teaching.

RT: And the high school at that time was downtown.

DG: At the Junior High, right across from the fire station. Frustrations—I think getting good students. You had to more or less rely on your outreach to get more students to come. There were not many scholarships. You had to go out and perform and hope that somebody might hear you and say “Oh he might be a good teacher,” or by word of mouth. I felt that . . . other areas of brass as well. I really didn’t have very many frustrations because I was so glad to have a job in the first place. Coming out of the

service and knowing full well that I had to find a job to support my family was frustration enough. I was grateful that I had a job and when the opportunity came for me to go into the college of music—it was still a department of music at that time—I was so happy to take the job as brass teacher when **Frank Wilcox** left [in Spring 1958], Francis Wilcox actually.

RT: You were teaching trumpet when you first came here?

DG: Yeah, I taught all the brass instruments when I first came here; trumpet, French horn, euphonium, tuba, trombone (initially). I always said I'm teaching the low brass.

RT: I didn't realize that.

RK: Weren't you a band director at one time?

DG: I was a band director in 1965-66 for the simple reason that **Dr. [Richard] Ecker** had a very serious problem of protein adjustment in his body, one of only twelve cases in the world. He was on dialysis for a number of months. He was going to take over the job in 1965 because **Roy Weger** had taken a leave of absence and didn't come back. Roy went down to Texas, to SMU, and became a band director down there. So when Dr. Ecker died August 19 who could take over the band? Well, **Lou Marini** and I were the only ones that had any, shall we say, knowledge. So he took over the marching band and I helped him during marching season. And then I took over the concert band and he helped me and that was for one year. And then Kelly got here [in 1966] and he said "I couldn't believe how disrupted this band office was." [Laughter] Which was true because we were teaching a full load on our own. There wasn't any way that we could not teach trombone or some other brass instruments. So we had to do that whole thing together without getting any credit on our loads, or extra remuneration.

RWT: You mentioned the help that people give along the line. You mentioned the band at Lancaster. During your career, what external influences influenced your professional growth and your teaching? Was it a former teacher or professional organization, additional schooling, reading and studying, attendance at performances, conferences, clinics. (DG: All of those) What guided you?

Dave G: Well, it goes way back even before I was in high school. My father was a minister and I was not allowed to go to movies or anything of this nature. But I sneaked into the Grand Theater one afternoon and they had a live show between intermissions. (RT: Was this in Lancaster?) This was in Lancaster. I heard this trombone player. His name was **Forrest Boidenboyer (??)**. See I can remember that name. I heard this fellow and thought to myself "Boy I sure would like to do that sometime". My wishes came true. I played with the Johnny Knorr Orchestra. I also had the privilege of playing with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra.

I'll tell you the circumstances of that. Saturday evening, we had what you would call Senior Cotillion in the big ballroom. This was a big thing, a big dance. And Tommy Dorsey founded by Warren Covington at that time, because Dorsey was dead. I was sitting home studying my Sunday school lesson and 25 minutes till nine this fellow called me and says, "Are you Dave Glasmire?" And I said "Yeah" and he said, "Do you

play trombone?" and, I said, "Well, yeah, I'm a teacher here at the University." He says "Well could you come over and play with us tonight?" I said, "Well, I only have twenty minutes". He said, "That doesn't matter, come over and on the bus we'll give you a red coat and make sure you wear dark trousers, etc." I went over about 9:00 and Warren Covington was so kind. He came over to me and he said, "Now this is the way we're going to do this." The reason for that was that the man who was to play first trombone couldn't get back from Cleveland, having gone to the Army recruiting place to get a physical, so he was stuck in Cleveland. So I went and played second trombone for four hours with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. I got fifty bucks for it. [Laughter] But, in terms of influence, I think another influence was this man **Frank McGrann** who was the one who sort of took me under his wing. My other influence was **John Enck**. He died a couple years ago. He was my first trombone teacher in high school; well actually I was in junior high at that time. He was pushing me. I had two teachers that said this. "David there isn't anything more we can do for you. You must go and get a better teacher." So I went in to Lancaster, Pennsylvania and got lessons from **Chet Lincoln**. He had a band, a seventeen-piece band. It got to the point where I was capable. He hired me for the band for the weekend performances. He told me "David, there isn't much more I can teach you, you've got to get another teacher." Now that to me takes a lot of moxie when it comes to teachers. They knew they couldn't do anything more for me. So they recommended **Robert E. Clark** who was the solo trombonist for the United States Marine Band in the early 30's and 40's. During the war this happened. I started taking lessons in 1941 and of course the war was going on at that time. And I went to **Robert E. Clark**.

RT: Where was he?

DG: In Washington DC. He was retired at that point in time. I drove down there once a week till gas rationing did not permit me to go any more. And the only reason that I went to him was that I really thought that I'd like to be in a Marine Band. But the stipulations at that time to get in the Marine Band was that you had to play a string instrument. Did you know Paul Makara played in the United States Marine Band? In order to get in the marine band at that time you had to play a string instrument. So I took cello lessons on the same day that I went down to take lessons from my trombone teacher. Because Uncle Sam saw fit to see otherwise, I would not have pursued them. Those to me are the influences **Forrest Boidenboyer, John Enck, Frank McGrann, Chet Lincoln** that really influenced my life.

Of all really the influence of my mother and father. My parents, both of them were musicians. My mother graduated from Elizabethtown College, magna cum laude, in piano. My father also graduated, not with cum laude or anything like that, but he was a vocalist and music was just part and parcel of my life when I was a child. With all the church activities that we had, singing in the choir. My mother, particularly, was influential in the fact that in the Church of the Brethren that I grew up in, there was no instrumental music. We sang everything *a cappella*. In fact, there are still some churches that do it that way. My mother and father, bless their hearts, saw fit, and they were much more forward looking than some of the Brethren people at that time, [they] said "We have to have a piano." And they got the powers that be in the Church to buy a piano. And I had been taking trombone lessons for a number of years and I said

something to my mother one day, I said, "Can I play in the church?" I didn't notice anybody. I went in there and played a trombone solo and was:



Fa-la-da-de-a-da-da-de-de-a-dum. You know that?<sup>2</sup> And people thought "That boy is going to go to hell!" because I was playing a brass instrument in the church. But the influence that my mother and father had was superior to anything. These other fellows led the way. As far as early influences, my mother and father, no doubt about it.

RK: What were your parents' names?

DG: My parents' names: My mother's name was Leah, my father's name was Will. That's him right there. He was about 33. He just had embraced the Church of the Brethren. Those were the influences. And of course I can't deny the Cincinnati Conservatory and my trombone teacher there.

RT: I know you've talked about your colleagues here.

DG: I've been blessed over the years to have been involved with people like you, people like Ted Betts, who to me was the consummate trumpet player. Wonderful musician, wonderful person. And all of the other people. I can't say too much about my colleagues. They helped me as a neophyte right out of college to develop into what you might say a fairly respectable teacher. Those are the people that influenced most of us in one way or another.

RWT: Now to students. You certainly stay in touch with your former students?

Dave G: I try to

RT: You still do that. I've always been extraordinarily impressed with your contacts that you've maintained over the years. And so that continues. What can you tell us about your students?

DG: He was a trombone player, **David Nicely (?)**, out in the marching field one time and a gentleman walked up to me and said, "Are you David Glasmire?" and I said "Yes." "Do you have a student named Dave Nicely?" I said "Yes". He said, "Where is he?" "He's over there." They were checking him out because they wanted him to be part of the service. It was very secretive and they were picking out certain personality traits. They interviewed David Nicely, not a trombone teacher, I'm not sure what he did. He didn't become a musician.

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<sup>2</sup> Franz Schubert, *Schwanengesang*, D. 957 #4, "Ständchen."



Now some of them, for instance **Paul Bauer**, chair of the music department at Northern Illinois University, very fine bass trombonist. And I think one of the things that he likes to remember most is when he graduated from Bowling Green he took his master's degree at North Texas. He went down and auditioned and replaced the bass trombonist in the first band. So he really could play his horn.

**Marta Hofacre**, who came in here from a little town called Dalton, Ohio, which is in the Holmes County area [Actually Wayne County]. She is now a doctor in music and has been for twenty years or more the trombone teacher at University of Southern Mississippi.

**Jeff Shellhammer**, a very fine conductor and a terrific man in Gahanna, Ohio.

**David Guion**, who was a very good trombone player but who was interested primarily in musicology. He spent some time at Iowa with Rita Benson. He did some work with Rita Benson and recently got a job somewhere in North Carolina, I think in Greensboro but I'm not sure, as a musicologist.

RT: Is his father the psychologist at the University?

DG: Yeah. David—not that I want to take much credit, or any credit for that matter—David was a good trombone player but he wanted to go into the profession as playing trombone. And I said “David, I don't think . . .”—It's hard for a student to hear this, or a professor to say it—but I said: “David, your strength is in musicology. You can still play the trombone if you want to but you should really look in the future as a musicologist.” And he has written one of the finest books ever written. John Hill, in the preface of his book says: “I have never seen a more complete study of the trombone from a particular time frame.” And he says: “Absolutely perfect.” And you know when John Hill says that, it's got to be good. So he's had this published, and in fact I have a copy of it.

**Jeff Macomber** who is a Westlake graduate, high school, came here, and when he left here he went out and got a degree at the University of Iowa, went to Bemidji University, Minnesota and now is somewhere in Missouri, and I'm not sure exactly where.

But the fellow that took his place was **Joel Pugh**. He [Pugh] went to Bemidji as band director.

RT: Is Joel there now? DG: Yes. RT: Oh, I didn't know that. I didn't know he had left Ohio.

DG: I noticed that note but knew that, because it was in the Trombone Journal that I get, the International Trombone Journal. So he's there. Oh my, let's see.

RT: You've no doubt a lot of them are doing very well in school, teaching, school jobs or university, or professional jobs.

**DG: Mike Ferenci**, a very fine trombonist in the Cleveland area. He had a twin by the name of [William?] and doing very well out on the west coast as a trombone player/composition/Music, etc. etc. and he went out there just to see if he could make it.

**Joe Crider** went to a Baptist college just north in Missouri and he left there and is now the Director of Music at a huge Baptist Church just south of Missouri. He's done a good job. RT: He was here when I first got here. DG: Joe Crider has done very well for himself.

RT: Of course, a lot of people who go through music school end up in other fields, but I've talked with some of them and they say that the experience as a music student has been very significant in whatever direction they have chosen to go. So we sometimes think about our alumni being professionals in the music field but some of them are extraordinarily successful because they were music students, perhaps in a different field now.

DG: I had five students before I retired that were very good students, but they all went into computers. And I talked to the computer people about that, and they said "We like to have musicians because they have good memories, they can retain a lot of things, and they just seem to fit in the computer business. That is very true. A number of these have done this.

RT: Would you say that, in the course of your teaching career, student in general changed? Or put another way: Are today's students different from the students that you had when you started at Bowling Green?

DG: I think in terms of level, the level of playing is much better these days than it was, although there were some very good trombone players back in those days, they were very few in number. But the level of playing is much higher now than it was before. In particular, during the Roy Weger era we had some excellent trombonists. **Vince Polce** is another classic example of what he's done for his life in terms of Defiance and being director there. He's starting his 33<sup>rd</sup> year. I talked to him on the phone; when I was not well he called me and he said "It's my 33<sup>rd</sup> year and I might retire in another two years but."

RT: He is Mr. Music in Defiance.

DG: Absolutely. He has done very well. Oh, I don't want to miss some of the students that have gone into the band field. Shellhammer and Polce, particularly have done very well in being band directors.

RWT: Talk a little bit about the environment at the University, in terms of . . . I'm just reading a question we thought of in advance. Do you remember any discussion topics that occupied faculty members during your years of service? And did these change over time? What were the issues?

DG: Well, first and foremost, early on, in the early 50's, the issues were growth, first and foremost. We knew that there was the possibility of growth within the College of

Music and this was part and parcel of the outreach. Secondly, there were considerable—I don't want to say "animosity"—"differences of opinion" between the choral department and the instrumental department, because the instrumental department was relatively new, and there were times where these issues came up as to credit, accreditation. Do the students get credit for this, or that, and the number of credits that one should get for a particular performance or class of one sort or another, and how you arrive at this. The theory department, in particular, was quite goo, I think, early on, but as we progressed, I happened to be on one of the committees, when Don Wilson came, to upgrade the theory area of the College of Music. Don Wilson was instrumental in getting a little better growth in the theory department when he came here, and he had many thoughts in that way. And that may have been during Wendrich.

RT: It might have been well before that, because Wendrich didn't come until about 80. Glidden years, I suppose. Glidden was here from 75. We're talking about issues in faculty.

DG: One of them was: What credit does a student get for going to rehearsals, I mean to concerts? In fact, I had a big argument about recitals and I'll put it on the table. They made me go to fifteen concerts and I said "Look, I've gone to 150-200 concerts in my lifetime and you're making me go to 15? I didn't like that but I still had to do it. But anyhow. That's just an aside. What else? I think one of the issues that came up was scholarships – how do you divvy up the scholarships amongst the departments? That was an issue that was foremost in the minds of many of the faculty and particularly the administration as to how you would handle this—Who gets what?

RWT: You mentioned the tension, I think it happens in every music school, between vocal and instrumental. Was there also tension between performance and music education?

DG: Oh, I don't think as much. There was at times, I'm sure. First and foremost we were a music education oriented department for years until about the mid 60's, maybe. When Dr. Kennedy took over one of the plusses that he did in terms of outreach was [that] he organized a string quartet, a woodwind quintet, and a brass quintet. He gave us each a quarter load for that, and because of that particular aspect, we were able to reach out into the communities within Ohio and other areas, other states, by taking tours, going into public schools, and just playing. But I think that was an issue.

One of the better issues when it came up to salaries, I think, this had something to do. I remember one of our friends—bless his heart, I won't say who his name is—that said "Now look, I've had as much experience in my life and so forth than this person, and you're putting him much higher than I am." That kind of conflict, I think, was ameliorated eventually, but that did pose a problem, because to some of the guys that we hired were excellent musicians and performers, but lower on the totem pole salary-wise than some of the others, but at the same time had even better experience. That was an issue that came up. [Another] issue was participation: Can you participate in the choral, as well as the instrumental or did you have to choose?

RT: As a student?

DG: As a student. We used to have a program where you had to choose one or the other. I don't know that we had a great deal of problems as I see it. You as Deans know very well that there are problems galore that come into your office and the faculty knows not to come out.

RT: On that subject, tell us your view of communication between faculty and administration within the music school and beyond in the university?

Dave G: I thought it was quite good. I think sometimes we (and I'm probably as guilty as the next) we assume things, we assume that that person knew, we assume this and that when we really don't know concretely that this is happening. So, the assumptions, I think, were something that we had problems with. As far as my communication as an individual to the chair of the departments or the deans I had no problem with that at all. In fact, Ted Betts, who was director, chair, of the brass department, had no problems at all with what was going on.

RT: Of course you saw each other regularly. You were in the quintet.

DG: Oh yeah. We [Ted Betts] had a very good on-going relationship. I don't know that I ever had any enemy in the college of music at all, but I always wanted to get along with everybody. I'm sure I had disagreements, professionally of course, but never done through anger.

RT: I remember when I was being interviewed at Bowling Green in 1983 someone said "We have our disagreements just as any faculty." But he said "We get over them and we still speak to each other." I believe that was true then and I believe it was true during the time I was there. And still there are people that, when I was there, we might have had some issues, you know, some problems, but people are still friendly, I think. I think it's quite a remarkable place in that regards, it's not that way everywhere.

DG: You're right, you're right. I think a lot of people, when they see how our faculty gets along in the music department, they are surprised because there are factions you well know as Dean, there are factions here, factions there. But by large I think the faculty at the college of music does very well in terms of its communication with each other and its relationships, personal relationships, with each other.

RT: And I think that is very much reflective in the study body. Students either know when it doesn't work or know when it does work. Just little things, well, not little things at all, but things that people don't think about at all. The atmosphere in the office – the way the secretarial staff relates to students. I think that has always been exceptionally strong and again it's an intangible, perhaps, or something that we don't immediately think of as a critical part of it. I think it's been very important.

DG: I agree. We lost some of that. Not that they haven't been replace[d] equally but some of the old timers have gone

RT: And that was an enormously stable staff for many years.

Dave G: It was, for many years. When you stop and think how long some of those people were involved with the College of Music.

RT: And how much they cared about it. It wasn't just a job.

DG: It was a personal relationship. In terms of communication from the rest of the university I don't think there was any problem there. I had to serve on Faculty Senate for a couple of years and problems came up in Faculty Senate. In terms of communicating from the higher echelon I had no problem with that. I'll just give you [an example]. [Someone] got a parking ticket. He went through the protocol and he ended up in the President's office.

RT: Over a parking ticket!

DG: And he won the case.

RT: Speaking of communication, that's a perfect example. Do you feel that the central administration at the university, of course it changed during the time you were there, were they supportive of the music program? Did they appreciate the music program? Did they recognize the music program?

Dave G: Oh yes, absolutely. Particularly Dr. McDonald. A lot of people say a lot of things about McDonald, but there were certain issues of the college of music [for which he was] very, very supportive. I'll give you a classic example: We knew that there was a possibility of getting a new music building. He was coming over at 2:30; we were in the Practical Arts Building at the time. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor was home economics, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor was music, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor was [rehearsal halls]. We had it all set up. Everybody was practicing, and the old Practical Arts Building was located within the courtyard itself. So we had everybody's windows open, everybody practicing—vocalists, instrumentalists, you name it. And he came over, and he sat in there for a while. He said: "I don't see how any teaching goes on in this place." Out of that started the ball rolling on the new music building. The Practical Arts had a beautiful studio B, he [McEwen?] called it, on the second floor; it's still there.

RK: Where was that building on campus?

RT: West Hall?

DG: No, you know where Prout is? Across from where the Union is now. It was called the Practical Arts Building.

RK: Johnston was the freestanding building behind the Union.

DG: No it's on the other side.

RT: What I wanted to turn to, is a little group of questions about what I'm calling educational issues and curriculum. How is music education now different from what it was like when you were growing up? I'm talking about music education in the broad

sense, what's going on in the schools, not necessarily just the university. And how has it changed over the years?

DG: Well, as a student on trombone I was taught by a clarinet teacher, John Enck. He was very instrumental in allowing us to go to his band, which was in Manheim borough (?), which was not Upper Leacock High School. We didn't have a band. We had a clarinet, cello, trumpet, trombone, piano, as a nucleus for our group in Upper Leacock. Now you look at that at one point in time, you think, "Well how did we ever get [there]." The point is, if you have the desire to do it, you'll do it. Nowadays, up until I'd say the last 10-15 fifteen years, we had superior high school bands. But you don't have that in this day; you don't have that kind of superiority now. [There are many things] you can blame that on, but [there is] a different kind of attitude towards music than we had back in those days. In fact, my experience in college was totally instrumental. Back when I was a child growing up as a trombonist, I was allowed to go to certain things and play, participate. One of them was—and this is where the growth business comes back again—I owe this to my mother and father. I played in a "rube band" on Saturday afternoons and I was not allowed to drink beer. I didn't. These guys would bring out these marches, and say "Here. Play it" We played and they drank the beer and I drank milkshakes. To me, that gave me the impetus to learn how to sight-read. Because if I could say anything that's good about me, that's one of my main strengths. You put something in front of me and I'll sight-read it without much problem. The experiences that I had in high school—I had no marching band, there was no concert band. The only thing that I had was the choir. I sang in the choir. Over a period of time, as you well know, the growth [in instrumental music] up until about 20 years ago was very commendable in terms of the public schools. But because of the inside and outside influences we have "musically speaking," we have a problem of having a viable music education program in the public schools.

RWT: And yet you say that the quality of performance of the students coming in has steadily advanced.

DG: Has advanced. Now that's up to the point where I quit. [RT: So of course it's hard to say.] About 20 years ago. And I've heard other band directors and people say that the difficulty of sustaining a real good marching band plus a concert band in a public school is very, very difficult now. So the [difference] does not lie in that particular area. They're are bombarded with all kinds of [unclear]. That's a personal opinion. But in terms of music education that I had, and I look at other students, they had a much more superior education in music in the high school than I did.

RT: Just because of where you grew up.

DG: Just because of where I grew up. And that's changed considerably over the years. [For instance,] orchestras in the state of Ohio under [John] Farinacci.

RT: Wasn't that Cleveland Heights?

DG: Cleveland Heights. Unbelievable professionalism. He was very well known for that. He had a considerable backlog, shall we say, of students who performed in these groups. It was astounding.

RT: Dick, there are a couple of things you wanted to ask.

RK: If you look back on that whole list of faculty members what are some that pop out? People that have been important. People who had a positive influence.

Dave G: **Merrill McEwen**. He was a very generous and gentle man, but a very thorough person when it came to administration. I was only part time. He didn't have to treat me as though I was a faculty member, but I never felt isolated from the department at that time just because I was part time. Because of the other part time people as well. Administratively wise, I think several of the presidents I had great deal of respect for. Dr. Prout, for instance, who was a gem of a person? And Dr. McFall, in the administration, was just a wonderful human being. And there were others of course I didn't point out. Herschel Litherland [Dean, College of Education], was another. The University administrative [personnel], I think, were exceptional people.

RT: Herschel, what was his last name?

DG: Herschel Litherland. In terms of the university and the college of music, I think **Roy Weger** was a great influence on the instrumental program at the University, college of music, department at that time. **Dick Ecker** was a very, very astute individual, and was highly respected throughout the OMEA. I always thought a great deal of **Bill Alexander** and **Warren Allen** because they helped shape me as a person, and guidance, me being a neophyte at the University. **Ted Betts**, when it comes to the best, he was a very great influence. I think each of us can learn from others, if we're willing to do that. And Ted Betts brought a lot from Eastman, as not only a professional trumpet player, but as a person himself.

RK: Isn't that kind of interesting, that there are so many people that have played a role.

D G: I was astounded when I read that list, that many people had been employed by the department of music at one time.

RT: During the time you were here. You overlapped with every one of those people.

RK: That's fascinating.

DG: Each one of those in their own right, I think, had an influence, whether it's for good or bad, on me as a person, as a musician. You don't know it all and if you can learn from somebody else, certain aspects of teaching, certain aspects of playing. When Dr. Kennedy [Mark Kelly?] was hired there were certain people who said "Well why don't you? I know my limitations. I'm not about to take on something that I'm not capable of doing in my own mind. Neither Lou Marini no I wanted the job as band director.

RWT: Ecker had been the assistant to Zuelzke, and he was the heir apparent until he fell ill.

RK; So Zuelzke retired.

DG: Zuelzke retired and Ecker still remained the asst. band director because Roy Weger came in 53.

RK: Then Mark Kelly would have come in the 60s some time.

DG: Yeah, that's right, 66. Doyt Perry Stadium was still . . .

Tape ends