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## Interview with Robert Bogorff - NSU Archivist

Robert Bogorff  
*Nova Southeastern University*

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Nova Southeastern University

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History of Presidents

Bob Bogorff

JP= Dr. Julian Pleasants

BB= Bob Bogorff

JP: This is Julian Pleasants. It is June 23, 2010. I am at Nova Southeastern University, and I'm talking with Bob Bogorff. Would you give me your background of when you first came to Nova and why you decided to come?

BB: I first came to Nova in 1970, which makes me the second oldest living employee here. Only Dr. Fischler is ahead of me and he's sort of semi-retired. I came here for family reasons not really because I wanted to at the time, and I probably would have left if it weren't for family reasons, given the financial situation of the University in those early days.

JP: What was your first position and what were your responsibilities?

BB: Well I got here and I was hired by a professional librarian, who was, at that time, making the unbelievable salary of, I think, \$17,000. And I came in at \$11,000,

which was actually half of what the president was making at the time, believe it or not. I think President Fischler was only making like \$21,000 or \$22,000 at that time. Six months after I started they figured they could get along just as well with me at \$11,000, and so they fired my boss, which left me as the only actual professional librarian at the University. The rest of the staff was clerical, administrative assistants, things of that nature.

JP: Well, did that give you pause if they fired him that maybe you might be next?

BB: Well, I was interviewed, in those days the school was so small that Dr. Fischler, the president, actually interviewed everybody except the clerical people, and I remember being in his office and he looked at my credentials and nodded and said, "Oh that's fine, everything looks good." And then he looked at me and he said, "You can have the job. There's one thing I have to tell you." And I said, "What?" He says, "We might not be here in six months." Of course I didn't really want to be there to begin with. I was sort of forced to come down here by family problems and things of that nature. So I really had no choice, and I stayed. I have been there ever since.

JP: Well, at that time it wouldn't have been too critical for you in a way, professionally, but since you had to be here there wouldn't have been a lot of options for you professionally would there?

BB: No there would not. Broward Community College was here. Florida Atlantic was in Boca. They didn't have anything here. Florida International I think had just opened or was just about to open, and there was Miami. So I really didn't have a lot of options so I stayed.

JP: What were the fringe benefits in the beginning?

BB: We had the TIAA-CREF, which is the teacher's insurance annuities association I guess. We had that ever since the school opened. There were problems with it; on occasional they did not pay the --

JP: Into CREF.

BB: Yeah. That was a major problem. I think was one of the SACS, The Southern Association accrediting agencies problems, but it was fixed. There were times, I think there's an urban legend around that we actually had checks bounce, and I don't recall that ever happening. The only thing we ever did get occasionally were little notes attached to the checks stating that we'd appreciate it if

you'd hold off on cashing this check for five days, which was not good for a family who had mortgage, but that's about as bad as it ever got, and I think it only happened maybe two or three times throughout the early 70s.

JP: Did you have health insurance?

BB: Yes. We have always had health insurance.

JP: So the benefits and the salary were pretty good.

BB: They were about what I was making in Connecticut when I came down here. Yeah, a little less salary, but the cost of living in those days was a little better down here.

JP: Now you had done your undergraduate at NYU?

BB: NYU, yeah.

JP: And then you had moved to Connecticut?

BB: Well I got my Master's at Palmar Graduate Institute of Information Library Science, which was in New York out on Long Island. And while I was there I had my first job, which was at the State University of New York Maritime College at Ft. Schuyler, New York. I was there for four years. Then I went to Connecticut State Library in Hartford for three years, and then the problems developed

with the family, and so I came down here in '70 I guess --  
'69-'70, something in there.

JP: Describe the campus in 1970.

BB: I think the word campus is somewhat generous. We had three buildings: The Parker Building, the Rosenthal Building, and the Horvitz Building. And everything --

JP: You mean the Mailman?

BB: Mailman-Hollywood, yeah. And the Parker and the Rosenthal. The Rosenthal was designed to be a student center, and I think it took 35 years for it to actually become a student center. The Parker Building was a physical science center. It had the kind of building load -- what they call loads -- that building -- if there was ever a bad hurricane here, that's the building to be in. That building won't budge. It's got science load, library load, everything. It can take almost anything. And the building that we're in, the Hollywood-Mailman Building was the executive building at that time. It had a small library. The president and his associates were all in this building. Each building, except the Rosenthal, had a small library, and ocean sciences out at Port Everglades, they had their own library, which was on a house boat, as was

everything else out there, the executive offices. It's amazing what you can put on a house boat if you want to.

JP: Well it must have been a bit daunting when you started out there was not a central library. There wasn't really a library facility. And as I understand, there was really no money from the central administration to buy books, and the only way that you could sort of get books if somebody in psychology had money to purchase books.

BB: Yeah, psychology was one of our really great supporters. They were consistent, which is why I think we ended up with a very good psychology collection. Ocean sciences took care of their own out there, and they just, sort of on the honor system, they just bought what the faculty really wanted. And the science was somewhat supported by the Leo Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research, which started just about the time I started, and Dr. Warren, who was the chairman of that department.

JP: And that was up on the third floor?

BB: Yeah, that was on the third floor of the Parker Building. He would contribute to the things that he wanted: Biological sciences, health sciences. So in effect, they took care of their own basically, but there

was no general fund, but there was no undergraduate -- I mean, there was nothing here. There were only, you know, we got 17 graduate students in 1967 or 8 and they were just beginning to graduate. There were no undergraduates or anything like that. At that point there really wasn't any need for it. Of course SACS had some things to say about that, but somehow we got through that first accreditation.

JP: Well, talk me through the evolution of the library here. When you started there technically is no University library per se. At what point did you get to where, either through the auspices of SACS or the University, that they decide, well we really need to do something to improve the library system.

BB: Yeah, mostly it was SACS. Dr. Fischler, in all honesty, never really supported the library as you would hope a president would. He tried to get away with as little as he could get. But we had our SACS people come down here, the SACS representative. I think he is from University of New Orleans actually. I still remember him. He said, "But what do you want?" He says, "I know what you need, I know what you're not probably going to get, but what do you want now?" And we gave him a laundry list of what we needed, and we got it.

JP: So you're talking about now basic reference books and that sort of thing.

BB: Yeah, a basic collection of some kind. Science education was here. Psychology really hadn't been born yet. I'm not sure what Frank said, but that came a little bit later. Frank didn't really start here until '78, but John Flynn, his predecessor, was a very good supporter of the library too for that whole department all through their existence, helped us a lot. Basically this was a psychology-type library because they are the ones that gave us most of the money.

JP: Well, yeah, Frank said from about '83-'84 on that the psychology commitment to the library was whatever he could afford, not always every year, but --

BB: But Dr. Flynn was very generous, too.

JP: In fact, the story that Frank said that was interesting to me is when they came to look at the accreditation for psychology, they went and looked at the library and they said, "This is a pretty good little library." They thought it was the psychology library. They didn't know it was the University library.

BB: We gave Frank a lot of credit for that because he, I mean, he literally saved us basically, even though it was overloaded with PhD psychology-type stuff, but that was our main department here basically. That was what we were supporting, and those are the people that used it.

JP: So how did it change over the years?

BB: It changed over the years in 1970-71 Nova, which was literally, I think literally bankrupt -- I think we could not have survived another month, formed a federation, a partnership with the New York Institute of Technology, which is located -- they have a campus in Manhattan up in New York City and they have a campus in Westbury in Nassau County on Long Island. And Dr. Alexander Schure, was the president of New York Institute of Technology. He literally saved the University, he and his -- I mean, whatever happened after that, nobody's going to deny that Dr. Schure saved us. And in doing so the bargain was that he could start using the Nova campus as an experimental sort of area of giving degrees at Nova and NYIT degrees undergraduate type stuff, and that's where it started.

JP: Liberal arts kind of programs and that sort of thing?

BB: Yeah, liberal arts, and then we developed into the off campus external degree program

JP: And there were some business courses as well?

BB: Yeah, they started. With that came an influx, not a big influx, but an influx of money that helped us build collections in areas that we hadn't done anything with. So that's how we started. Still Parker was still basically science. It remained that way for almost the nine years that they were there. This is the library in this building, which is on the second floor, that started to get filled up, and over the years they expanded, cut through literally, until we had almost the entire floor. It was clear at some point, that Parker started to expand, that we had to have a building. It was difficult in the 80s because there was no way we could foresee having that building.

JP: Was the library at that point, again, understanding that Nova is quite a different institution, it's an inverted pyramid, it's almost all graduate at this point. Was the library satisfactory for an institution?

BB: No, no. I don't think it's every satisfactory for an institution. I don't know how they did it with

SACS. As the years went on, of course, it became better, more equipment, more like a traditional library. But the first 20 years it was not satisfactory university library.

JP: If SACS did the accreditation process today, that kind of library wouldn't get accredited, would it?

BB: No.

JP: Would it have a chance?

BB: Wouldn't have a chance, certainly not until we went into the 80s, but even then.

JP: It was still a little problematic.

BB: Yes it was, but we also didn't have that many students. It was relatively small. We were able to use the library. We had contracts with different libraries in the area, Miami and things like that. So we made due as best we could and we got what we could get, but not today.

JP: And I already found out that a lot of business students, they use the Ft. Lauderdale Library, Downtown Library.

BB: Well, it could be. Yeah, a lot of them use Broward County. A lot of them used FAU.

JP: Yeah, whatever library they could find, yeah.

BB: Most of them would have let them in.

JP: Well my understanding is that Fischler had a sense that ultimately everything was going to be online, everything was going to be computerized, so that in the end you were going to be able to read it on these computers, and you didn't have to worry so much about the physical books in a physical building. Yeah, well that was -- his ideas were about 25 years too early. I mean he was talking that way in the 70s, and there was nothing in the 70s. I mean we didn't get our first DVD, which was books in print, and it was a celebration. We had the board members come in, and you could type somebody's name in and you could actually see what that person wrote and actually in print now. But it was totally ridiculous. You know, he kept saying that to people, and people would say, "Well it's not there. You can't do it yet. The technology is not there." 25 years, 30 years later, yeah. So then we get the building and now you can put most of that stuff on ten disks, and it's almost like you don't really need a building anymore for libraries, everything can be boiled down to disks, and tapes, and films and digitizing, and things of that nature.

JP: Had somebody said to Fischer at the time, said, "Well gee that's great for the future, but what about students who are paying tuition who don't have these libraries?"

BB: I don't think he ever had a serious answer to it. He would talk that way off the top of his head. We kept getting away with it basically. I mean, you know, why would he do it, why would he change? He didn't do anything in '72 when we had accreditation. Somehow, God knows how we got through that.

JP: Well, now how did the library staff evolve? When you started, in essence, you were the only one.

BB: I was the only one, yeah.

JP: And how, over a period of time, at least did the staffing of the library increase?

BB: Slowly, very slowly. I was doing everything: Cataloging, buying, library loans. You really learned your trade doing that. And then Harriet, who was my associate eventually, came. That is somewhat of a funny story. She doesn't like me to tell it, but, she was a mom of two children. She lived very close to the University. Her best friend was a law student. And we had just started our

law class, which was in the Parker Building, and the law school began there. That's where the law school began. Her girlfriend came down and said, "I have a friend who is looking for something." I did have something. I needed an assistant because I just lost somebody the week before. She says, "Well but she's really not interested in the library. She's really interested in upstairs in the science labs." Which was Dr. Warren's Leo Goodwin institute.

So Dr. Warren calls me and he says, "I have somebody here you might be interested in." I said, "Well what can she do?" So he says, "Well she really can't do anything. She's got a bachelor's degree in science." I said, "Can she type?" No. Can she do that? No. She had no secretarial or assistant skills. So then he whispers into the phone, he says, "but she's a great looker." She comes down, we talk, and she says I don't know. She goes home. I try to call her. She doesn't answer. But eventually she comes and she takes the job. She progresses along with me up the ladder. We start hiring slowly but surely professional people. Two years ago, I guess, I was the senior librarian until 1980. I was the Director of Libraries from 1980 to '97, and then Dr. Lewis, who was the

President of the University at the time, asked me to open up an archives. So I opened up the archives.

JP: This is '97?

BB: Yeah, I think it's '97. Dr. Don Riggs was hired. He and Sam Morrison who was the accountant.

JP: So Riggs was just the second director of the library?

BB: Yes. Well, actually I was the second because my boss, he didn't last too long.

JP: Well, but he didn't last too long.

BB: He went to Notre Dame actually and did pretty well. So, and then it got to the point, which I had always feared, that one day she would be signing my vacation form, and when Don Riggs got sick, Harriet became the Director, and I had to go, hat in hand, for her to sign my form. But I was happy, I am happy for her. You are always happy when somebody you trained gets to --.

So we just kept adding over the years, and the money kept getting a little better. Salaries were good. Budgets were a little better, and it progressed.

JP: Well, talk about the evolution of this rather unique situation between a private university and Broward County Public Library.

BB: I wasn't involved in that. I was the archivist at the time that Sam and Don got together. So I don't really know the exact details. I know that it's a unique situation and I know that it started out as a friendly partnership, and it has somewhat degenerated into a shouting match. I guess you could say they are reneging on their contract. I don't know what other word to use, but they are not living up to what they promised, and that's not totally their fault. I mean the tax base is eroded. They just don't have the money.

JP: Well, but it would not have been built had not the county paid 50%, right?

BB: That's right. The county paid. So many other things on this campus. We had the land, we've always had the land, but we never had the money to do anything with the land. The same thing happened with the medical school. The medical school had all the money in the world, but they had no place to go, and they couldn't stay in North Miami Beach. So they came up here. Same with the Miami Dolphins. The Dolphins were down at I think St. Thomas Aquinas. It

was like a high school locker room. These were the world champions in 1972 and '73 and they're training practically in a high school locker. Joe Robbie was very tight. He figured he got a championship down there, why not stay. So they were also looking for a home. This was the end of Don Shula's career more or less. I think he was here for just a year or two.

And so we had the land and they had the money. And so again, they put their facility up with their own money, and I think they pay us rent. And the medical school put their facility up with their own money. So that's sort of the way things were.

JP: And today, as I understand it, 60% of the users of Nova Broward County Library are residents of the county as opposed to students.

BB: Well, I don't know.

JP: That was a figure that I was given, so I'm not sure, but --

BB: Sounds like it might be a little high, but --

JP: End result is a large, or at least half of the people who use this library are not affiliated with the University. Would that be fair?

BB: Yes, that would be fair. And that is going to make for a very difficult situation if the county -- they are having a meeting this Friday to determine somewhat what the budget's going to be. Our concern is if -- they are talking another 25% cut. If that actually happens along with some other problems we're having at the University, we cannot keep the hours that we're keeping open.

JP: But up to this point the University has kept the hours and has not cut back on staff.

BB: That's correct. The University has not let one person go because of budgetary matters. They have not filled certain positions, but they have not let anybody go. Now that could change.

JP: Now, considering where you started and where you are today, what has this library building meant to you?

BB: Well, first thing is, I've got the best office in the building. When then-President Ferrero came over he looked at it, and he says, "I don't know how you got this, but this should be my office." And Frank is always claiming when I leave he's going to take my job and get that office.

JP: He said that yesterday.

BB: So, it was just luck I think. But you know, it was the first time since I left Connecticut that I actually was in a real library that was designed to be a library and has everything we need. So for the last ten years it's been super, great.

JP: And what do you foresee as the future of this library? You mentioned that technology has changed a little bit. This is a huge building I think, what the largest library in the State of Florida.

BB: It's about 350,000 square feet.

JP: Are you going to expand the books? Or are you going to expand --

BB: No, I don't see any way that's going to happen. I'm not sure you're aware of this, Julian, but the entire east side of the fourth floor is empty stacks covered by the wall so you can't see them. They are movable stacks. They were rather expensive. I don't think Lydia has any intention of ever filling them with books.

JP: So they might be used for other departments or other space?

BB: That could very well be. That could very well be. The President, well, now the Chancellor has had many

ideas. The entire fifth floor is empty. I mean we're using it for storage. We're using it for the museum-type stuff that when we became affiliated with the museum that stuff was transferred there. So that's a whole floor up there. And the circulation figures, the actual borrowing of books is basically going down. Everybody knows that. And other things are going up. A lot of tapes, a lot of movies. The archives is digitizing, and we will, within a couple of years, have everything in the archives digitized. We have about 80-90-100,000 presidential papers alone which take up a couple of hundred boxes on the shelves, that will all be digitized, all available online, indexing. The Board's minutes: We have the Board minutes going back to 1964-65. That's already been done. So you can now actually search, if you find somebody's name or you find a question, the Chancellor or the President has a question about somebody, you can search by that person's name or some incident that distinguishes it from something else. It's clear.

So the building probably will be used for things that are other than -- I mean, who the hell can read newspapers anymore? We're cancelling -- I shouldn't say we -- they, they are cancelling that kind of stuff. It's not used. People don't use it anymore.

JP: Well, go back and talk a little bit about the University when you first came. And one of the early developments that you've written about was the sinking of the vessel, The Gulf Stream, which was part of the oceanographic center.

BB: If I could I'd like to go back a little further than that. This land, I think it's over 500 acres, I think, was owned by the Forman family. This was a family who settled here early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. God knows what it must have been like here without anything. There were no nothing, fans. There's a picture of Mrs. Forman with an alligator on her shoulder and a shotgun in her left hand. So they owned -- he was bright enough to buy land. So they bought the land. And then World War II was just started. It must have been '42 when they actually approached them. And the government said, you know we need a training field to train pilots. They were flying these Avengers off of the aircraft carriers. And they had the Naval air station, which is out of Ft. Lauderdale Airport. That's where it was at the time. And so they did. They built an air field here. The new people don't know that. But in the early days if you flew over the Nova campus, you could see the runways. You can still see a little of them over the

University of Florida area. It was trained. There was a spoke. There were runways going all different ways because of the wind. They wanted to be able to always be able to practice flying into the wind when they landed on aircraft carriers. So they designed it that way.

Now, one of the really interesting things is that President George H.W. Bush, the first President Bush, actually trained here. He was a Navy Pilot in World War II, and this was one of the areas he trained on. Mrs. Barbara Bush, who was his wife, was speaking at Nova a number of, maybe a year or two ago, in my naiveté I thought that I could get to her. I wanted to know if they were engaged when he was flying here. I wanted to know if she remembered writing him letters from this area. I don't know what they would have called it then, I guess Ft. Lauderdale or something. But I couldn't get within 50 feet of her. The Secret Service just pushed me away. It was my own fault. I should have written her first, but I didn't. So that's one of the more interesting stories that not many people know about.

The Gulf Stream is a real mystery. This was a boat, which was about 50 feet long, had two engines, I think 400 horse power or something like that. And it used to go up

to the coast of Maine. They had Bigelow Labs up there. One of our former professors was the director of the lab. They would go up occasionally in the winter, and they would do buoy work and current, measuring currents. We even had our own little plane. They had done this before, many times before. And these guys were trained seamen. Dr. Richardson was the Director and Dean of the Ocean Science Institute. He was a Navy flyer. He was a fighter pilot in World War II. He had been at Woods Hole, Cape Cod, and University of Miami. He had been involved in sea and air his whole life. These were not amateurs. And every guy on that boat was a professional of some kind or another having to do with the sea, with boats, with maintenance, with experiments, whatever.

They set out on June, January -- now this is a Florida crew and a Florida boat up in freezing cold of Maine. They set out from Booth Bay June 4<sup>th</sup> I guess or 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>. And there's all kinds of rumors as to who saw them, when they actually left. But the bottom line is that there was some SOS to the Coast Guard. It was cut short. They heard something else. There was a baby sitter at the professor's house, who Dr. Richardson was supposed to call, and she didn't pick the phone up for whatever reason. All of these

odd things happened, and they lost contact with the boat. They left, the weather was good and the weather was projected to be good for at least four days. Their trip should only have taken two. They should have been back and overnight practically, but they didn't. They never came back.

You know, one of the reasons that it was so difficult for us was because the campus was so small at the time, that we all knew these guys and we knew Dr. Richardson. He'd have a Friday afternoon beer party every Friday out at the beach. It was very much more intimate. If something like that happened today it would be terrible, but half of the people wouldn't even know who he was.

So the boat was lost. It has never been found to this day. In the early years many of his friends and associates would try to find it. They were all seaman. The oceanographers couldn't find it. Sometimes they thought they had it. The only thing that ever was turned up was one body and the life preserver, which I have in my office beat to hell. I mean just -- you can't believe what it looks like. So the theories --

JP: But that would have been to other storms afterwards perhaps, but there was no storm per se that would have destroyed their boat.

BB: No, there was bad weather. It was bad weather. I have had some experience with bad weather. When I was at the State University in New York, the Maritime College, we had a training vessel, which was used as a World War II transporter back and forth between England and the United States. 12,000-ton ship with 70-foot beam, 17,000 horse power engines. This was a heavy-duty boat. One of the things when you're training Navy, either cadets or anybody that's going to go to sea, if you want to try to give them some experience in bad weather, not horrible weather, but you know what your boat can do, and you pretty well know what it can take, but you want to make sure that the kids understand what bad weather.

Now they measure storms and weather by the Beaufort Scale with one being a drizzle or something; 12 being a hurricane. I would say we probably went out in maybe 4, 5's, maybe 6's, and it's not something you forget if you've ever been on a boat in bad weather. It is absolutely horrifying. And I was only a librarian. I mean I wasn't involved with this. I was just servicing the kids when

they wanted to read. It was just a perk they threw to us. It was terrible. And I can't imagine what would have happened with a 48-foot boat with two, 400 horse power engines.

JP: So was the weather the equivalent of say a 5 or 6 when they went down?

BB: Probably, yeah. It was stormy weather.

JP: So a rogue wave could have flipped them?

BB: Yes. Could have flipped them.

JP: Is that what the general consensus is?

BB: Dr. Yench at Bigelow, no. That's what Dr. Fischler always felt, that it was flipped. They put the heavy buoys on the back of the boat, which was not sometimes the safest practice, certainly not when you're in bad weather. They usually drag them. For some reason the people that saw them said that they had them on the boat, but that was before the bad weather was supposed to hit. Dr. Yench's theory was that it was actually hit by a supertanker, which -- those were the lanes that they were using. The only way you can ever tell if a super tanker ever hits anything is that the prop is damaged. Otherwise they would not even have known.

JP: Wouldn't have even been a bump?

BB: No. Would not even have known they hit them. The mystery has never been solved. One of the families hired a psychic. This is just an interesting side line. His name was Dykshoorn, and he was somewhat of a man about town in New York at the time. He wrote a couple of books, and his business card said, my passport says clairvoyant. And so he really wasn't all that interested in it because they pestered him. They pestered him. Finally he said, all right. Let me have a chart. He has a chart. He goes through whatever he goes through. He takes a needle pops it into the chart X number of miles off Massachusetts off Cape Cod. At the same time the Woods Hole people -- Woods Hole is an oceanographic institute in Massachusetts on Cape Cod. Our president asked them to just give us some feeling of what the currents and the wind and everything -- where do you think they might have, knowing where they started from and where they were going, where do you think they might have went? And it's unbelievable, but believe it or not it was on the map like this quarter of an inch where the psychic put the needle and it's where Woods Hole put the needle.

JP: And there was one theory that this was all a hoax and they were all in Mexico or Hawaii or somewhere.

BB: Yeah, one of the theories was -- well, Dr. Richardson was having marital problems, which came out later. I don't know if that meant anything or not. But somebody said that they saw them in Marseille sipping wine. You know, stuff like that, which was -- but the kids here immediately assumed this was a Bermuda Triangle event. The fact that Maine is not in the Bermuda Triangle meant nothing to them. This was obviously a psychic, something happened to these guys.

I don't know if you're familiar with the Lost Patrol story. The Lost Patrol was a patrol of avengers that flew out of this area, and I'm not sure if it was either here or Ft. Lauderdale -- out straight out into the Atlantic. It was the end of the war. They were just practicing about 1945, and they never came back. They sent out a search plane. The search plane never came back. And the movie, Close Encounters of the Third Kind -- I don't know if you've ever seen that or not, but at the end of the movie the alien craft comes down, and these people start getting off, and there's the crew of the avengers of the lost patrol. But the Bermuda Triangle clearly was a little

north of where it should have been. But nothing was ever found. I mean, they actually never did find anything. If it wasn't for the body and the life preserver it would really be a real mystery, but since we do have that evidence, clearly something -- they were lost.

JP: Also, in the Oceanographic Institute, the center, I understand that Steve McQueen was going to make a movie.

BB: Yeah. Steve McQueen came down here around 1972 I guess, and he wanted us to build him four submersibles with a lot of glass. He was going to make a movie down here with that. We have pictures of him with Dr. Richardson. I even have McQueen's drawings of what the submersibles were going to look like and his ideas and the engines and stuff like that. And I think they might have started, but once Dr. Richardson was lost, that was the end of that. The impact of Dr. Richardson's loss on the University was devastating because he was a very grantable professor. I mean, he was from Harvard, he knew everybody, he was getting all kinds of money to support himself and I don't know, what, 20 percent, whatever, a kickoff for the university. All of a sudden, half the ocean sciences department, along with the boat, is now gone. And the insurance company, we had to go to court. The insurance

company wasn't going to pay for a Florida, Fort Lauderdale boat up in 20 degree below zero in Maine in the middle of the winter. What's going on? But they did, put it that way. The navy had a board of inquiry about it, and they came to the conclusion that there was no malfeasance, nothing was done wrong, but I'm not sure you know any oceanographers, but they have this devil-may-care attitude, the ones that I've known over here anyway, and they weren't always precise in certain regulations as they should have been. That's the only thing they criticized them for, but there was no fault so the insurance company had to pay.

JP: So they probably weren't wearing life vests or anything.

BB: They were probably having a few beers. But the whole story is bizarre because people claim they saw them come back. It's never going to be solved unless something, hurricane drags it up or something.

JP: There's also story about Johnny Carson was involved?

BB: Yeah. Johnny Carson came down. His sons, he had three -- well, this was a long, long time ago. This was also in the early 70s. Dr. Richardson drew a lot of people

to Nova, which was another great thing about him. He had this personality and he mingled in this crowd. And Johnny Carson came down, his sons were interested in ocean sciences, oceanography, and they were in their teens at the time, I guess. And he was here for a couple days and then he left. He wasn't planning on anything. He just wanted to visit with Dr. Richardson and the boys wanted to see it. So we have pictures of that. So that was interesting.

JP: Have you kept up with the Oceanography Center since that time?

BB: Well, I did when I was in the library because I was technically the head, the director of that library. It was always underfunded because they could get away with that. It was basically a professor's library. In those days there weren't that many students. Now they have coastal zone students and coral reef programs, but in the early days there were guys and gals who were getting their grants and they were doing their thing. They had a couple of graduate students with them. So the library was not really what you would think of as a library. It was like an honor system where they just bought what they wanted, they give us the accrediting needs we had, they put it in a building, and they were catalogued and everything, part of

our collection. But in practicality, it wasn't for the students; it was professional journals and stuff like that. So it remained pretty small. And after Dr. Richardson left or died, it was even worse because then they really had no money. So it just sort of founded out there for years.

JP: So they would have struggled quite a bit in the 70s and 80s, but recently they've got this new \$15 million federal grant so it looks like they're going to be able to build a new building, expand. The future looks a lot more promising to them now than it did ten years ago maybe.

BB: Or even now, I think they're grant-generated, making their own money basically. I don't know how much the university gives them. This was a matching grant, from what I've heard.

JP: Yeah. It is.

BB: The University had put up the 15 million or 7, whatever the heck it was. Yeah, that will be quite an improvement from the plan. So it looks great.

JP: When you came first to Fort Lauderdale, and let's just take maybe from '70 to '85, what did the local people know about Nova? What did they think about Nova?

BB: They didn't know anything about Nova. In fact, to this day, I was talking with a woman who is relatively into the Fort Lauderdale scene, I was taking a class with her, and she didn't know that Nova had a -- she didn't even know much about Nova, but she surely didn't know Nova had a public library in the building. And she's a well-rounded person. I'm mean, she's into arts and -- but the 70s no, no, no.

JP: Didn't even know it existed.

BB: No. We used to have, believe it or not, Ku Klux Klan parades down Davie Road, which is the main road up beyond the university, Nova High School area. The Klan was actually marching.

JP: This is in the 60s and 70s?

BB: This was in the 70s, maybe even in the early 80s. My kids were going to school on that corner there, and I'd see these guys in these -- I thought they were making a movie.

JP: Well, Davie was still pretty rural at that point, was it not?

BB: Yes. Davie was settled -- the first name of Davie was Zona, and it was settled by the people who built

the Panama Canal. That's how long ago that -- and they settled this area and they called it Zona, and then at some point they changed the name to Davie, I'm not quite sure why.

JP: Well, in the early days, the general consensus around the country was that Nova was a diploma mill and that the only thing they had were these clusters, off-campus distance learning. How has that attitude changed over the years? And how have the local people increased their knowledge about what actually goes on on this campus?

BB: I don't know about the local people. Everybody that I know of course knows about Nova because --. The New York Institute, when the federation was formed, was encouraging. They themselves were starting these external degree programs, which took us to all different states. I remember North Carolina was very upset. They felt that we were intruding into their -- well, we were intruding into their states and we were taking students who found it more convenient. We were accredited now, to take these kinds of courses which fit their time schedules, weekends. We would send professors, fly out to these places. In the early days, many of them didn't get paid for long, long time. But anyway, finally they brought suit against us. I

particularly remember North Carolina, I'm not sure why, and I know the Cincinnati Enquirer, which was a newspaper, actually had an editorial calling us a diploma mill without even having any courses, we just gave people out diplomas. And we sued for libel and we won. So at least that put an end to that. These kinds of things did not help the library though, because in effect we were using University of North Carolina -- we would sign a contract with maybe UNC or somebody to get these students privileges, and we pay for it, and they would have the privileges and they would go to school and get the degrees from us. New York Institute did not encourage this, and then we picked it up. They were very, very successful. We lived off of those programs until the undergraduates started coming, the graduate school became more normal, we got our first professional law school in '74 I think, they started graduating, they became members of the bar, they became attorneys and judges. So with that, once you get that initial public professional school in your system, you start attracting better students.

JP: Also attracting local students. I mean, prior to that time, any activity of any consequence was not in

Davie; it was elsewhere. So there wasn't a lot going on on the physical campus.

BB: We had no facilities. It's hard to realize how much Mr. Ferrero has actually done. I divide the history of the school into three separate areas. The early areas from 1964 to 1970, it even had a different name. It was Nova University of Advanced Technology. That's what the school was called. NYIT came on board just about that time. They changed the name to Nova University Incorporated. That lasted until Southeastern University, which is the medical school, came aboard, but it also sort of coincided with when New York Institute left.

JP: So that relationship ended in 1985.

BB: Yeah, it ended in 1985.

JP: Then '85 to the present is then -- at this point the school somewhat stabilized until the growth period is sort of '85 to the present, stage three as it were.

BB: Yeah. Dr. Fischler was 22 years president. He was up to the early 90s, but he still -- he was the right man for the right job. But I personally think he lasted -- he stayed too long because he couldn't get -- he didn't have that vision. He had lived too long trying to get a

buck here and there. We hired Dr. Feldman, who was somebody from -- president from Western Connecticut University, and he left under a cloud two years, they let him go. Dr. Lewis, who was certainly the brightest -- he's practiced before the Supreme Court. He was he law school dean, he got promoted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and then they got themselves into a bind because Feldman was gone. Everybody knew that Ferrero was going to be president, but he had a law practice and couldn't get rid of it overnight, so Dr. Lewis stepped in for two or three years and there were some problems with that. There was a contract dispute when Dr. Lewis left somewhat under a cloud. And once Mr. Ferrero became president, which the history of the school was not long ago, you wouldn't believe -- how he did it I don't even want to know, but I mean, this place just quadrupled in size. When Dr. Feldman was president -- Dr. Lewis, the only building they had was the administrative building basically. They had maybe one or two -- Dr. Siegel put her own buildings up because she had the money and she had a free hand to do it, we had the land, but nothing like what Mr. Ferrero did. I mean, it was just like night and day what's happened to this campus in the last 10-15 years.

JP: And one of the things Feldman did or started to do was put in some landscaping because this really didn't even look like a university campus.

BB: Yes, he did. Unfortunately --

JP: The hurricane took them out, but --

BB: -- Hurricane Andrew blew through soon after they were put in and they all -- I don't think we lost them, but they all went down, just tumbled down. But that's true.

JP: But the idea was important because students who come to a university campus want it to look like a campus, want it to look nice, they want to see buildings. They don't want to come to some airfield. And this is part of I think Ferrero's sense of the vision of the future. If we're going a first rate university, we've got to have a first rate physical plan because at one time there was really no --

BB: There was nothing. We had to rent a gym in a church when we had basketball games it was -- we didn't have our own gym.

JP: Well, they didn't even have a central heating facility or cooling facility. I mean, it was sort of -- understandably with Fischler, you sort of did what you

could to stay afloat and you couldn't get too far ahead because you were trying to keep the doors open. But once he got to the point where he felt the school was at least in the black, stabilized, then he could see what they could do, what the potential was.

BB: Yeah. Well, there was a situation, which has become known as the Goodwin Trust, and this was a -- Leo Goodwin, Sr., he started the GEICO insurance company, Government Employees Insurance Company. And this was in the early 70s, and he made his will out and he left X percentage of that will to Nova University. He died relatively close to that will being made out. His son, Leo Goodwin, Jr., was somewhat of an odd ball. He died not that long after his dad, and the grandson committed suicide. So here's this trust laying there now, and the trust had said that Nova University was going to receive X millions of dollars in stocks, and there were to other participants that had a smaller part of it. And the lawyer for the estate, Alfonso Della Donna, refused to give us the money, claiming that at that point in our history New York Institute of Technology in fact owned Nova, and that it was not a Broward County facility, it was a New York State facility. Well, this dragged on and it was a bitter,

bitter fight. Eventually Nova won. I think by the time everybody got finished it was like \$13 million, which was a lot less than what they thought. Della Donna was eventually disbarred for causing havoc in the University, and years later he was disbarred. Dr. Fischler brought us all into the auditorium, this was in 1979 or something like that, and banged his hand, the gavel, "This University will never be short of money again." This was \$14 million that we had. Within two years --

JP: Well, but that was an important 14 million, yeah.

BB: Within two years it was gone for bills and all kinds of stuff.

JP: But it was critical to get the law school accredited.

BB: Yes, it was. Law school demanded it basically.

JP: Yes.

BB: They demanded an endowment. We had to have some money. Law school in the meantime had moved from the campus to off-campus, what we call the east campus now, which is about 10 miles east of us, on 84 near US-1, and they took over an old union hall, which was certainly not adequate for what we needed, but they gutted the whole

thing and they rebuilt the library and was there for many years, many years it was there, until they could get the stuff together to put on campus. So now we have everything.

JP: So the real key are the new buildings, the library, the new law school, the DeSantis building, the Business Administration --

BB: Psychology building.

JP: -- the Horvitz Building Administration, and the Student Center.

BB: Right. And Frank DePiano who was the dean of the psychology school --

JP: Maltz Building.

BB: The Maltz building, right, which is another interesting story. Dr. Maltz was a plastic surgeon of some repute, and he had all kinds of new -- he invented actually new techniques in plastic surgery, and he operated on Salvador Dali's wife in the 30s, the late 30s, and they became very close, very close friends. We ended up with I think -- Mrs. Maltz, Dr. Maltz died in the 70s, Mrs. Maltz had the money and Dr. DePiano and Dr. Barone wined and dined her and they did a good job and eventually we got the

money to put up the Maltz Building, which is the what the psychology building is now occupying, and we ended up with seven Dalis, which have been treated rather shabbily, I must say, but they're around. I know Frank DePiano has one in his office; the chancellor has one in his office. They just hang in there. They're estimate to be worth 70,000-80,000, and they just hang in there. I mean, and the janitor could come in, I don't know what you could do with it, it's pretty hot, but anyway, we do have these Dalis that were appraised a few hundred thousand dollars many years ago, so I imagine they might be worth more than that now. But that's another interesting sidelight of the history of Nova.

JP: So when you look at now the physical campus you see some of the problems that occur in other campuses suddenly traffic, suddenly there are parking problems, you have a new parking garage, you have a shuttle system, but there's still is issue of people getting to this campus because it's still pretty much a commuter campus, is it not?

BB: Yes. I would say that it is. We have a lot of dormitories. We've put up a number of dormitories. Actually, one of those dormitories was put up for the -- we

hosted the South American soccer teams' -- I guess they had regional playoffs. I don't know much about soccer, but the South American teams came here and we actually -- the federation or somebody help us put a building, so we housed the South American soccer team here for a summer or two while they tried to proceed up the ladder of victories. I don't know how they work soccer.

JP: Well, is there some -- it seemed to me one of the future goals would have to be some sort of public transportation or light rail or something that would connect the campus to downtown or Miami, and there doesn't seem to be any movement in that direction.

BB: No. I don't anything like that. The only thing I know about is the public bus system, which runs along University. It doesn't even come into the campus.

JP: It's not very good, is it?

BB: No, no.

JP: How important was the Miami Dolphins facility?

BB: Well, it made us the only college in the United States with a professional team representing us. It's been great PR. The original deal was -- originally, the first number of years every time the Miami Dolphins were

mentioned in the news, they had to put in "on the campus of Nova Southeastern University." I think that stopped at some point because I don't see it anymore. But it was great publicity for the University. It still is, I think. I mean, we're coming into July; they're going to be starting their preseason practices. There's a bubble out there now, which is indoor air-conditioned. That wasn't there all that time. They used to just have stands out here and it would be like 120 degrees, the players would be dropping, the fans would be dropping, but they were filled. Every time the Dolphins came out the practice, they were filled up. We did a project with them actually. We interviewed -- we did an oral history with Tim Robbie, who was Joe Robbie's son, and we thought we could get something going with the Dolphins, but Shula left and they had a bunch of coaches. It just wasn't very stable over there for a while and we never got back with them.

JP: What has been the difference between working at a private non-for-profit university and a public university? What are the advantages and disadvantages?"

BB: I don't know, Julian. I don't really find any difference. When I was at State University of New York, SUNY is a public New York system, I worked at the State in

Connecticut. I don't think at the library level there is much difference. I mean, we got all the benefits that the professors got. There was no tenure. New York did have tenure; we did not get tenure. Our librarian didn't want tenure. The only people who have tenure on our campus here at Nova Southeastern is the law school because the ABA demands it. The medical school does not have tenure. But as a working librarian or as an archivist, I don't see any difference. Salaries are the same, the benefits are the same.

JP: In the future, there has been a lot of talk here about expanding the undergraduate population, getting more students, getting more -- better students, getting a broader curriculum. Do you see that as the logical future for Nova? In other words, the professional schools have been pretty well-established.

BB: I think so. Unless I'm mistaken, I think the medical school still has a rule whereby a student who comes to Nova as an undergraduate, after three years of maintaining whatever their average was, would automatically be accepted into the medical school. Now that's a pretty good carrot to have out there. I mean, if these kids can perform as an undergraduate and after that third year they

know that they're going to go to medical school, I mean, that's not a -- traditionally it's an osteopathic school, although I think those lines have blurred a lot lately. I don't think there's that much difference any more.

JP: Is this one of the issues for the University? It started out very innovative, very experimental. Then you get the law school, which is pretty traditional, and you got psychology, that has to be pretty traditional.

BB: I think they're all going back to the original --

JP: It's moving more toward the traditional standard and away from what the original concept was.

BB: I think so. The school started as a PhD -- school of the PhDs, and it over the years has worked its way down to the masters and the bachelors, and now I think the proportion is much better.

JP: So, as I was talking to Frank DePiano, he said at some point it may be a good balance to have 50/50, maybe ultimately keep the graduate program as they are today, but build up the undergraduate so you really would come closer to approximating what maybe a traditional campus --

BB: Yeah. It would seem -- and the interesting point about that is those 17 students, the original 17 PhD

students that came here, half of them were in physics and physical chemistry and the other were in science education, the humanities, that kind of stuff. And there was an internal battle between the humanities people and the physicists, who later turned out were like 20 years behind the times, they were still doing crystal work and they never really progressed. The fact that nobody knew that was rather bizarre in itself. So Dr. Fischler, the Dean, said, "Look, either he goes or I go." He said, "We can't maintain giving these people money." So we had like eight physics PhD students here who now had no school, so we had to pay for each one of those students' entire PhD education, wherever the heck they ended up, out in California, anywhere. One of the prices you pay when you don't do your research I guess.

JP: When you look back on your time here, what would be the most positive or rewarding experience?

BB: I think probably just my ability to stay the course and to fight for the early years. Now they're still fighting, but now you're talking about millions. Dr. Fischler, when he was president, had a secretary, this is a little bit off center, and she would have her desk in front of his door and you couldn't get into him without going

through her. There was no way of -- I was a young guy, I was in my 20s, and she was very intimidating. And I'd go into the office and she'd say, "Well what do you want? What do you want?" And I'd say, "I want Dr. Fischler to sign this request. It's for our journals." We have to have journals. They were 8,000 bucks at the time. She says, "He's too busy now. Come back later. He hasn't got time for that now." After doing this a few times, I figured this is not going to work. So I used to wait outside the office until he came out to go to the men's room and have him sign -- he would sign it. He wasn't a problem about signing it. She wouldn't let me in. So we had more books bought in the men's room signed.

JP: Well, I guess if you look at it in your career and where the library is today, I mean, there's been a lot of progress any way you look at it. So that's got to be satisfying for you.

BB: It does. It was so amateurish the way we had to do things. I mean, we had to move -- we literally had to move the library by ourselves. They wouldn't hire a company. We had to push trucks from here to the Parker Building when we moved there, and then we had to come back

here. And there were no sidewalks and it was bumpy. It was just so humiliating.

JP: And you may have just answered my next question. What was the next negative or disappointing experience?

BB: I think when we had to do that.

JP: That was pretty much under the guise of --

BB: Comedy.

JP: -- a union person instead of the librarian, right?

BB: It was -- one thing that happened once was -- this is also rather bizarre. We had moved most of the collection, the journals and everything, over to this building. We expanded the third floor to encompass almost the entire floor with the library. And I don't know why I thought of this or what brought this into my mind, but I was just sitting there with Harriet one day talking and I said, "I don't think this building has library load on the third floor. It was never built for this." I didn't know, but I didn't think it was. I ran down to Dr. Lewis, the president at the time -- no, he was vice president at the time, and I said, "You know, we've expanded the wings of this building and I don't think this has library load." So

he calls our physical plan, they go through the blue prints. It didn't have physical library load. So we had to move the stuff back to the Parker Building. I mean, that literally could have collapsed the entire building. This stuff weighs a ton.

JP: Yeah. People would certainly have been killed, I mean, with all of that weight.

BB: We've had a couple of killings here. We had a murder, which was really tragic. It was one of our faculty's sons was in a halfway house. I guess we used to call them juvenile delinquents. I don't know what they call them now. But he was on campus, he was on the University's campus and he killed a young person that was walking by. But this was the faculty member's son who did this. We had a tragedy right outside this building when they were digging holes, they were putting in mounds of dirt and they weren't fence, it wasn't fence. And I even told Dr. Fischler, I said, "Abe, you better do something out there. We got kids." "Ah, don't worry about it." Well, little girl got buried alive in that mountain. To this day I feel I should have done more, but what the heck could I do? So that's another bad thing.

JP: What would be some of the more memorable events you can recall, either speakers, Desmond Tutu, Dalai Lama, Shirley Chisholm or hurricanes or whatever?

BB: We had Dr. Goldstein, Stephen Goldstein, who was a vice president here at the time, started a breakfast, a Nova Breakfast we would call it, and we would bring speakers from all over the country. And they were high-powered, so it was not just -- it was really -- secretaries of state, first-rate actors/actresses, opera singers, and they were interesting. We could go to that.

JP: Jimmy Carter came at one point.

BB: Actually, John Anderson, who ran for president at some point, I don't remember what year it was.

JP: 1980.

BB: 1980 -- is on our faculty. I think he's an adjunct at the law school. So this other stuff happened much later, you know, the Dalai Lama, that's real recent history. Was not much going on here in the early days. One of my staff, this is another story, she came in from New York for an interview and the cab drove her up and she said she got out and started crying. She couldn't believe

what she was seeing, that this was a campus. Three buildings.

JP: Somebody I talked to the other day said he came from the airport and gave the address of Nova and they said they didn't know where it is, never heard of. And they had to call dispatch and said, "Well it must be around this area."

BB: The first 25 years were --

JP: Were tough.

BB: Yeah. There was just nothing.

JP: But once you've gotten, again, over certain thresholds, now --

BB: Yeah. Once we got out of the clutches of New York Institute, which did save our lives, no question about it, but in the end, it didn't turn out well in the end for whatever reason. But once they left, that income that was constantly being syphoned off to pay them was put back, and then that's when we really started to grow.

JP: Was there anything else that we haven't covered, Bob that you'd like to talk about?

BB: No. I think the history is good. I think each president we've had has had his -- I think we've been very lucky actually. The presidents we've had, I think that they each -- some of them might have stayed too long, but each one's personality was fixed and matched to the needs of the school. Dr. Fischler was that way, Feldman didn't last long enough to know really, but basically I guess the long one, it was Fischler and Ferrero. And Fischler was a good person for the early days; and Ferrero, nobody figured that -- we knew he was a lawyer, he was strong on the board, but he wasn't an academic. He was an ex-Marine, captain of the Marine Corps and a lawyer. That's a deadly combination - Marines and a lawyer.

JP: But in a way, isn't that what Nova is good about? It's an entrepreneurial institution, and Ray Ferrero as CEO.

BB: Yeah. Once Ray came on board, he could bring people like Huizenga, Wayne Huizenga onboard, he could bring people with money on board, and that just --

JP: Plus Ferrero had not only a series of goals, but he had a way of getting that accomplished. I mean, he's not the kind of person who sits back and says, "Well, I

hope somebody will come up with the money." He goes out and actively pursues these goals.

BB: Yes, he does. He's a very strong personality, what he wants is what he wants and usually gets it. I think he's got pretty much control all he did of the board. They seem to go along with what he wants, and so far, as far as we're concerned, the people that work here, without knowing the politics of what's actually going on, it's been a godsend for the school.

JP: And if we look into the status economically, there had been some economies, but by large, this school hadn't laid off a lot of people, they haven't cut back.

BB: No. Not yet.

JP: Not yet. And comparatively speaking, this school is a lot better off right now financially than many other institutions in the State of Florida. So some of that, you have to give some credit to the administration for making sure that the place is financially stable.

BB: Absolutely. And we're hoping that Dr. Hanbury, we all know, and he's a different personality from Ray, but Ray has done what he wanted to do, the buildings are now, here, the programs have reached the point where they are

self-sustaining, most of them, and now Dr. Hanbury will exert his personality on the university, and hopefully successfully.

JP: Anything else we need to talk about?

BB: No. That's fine. Great.

JP: Okay. Well on that note we'll end this conversation. Thank you, Bob.

[End]