

## CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

### Adrian "Bink" Beamer

#### (Transcription of Tape 1, Side 1)

Q: [Tape begins in mid-sentence. The interviewer's name isn't given.] '96, and the living history committee is interviewing Adrian "Bink" Beamer who is Professor Emeritus from Central, having served from 1957 to 1983 in various roles. And we're going to ask Bink some questions. Would you first, Bink, give us some background about yourself, where you were born, etc., up to the time you got to Central?

BB: Okay. I was born in Claire, Oklahoma, 1923, and started school there. And my mother moved us to Colorado in – I think I went through the fifth grade – sixth grade there. And then we moved to Cashmere, Washington in 1936, and I went through school in Cashmere. Graduated in 1942 from Cashmere High School, and then I entered Eastern Washington University, where – then was Eastern Washington College of Education – and that was the fall of 1942, and I went there on a football scholarship and participated in football, and played a little basketball, and then went into the service in April of 1943, so I only completed two quarters at Eastern Washington before going into the service.

And during the time I was in the service I was basically most of the time a physical training – and was in physical training, well, basically I guess in the service almost three years. Spent all the time there in Utah. And we were connected to a large hospital, and we did an awful lot of work with the medical field in physical training and – physical reconditioning was basically what I ended up doing in the military service. And we pioneered a lot of physical reconditioning in the areas of getting soldiers and – you know – back into duty, if they were able to go back in reconditioning. Getting them out of the hospital in less time than they were used to be, and getting them up, and getting them going, and that type of thing so that they weren't lying in bed, and – you know – for weeks at a time. Ones that had had prosthesis and equipment like this, then we had to get them stronger, and able to wear prosthesis and get back. And those who were able to get back into duty, then we had to get them into condition and send them back into duty, too, so it was a fairly new field at the time. In fact, we kind of pioneered that field, and we did a lot of work in this type of thing where – well, it's not real [inaudible] to get somebody – you know – had the – operated on their leg, and take their leg off one day, and we started on them the next day, and reconditioned them in bed, and take from the bed to the full program until they were out and ready to go back to duty, or go home. So we did a lot of work there, and I spent the last few months that I was in the service in – and – for a guy that was also new, working with the patients that were mentally disturbed and mental disorders, and – did a lot of work in the – trying to do some things with that type of injuries of – of – things like that, that hadn't been worked on before. So it was an interesting job.

But anyway, I left the service – when I got out of the service I went back to Eastern Washington University in 1946, and played football, basketball, track, 1946, 1947, graduated in the spring of 1948. And I went from Eastern Washington to Central Kitsap High School over at Silverdale, Washington. Pretty large high school. I was head football coach, and head track coach, and basketball. And spent nine years – almost ten years, I guess, at Central Kitsap High School. And from there, my next move was to Central Washington College of Education in the fall of 1957. I only had – I had two jobs, and one was Central Kitsap High School for ten years, and Central Washington University.

Q: And you came at what rank, and what role?

BB: I came as assistant professor in 1957. Assistant football and head track coach. And later took over and did some other things, but I was hired as the assistant football coach and head track coach.

Q: To get us a historical frame of reference, do you remember the approximate salary you came?

BB: Uh – yeah. I would guess I'd be fairly close -- \$8000 a year. But I think, as I remember, I took a little cut to come here. You wouldn't think so, coming out of a high school, but – to a state college, but I think I did, as I remember.

Q: Who were some of the main people that hired you?

BB: Well, Dr. McConnell was the main guy, and Leo Nicholson, and Abe Poffenroth were the three responsible, I guess, for –

Q: Tell us something about the other roles which you played here. You were full-time football coach, and –

BB: Yeah – I did. I coached – I was assistant football coach to Abe Poffenroth during the 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, and then Abe became the department chairman and I took over as the head football coach in the fall of 1961, and continued to be the head track coach. So I coached 1961, 1962, and then Leo retired, and I was given the job as Athletic Director in the spring of 1963, and had to give up – we had a rule then in the department that if you go into – the Athletic Director couldn't coach. So I gave up all coaching and became the athletic director, 1963.

Q: During this time did you have some classroom teaching in addition to that?

BB: Oh yes. We had – we had a certain amount of time that was allotted to coaching, you know, and so much then – you know, like half time, or three-quarter time, and the rest of it we did teaching like other faculty members. Well, we were part faculty, and –

Q: What were some of the classes that you enjoyed teaching?

BB: Well, I taught – uh – years – well, I taught a little bit of everything. I had first aide, I taught athletic training, uh, activities, boxing, tennis, uh – all of the normal physical activities, I guess, and taught administration classes, and – basically that's what I doing most of my teaching in.

Q: What schools did you get degrees from? You mentioned your bachelor's from Eastern.

BB: Aahh – I got a – I had a bachelor's and my master's from Eastern Washington University, both of them.

Q: What problems do you recall that you would class as significant during your tenure here – campus-wide or athletic department, or whatever you –

BB: What problems in classes?

Q: Yeah, what type – what kind of problems did you see around our Uni – college then – having – campus-wide, or athletic department, or – do any stand out?

BB: Well I think – I think, you know, every department has their problems – you know – they're not unique to one problem. They all have problems. There was – basically as I look back on some of those problems – it's been a long time, Bill, but uh – you know, we weren't paid all that well. Uh – so you – it was sometimes difficult to uh – when you're hiring new coaches or new staff people to – to hire the people we'd like to hire because of, basically, the money – you know – not being able to pay as well as some of the big high schools, or even some of the junior colleges. Our own department, I think, from my standpoint from coaching and as an athletic administrator, I think basically the problems were you're trying to do too many things. You weren't getting – you didn't have the time to do what you would like to do, when you have to – from the coaching standpoint, when you have to coach, you have to recruit, you have to take care

of many, many frantic problems when you're dealing with athletes and students, period. And so I think that was the biggest problem. You didn't really have enough time because you had to teach, you had to coach, you had to do other things when you're on the faculty like [sounds like "Aaron"], like any other faculty member, but – so it made the job a little more difficult if – when compared with the large colleges and universities, and usually there are coaches that coach. And I think that was the biggest problem I found – that it was difficult to do all the things you had to do. You're supposed to be teaching classes, you know – how are you going to recruit? You know, you get – and that's the name of the game when you're in college – when you're coaching in college – is recruiting. And spending – and that takes time. And that was basically the biggest problem we had as coaches – that we didn't have enough help. We didn't have enough assistants. We usually had one, and like in football, and we had one – you know – we had a head coach, and one assistant. You might have had some part-timers, but – or somebody, but basically you only had one – you know – so you didn't have enough help. There weren't able to – to do those things, so you – you were limited what you could do.

Q: While you were Athletic Director, were you given fairly free rein in the hiring of athletic personnel?

BB: You know, generally when we had to hire coach, as the Athletic Director I basically – yes. Between the department chairmen [inaudible], and the Athletic Director, I think had a – pretty much able to hire, all other things working out, whom he would like to have. But – um –

Q: I raise that because our newspapers carried stories about our own University and University of Washington where there's been quite a bit of conflict about the hiring of the coaches.

BB: Well [inaudible] organization where the Athletic Department was under the guidance – you know – of the chairman of the department at that time, and – we were just another department like any other department, and – but we had – I'd have to say that, you know, as the Athletic Director, when we did hire somebody, I had pretty much – the say – the final say who it's going to be, unless there was something unique in the –

Q: Without persons higher up the ladder telling you?

BB: Right. No. That's true.

Q: So that led to less controversy than we see in –

BB: Right. We didn't hire an awful lot of people, and we weren't able to hire enough people, but when we did have an opening and have – we usually tried to –

Q: So money was the big thing – just to not be able to get who, and how many you wanted.

BB: Yeah. Well basically it's a – it's a money problem, you know. You'd like to have five assistants, but you know, who's going to pay for it. So you ended having one.

Q: Which led to your many, many hours recruiting, etc.

BB: Right. Yeah, you know, it's hard – if you're the head coach, it's hard to be gone from recruiting, and you don't have a recruiter, or you don't have somebody that's out raising money and things like this for you – you do it all. You – if there's any money to be raised, you raise the money, and if you – you know, if you look for boosters and try and – you know – and things like that, and work with the boosters, and you know, you did it. You didn't have somebody else to do it. You didn't have assistants, or assistant who was in charge of the boosters, or in charge of raising money, and, and, and these type thing, you know, you had to do it because you didn't have that – we didn't have the personnel to do all those things.

Q: You had to be a man of many talents.

BB: Yeah, that's why – and as I said, you know, when you have to teach, you have to coach, you have to – you know – work with boosters, and the public, and recruit, and do all the other things that take – you know – that you don't – you don't do the job you'd like to do. I mean, that's what it boils down to.

Q: Over these years – long years of tenure that you've had, do you recall any humorous events that really kind of stand out as related to the University?

BB: Some I probably wouldn't dare to relate [inaudible], or some that may not – I was thinking – one, I think is –

Q: All right.

BB: I think it's a –

Q: All right.

BB: Those people who know Abe Poffenroth. Uh – a number of years ago we had some really cold weather. I know, we had some this year, too. I mean it was cold, like 25 or 30 below zero, and for a number of days, and everybody was having car problems, and people were using light bulbs and things to – under their cars, and so forth. Abe, in those days, drove a Cadillac, and he had a fairly new one. But he was – to get it warm, he decided he was going to take a pan of briquettes and put them under his car, and get it warm so that – you know. Well, that worked fine, except he went back in the house, and pretty soon the fire engine showed up, and his Cadillac was on fire because the grease had melted down into – in the briquettes, so he had a fire under a new Cadillac. And I don't think Abe has ever lived that down. I think that was one of the funniest stories that we had, you know, but -- we had numerous others, but that one – I look back onto that as a –

Q: Well mentioning Abe – obviously he's one of the faculty and administrators that stand out. Can you think of some others – administrators and faculty – that stand out in your recall, and your relationships with them in one way or another?

BB: Well, I'd have to – I didn't have the pleasure of working under Dr. McConnell that long, because he left soon after I was hired. I think I was only here a year or so before he left, but – I think he would have – you know, he had the ability to do some things I thought was good. You know – I think one thing about Dr. McConnell, you know – what he said, he meant, and what he usually meant, he said, and you knew exactly where you stand with him, and I appreciated that. And – I think that Jim Brooks was, as far as I'm concerned, would stand out as – I think as an individual that did a lot for this University, and wasn't necessarily out pounding the drums for the Athletic Department – I'm not saying that that's – because I think, you know – I just think he did a lot. He was the kind of administrator that you could talk to, and – uh – I think you could believe, you know, what he said, and he was sincere, and all those things, and surrounded himself with some good people, and I think he was a – as far as I'm concerned, he did a good job and – and – for the University, and throughout this state, and other states. He was well respected, and – I had a lot of respect for Jim, and as I say, I could talk to him – not necessarily I was going to get what I was talking about, but at least, uh, I could trust him. And so I – uh – I think he was one of the best ones that – you know – I had the privilege of – I didn't have many, but – and I – you know – talking about Abe Poffenroth – he was the chairman of the department, and basically, I served under him. And I think he was – he was a great guy. He did a lot for this school with public relations, and other things, and ran a good department – let people – hired people, and expected them to do what they were hired to do, and let them do it. And I have a lot of respect for Abe – always have had, and still do.

Q: Are there faculty that stand out in your recall – enjoyed working with, or?

BB: Well I – fortunately, we had a faculty on our own department that – we all got along pretty well. We had a pretty good bunch of people. Other faculty that I thought a lot of at that time – we had a very strong Music Department – Wayne Hertz, I think, and Bert Christionson did – you know, had a strong department, and – you know, our Art Department was strong – Reino Randall, and the crew that’s on our department, and uh – um – Accounting Departments, and our Education Department, I think were outstanding for a school this size, and they – a lot of outstanding faculty, and well-respected throughout the state, and I think our school, during those years were – and I personally think our Athletics did a lot for this, because we were strong in Athletics all those years, so – you know – for the size of school that we had. And we had strong coaches, and very good coaches. I think they were outstanding for a school this size, and I think that’s where much from our success comes. It certainly didn’t come from having a lot of money and all of those fringe benefits and resources that, you know, maybe some other schools had. But we just happened to have – um – a bunch of, I thought, outstanding coaches for this size of school, and I think you can contribute that a lot to people like Abe Poffenroth.

Q: Are there students that stand out that you recall – one or two?

BB: Well, I don’t – you know – on the academic side I didn’t have that much contact with students.

Q: Athletes?

BB: Yeah, there are a lot of athletes who stand out. And coaches – people – but you know, I don’t like to get into this. It’s hard to pick out, you know, outstanding. But programs – our basketball programs, and people like Dean Nicholson, and our wrestling program under Eric Beardsley – people like this had outstanding programs, outstanding kids and athletes, and they did an awful lot for this University on – you know, around the state, and around others. They’re respected, you know, throughout the nation. That wasn’t only just Ellensburg and this community. We had, I think – some of our coaches were very outstanding, and we had a lot of outstanding athletes, and I can name a lot of them. I had some really good ones, and [inaudible]. It’s kind of difficult to single out – you know – really, the top ones, but – I could go back and name names, but there are a lot of them that’s responsible for those good programs we had.

Q: Do you have any memories of problems that existed between faculty and the administration during the years that you were here? Or faculty and students?

BB: I have – can’t say as I can remember a whole lot of conflict between faculty and students, or faculty and administrators. I think you always have *some* conflict, and – I think if you didn’t have – it’d be a unique institution if you didn’t have conflicts, so I don’t see that we had anything that was all that outstanding. That – none of us had the resources that we’d have liked to have had, and none of us had the financial backing that we’d have liked to have had, and – uh – but I think we had a pretty close faculty. I mean, when I first came here, I – we used to – for instance, we had one place we had coffee was over at Webster’s. That was the coffee place. And we would normally meet – the faculty would normally meet sometime during the week. Almost all the faculty would – you’d meet them some time during the week, or the period, so you knew what was going on, and you could talk to Milo Smith, and Jake Harum – uh know if they had a – if they had an athlete, or a student that say – “Say, you know this – one of your athlete’s not doing very well in the class now.” You usually knew it. And then when we got larger, and everybody had their kind of – they went their own way, they had their own office, they had their own coffee pots and coffee rooms and everything – I think we lost a little there because, you know, you ended up in my last few years with a lot of faculty you didn’t really know. You had no contact with them. And – and that’s – you know – that’s – say, that’s not unique because we grew a lot, and we had to – but I enjoyed the early years more, because I thought we had a little closer-knit faculty and administration. And that was because, probably, it was a smaller institution.

Q: Well you never –

BB: You grow, you get growing problems.

Q: You join others in the pet belief that we've talked to, also. As long as you've mentioned the salary schedule, which most felt was pretty inadequate – there were things that affected lives here, like the faculty code, and faculty senate. Do you have any comment about code, or senate, or long-range planning? Any of these topics that strike a chord with you?

BB: Well I always had, in my life – I always had respect for the faculty senate and faculty code. I'm – I wouldn't always agree with it, and I think there were some problems. There were some problems in our department. I can speak for our department, but I can't speak for the Music Department, or the Art Department, necessarily. But I know some of our problems of – I – I think it's sometimes the faculty code gets maybe a little bit narrow in the scope of what it does. For instance, I felt that if you make a real contribution in some areas, that maybe it wasn't so important that – and I'll use this as an example – that you go get a Doctor's degree. In other words, I think Dean Nicholson –and I'm going to use this as an example – Dean Nicholson, or Eric Beardsley, or some of the others on the coaches I think made enough contributions to the institution, and to the community, and to the state, and some of them on a national basis, and – that maybe there were some other things besides, in some areas, that were as important as going and getting a Doctor's degree. And I have a little hard feelings on that one, because – you know, I think some of us made contributions as much as some other departments, and you look over the departments over the years and you see faculty with degrees and doing a masterful job of nothing, and you see others that work their rear ends off and make real contributions, well respected in their fields, go out and do other things that are important, to me, and you know, are – to the institution should be, as – sometimes – academics.

Q: Mm-hmm.

BB: I don't think you can judge, and say this is going to be – everybody's going to be required to do this before you can advance or be promoted, and – I think you have to look at some other things. I just felt, over the years, that we had a lot of outstanding people that never got what they really deserved.

Q: Bringing that out, I think, is beneficial because I believe – my understanding – there have been some changes in that regard.

BB: Right, but it took an awful long time.

Q: A long time, yes.

BB: And it's too late for a lot of them.

Q: Right. Were you on committees that you remember besides those within your department? Building committees?

BB: I was on – well, I didn't have a lot to do with it. I was on some building committee where we built new facility and so forth. I was on the – the institution's insurance committee, and in our own field – in our own department and my own athletic business, we – I had, you know, committees on – on the NAIA, and our conference committees, our district NAIA organizations. I went through the chair – I was head – I ended up later on as being president of the national NAIA Athletic Director's Association, and [inaudible] also – I also was president of Rotary, and a few things like that, so we had lots to do. I mean, we were busy.

Q: Right. Well that brings to it a topic that fits, I think, a little along the line you were talking about. There seemed to be a publish or perish kind of atmosphere here –

BB: Well that's what I was alluding to, you know, to a certain extent.

Q: Right.

BB: Yeah, it's a –

Q: There are activities other than publication.

BB: Uh, yes. That's what I'm saying. I think there are things that you have to evaluate other than academics sometimes. So it doesn't fit – the code doesn't fit all of us. But I don't have any art. I think you have to have it, and I think it's a necessary, and –

**(Transcript of Tape 1, Side 2)**

Q: [Question begins in mid-sentence.] Some of the roles that she was in. She was secretary of the graduate school.

BB: Yeah, Margaret started out as working in the purchasing department.

Q: Purchasing.

BB: Uh-huh. And she was there a number of years. She also worked as a secretary in the library, and I think she was in the – she worked as a secretary in the Education Department, too, at one time or another. Then she was – yeah, her longest tenure was in the – she was an executive secretary to the Graduate Department, and I think that was about her last position here before she went back to school and decided she wanted to teach. She left, got her degree – graduate degree, and went back to school and started teaching.

Q: Was that in speech correction, or?

BB: She was in speech therapy.

Q: Speech therapy.

BB: Yeah. She – she – then she later on went to – she taught at – in Seattle and Yakima.

Q: I appreciate that mention since she's declined to interview with us.

BB: Well –

Q: She needs to be remembered.

BB: Well she spent a number of years working in the –

Q: Yes, she certainly did. At what point were you married? You were married –

BB: We got married in 1943, when I was in the service.

Q: In the service.

BB: Uh-huh. Right. Brigham City, Utah.

Q: In Brigham City, Utah. That's where the hospital was.

BB: Right.

Q: Right.

BB: A large, large hospital.

Q: Yes, I passed there, and many changes have occurred.

BB: Oh yeah.

Q: Now there are obviously a lot of things that I have left out.

BB: A lot of things I've left out.

Q: What would you like to bring out that we haven't questioned you about?

BB: Well, I think, in looking back – and this has happened on numerous of times, but I guess it's a rather personal thing of mine. I think when you spend a number of years in an institution, it would be nice if you could leave with a good feeling, and a good – with good thoughts about the institution. And I think a lot of us probably – that didn't happen. And there are various reasons. And it just seems to me like that – there's two things. That's one of them that – you know – I felt it. That you didn't really leave with a good feeling about the institution after 26, 28 years that I was here. And I'll give you an example. When I retired I had notes and letters from many of the faculty, and a letter like, from the business office, the financial aide office, the [inaudible] department, and different departments that I had worked with, and been here long enough that we were well acquainted. But I never had anything from the administration saying that – you know – it's nice that you were here this many years. Nothing, you know. And to me, that – after 28 years maybe they thought maybe I – maybe I didn't do the job that they thought should have been done. I don't know. But I know I'm not the only one that feels this way, either. That it seems to me like they could be – the deans or the president – would write a little note saying that look, it's nice to have had you here 28 years, and – you know – hope you enjoy your retirement, and think of us, and things like – you know, something to the effect that maybe they – they do have some personal feeling that – that maybe they could – well, it could make you feel a little bit bitter about the years that you spent here. I have a – I have a – I think that – to me, it's common courtesy, and –

Q: If you got nothing personalized, did you – did you get a little wall plaque or something – paper that shows –

BB: Certificate in the mail.

Q: Certificate in the mail.

BB: Yeah.

Q: I think that's what many have said.

BB: So to me, I really – I really kind of feel that that's about – if it isn't corrected it certainly should be someday. But that – I have – as I say, that's kind of personal, but I – I know that – after that many years, you know, there should be something that you did right, maybe.

Q: Yes, there are others that have shared that. Any other comments you'd like to make?

BB: Uh – probably I’ve forgotten a lot of them, but – you know – I was here a long time, and I’ve been retired thirteen years, so there are a lot of things you kind of have a tendency to forget, but – um – no, I don’t think there’s – unless you have something you want to ask.

Q: Let me turn to my recorder. He’ll have something.

R: That’s fine. We’ve got a few minutes left if you want to – but he said [inaudible] he needed to get back.

Q: Oh yeah, that’s right. No, I think you’ve given us a lot, and we really appreciate it.

BB: Well I just.

Q: If we happen to have missed stuff that we’d like –

BB: Well I’ve been pretty quickly through all this span of life. Okay.

Q: Well that’s – [End of interview]