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Robert Bennett interview

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Smith: It is November 12, 1996. We are assembled in room 410 Barge Hall. Ham Howard is our cameraman today. Our interviewee is Bob Bennett and I am Milo Smith. All right Bob, let’s start the interview by asking you if you’ll please just give us a short autobiography of Bob Bennett from the time he was born until at least til he got involved teaching at Central?

Bennett: I was born in Tillamook, Oregon in 1927 and lived there for about 10 years. My father was superintendent of schools and then we moved to Albany for a couple of years and then to Salem, Oregon. I was at Salem and graduated from high school there. Was in the service shortly and then back to Salem and then went to Willamette University where I got my bachelors degree. That’s where I met my wife or wife-to-be and then I - we were married between our junior and senior year. We graduated. Got called back into the service during the Korean War and after that I went back to Salem for - worked for the state highway testing department for a short time in their highway testing lab and then I started graduate work at the University of Oregon where I eventually got my Phd. From there I went to Walla Walla and taught at Whitman College for seven years. I then was with UNESCO for three years teaching in Africa. Taught for one year in Rhodesia and then Rhodesia declared their independence from Britain and our project - our municipal project was moved to Zambia and I taught at the University of Zambia the first two years of the existence of the University of Zambia. We set up the University there. From there I came to Central Washington and I came to replace a person that was on leave of absence for a year and so I came on a one year appointment. While I was here a permanent position opened up and I then became a regular faculty member here. I was - I came in as an associate professor and then - and that was in 1967 and then I retired. I don’t recall which year it was but I was a full professor when I retired.

Smith: Which service - which military service were you in, Bob?

Bennett: I was in the Navy. In radar technician in the field of electronics.

Smith: And your duties were what?

Bennett: I was to maintain the radar equipment and the radio receivers and transmitters although I was in the - stationed in Bremerton in a shipyard and we were reactivating moth balled ships that were being activated to go into service for the Korean War. First time I was in it was primarily - I was in school training essentially all of the time.

Smith: Now, which school did you get your BA. from in Oregon?

Bennett: Oh, Willamette University.

Smith: Willamette University in Salem?

Bennett: Yes.

Smith: Okay, when you first came here to Central on your one year appointment, Bob, what courses did you teach? Do you recall?

Bennett: I was - I don’t particularly recall the specific teaching assignment. I was teaching introductory physics. I believe I was teaching a electricity and magnetism course. Just physics courses in general. I don’t recall which years I taught which courses.
Smith: You said that your permanent appointment began in ’67. Might we assume then that your temporary - your one year appointment was in ’66?

Bennett: I think I came here in ’67.

Smith: Came here in ’67?

Bennett: And the thing that happened was that since I was on a temporary appointment I was looking for what I would be doing the next year even when I started and I had just accepted an appointment with the Commission of College Physics which was a nice chance to get acquainted with physics programs all over the nation and so I said yeah, I would like to accept the offer for permanent appointment if you’ll give me a year’s leave of absence and so I took a year’s leave and then went back to the University of Maryland with the Commission of College Physics and was involved in physics education programs nationally for actually 15 months. It was two summers that I worked with that.

Smith: Now for the three years that you spent in Africa, Bob, what were your duties in those years?

Bennett: The program that I was associated with, the UNESCO program, was a program that was designed to prepare high school teachers and in the British system the way the high school teachers are prepared is to get a bachelors degree in some subject matter course and then after getting a bachelors degree they take a one year teacher training program and get a what they call a PC, Post Education Certificate or post - anyway, they get their certificate at the end of their year’s graduate work. The program - the UNESCO program was to train high school teachers but they wanted more science teachers so part of the program they had associated with it one chemist, one physicist, one biologist and one mathematician that were assigned to the respective departments in the University so that those departments would have the flexibility to put in some programs to encourage people to get into their subject matter so they could get their bachelors degrees so that they could eventually get a teaching degree. So I was kind of an extra person in the physics department. Part of what we did was when we were in Rhodesia was to set up a program which it provided a transition for students that had not gotten past their 0 level - they had gotten their 0 level but not their A level exam. The - in their system the ordinary level or the 0 level is kind of equivalent to the American high school graduation. The A level was specialization in a rather limited number of subject areas that they can read in so if a person took an A level in physics they would be doing physics and mathematics and some chemistry. Not much other than that so when they completed the A level they were coming in with a more equivalent to a person who has completed a year at the university as far as their major was concerned. They didn’t have any breadth courses associated with it but as far as their major was concerned it was - they were more advanced. So we set up a program which helped students that had finished the 0 level but had not done the A level and did a special course for them and this was needed because in the African schools, in the Rhodesian schools they were divided both sexually that is boys school and girls school in high school but also they were divided racially for the European and the non European. In the non European schools they had a very very difficult time maintaining teachers because they would - the teachers would want to get into the European schools as soon as they could because they had higher pay and better teaching conditions and it was only a few really dedicated teachers that stayed and the group of students that I worked with had seven different teachers during their year that they were trying to study physics and they - and some of those teachers had never had physics. They were just trying to maintain discipline in the room and then the students study on their own. So they needed - there was need for some special work to remedy that. That’s all we did in Rhodesia. Then when we got to University of Zambia it was a different situation. We were setting up a brand new University and we were just - everybody was working together trying to establish what the course would be, the standards of the University, what kind of grading system we would use, are we going to have breadth courses or not, is it going to start at the 0 level or at the A level, is it going to be a three year or four year university, what kind of examinations will we have at graduation time? Everything. And since we had faculty members from every English speaking country, everybody had different ideas of what an education was. It was an interesting time. It was fun.
Smith: Have you kept track of that Zambia University since you’ve been here?

Bennett: Not very much.

Smith: Did it ever develop into a full blown University?

Bennett: Yes.

Smith: It did? Would you please comment, while working for the UNESCO programs, will you comment on your living accommodations and your teaching accommodations?

Bennett: Well, it was a cultural shock to me to go into a situation where faculty at the University are considered to be on essentially a par with the cabinet of the country and to be - have that much prestige was a culture shock. I never lived in a better house. The - it - the University since we were just starting it had no buildings. We were teaching in temporary buildings. The second year I was at Zambia the construction on the permanent site was taking place and I did set up a lab in one of the buildings that got completed. A classroom building that we temporarily used as a lab so I actually taught the first classes that were ever taught on the permanent campus but it was - the accommodations were pretty primitive because of this. In Rhodesia it was the College of the University of London so the degrees there were the University of London degrees and that was very good facilities and a high standard of performance. The physics department had one research area and that was actually a geo physics area and they were doing paleo magnetism which is the study of the magnetic field in the earth rocks and dating it as to when the rock solidified so that you could know what the direction of magnetic field was when the rock formed and then from this they were getting information about Continental Drift so that was the research area at the University there. It - when we got to Zambia we were so busy setting up the University we didn’t really have any research program going at the time. Did a little bit of lightning research but very little.

Smith: Now Bob, when you were working on your Phd, what was the area or subject that you pursued for your doctoral dissertation work?

Bennett: I was doing Atomics Spectroscopy and we were studying the - what was called pressure broadening with spectral lines. This is when you have a gas that is being -had light pass through it so it absorbs some of the light out characteristic of the atoms in the gas. If that gas is in the presence of another gas, then because of the collisions and so on the spectral line is broadened and the higher the pressure of the gas the more the broadening and sometimes the shift of the fission. This gives some information about the atomic interactions. So I was doing what is called pressure broadening studies.

Smith: Now who would use that information on a daily basis, Bob?

Bennett: I don’t know. It’s used –

Smith: It had to have some practical application?

Bennett: Yeah. One of the very early work in this field was done by astrophysicists because it gave them information about the temperature of the stars - the atmosphere of the stars. The light coming from stars exhibited the broadening and so they were trying to find out what this broadening would tell you about the - what could you infer about the star atmosphere from the broadening so they wanted to do the studies in the laboratory in order to find out how broadening took place and then they could work back and determine what the atmosphere of a star might be or get some insights into it.

It was also used during the study of atomic explosions because they get high pressure, high temperature effects and so that was - it was used there. Another place that it was used is when you have a shock wave of any kind then you get a pressure - high temperature pressure effect and it shows up in those effects. Later
on, it became important information in the development in the laser field because it’s the characteristic line shape is the important part of the parameters that go into that so in a way it was leading in that direction but it wasn’t being used in that direction at the time that I was studying it. Lasers hadn’t been developed at all.

Smith: Have you - have you continued to pursue as a research subject any part of that since you completed your PhD and went into college teaching?

Bennett: I was pursuing that while I was at Whitman College and then while there during that period of my professional work I did take one year leave of absence from the University - from Whitman on a National Science Foundation Fellowship and spent the year at the University of Washington. While I was there I got into working with Ken Clark in geophysics where we were studying upper atmosphere phenomena which is related that is its an atomic spectrum kind of thing. We were studying the aurora type phenomena. What’s going on in terms of the atomic collisions in the upper atmosphere and then I continued that after I came back from Africa. I got back into that working with the same group.

Smith: Okay, thank you Bob. Now after having come here to Central, were you given any opportunity to design new courses in your early years?

Bennett: I - I got involved in some courses that were new to me. I guess new. I was involved in team teaching a course in environmental studies with Curt Wiberg and George Macinko and the three of us taught for a couple years a course in environmental studies and this was an entirely new experience.

Smith: Did you find it a pleasant experience getting involved in team teaching?

Bennett: Yeah, I really enjoyed it. It may have cost the physics department some things because of the way credit hours were counted and such but after doing it a couple years I was feeling pressure that I get into full time physics but it was a very enjoyable experience.

Smith: Now, who was chairman of the physics department when you came on campus?

Bennett: Smith Murphy.

Smith: Murphy? And through most of your years of service here who was your chairman?

Bennett: Well –

Smith: Or did you change often?

Bennett: It changed several times and I really can’t give you the years of the change but Smith Murphy was initially. Vance Johnson - actually Vance Johnson, I think, was chairman when I - he was the person I replaced when I came the first year. He was the chairman and Smith was then chair while he was gone on leave and then Vance was - he went by Will Johnson then - was chairman then when I came back for a few years and then Bob Mitchell was chairman for a bit and I was chairman for a bit and then back to Bob Mitchell and so I think Vance was again chairman in there also a second time. So there was some passing of the chairmanship around.

Smith: As a faculty member did you find that you were well supported with materials and equipment in order to do the job you were being required to do?

Bennett: When I came the equipment was very good with - the department had just received a National Science Foundation Equipment grant. It had nice new equipment. This was not too long after Sputnik actually and there was considerable support for science. We were in the phase - even in that phase although we were in temporary buildings in the military surplus buildings that were brought in. The little - we were
Smith: Did Dean Hall accommodations meet the needs of the physics program well?

Bennett: Physics was never in Dean Hall.

Smith: Oh you never were there?

Bennett: No, we were in Lind. Chemistry moved out of Lind Hall and we moved into the chemistry labs but they never - they were very slow about doing any remodeling and - but they did some remodeling but it was never really given the support - when I came and for the first few years it was fully expected that we would be a masters degree program in a few years and we were working in that direction and then when this turned around we lost faculty members. The - they were - went through a review process and decided that Johnson should be terminated because he was - had the least teaching time at Central. Well he had recently - he had hired us all but he had been on leave so many times and they weren’t counting leave. He challenged it and they withdrew the pink slip and revised their rulings about leave time. We went through that a couple times - that kind of thing twice. I was on the block one time.

Smith: Have you noticed that Lind Hall is currently undergoing another remodel?

Bennett: Yeah, but not for physics. For geology.

Smith: Where is physics now?

Bennett: Well, physics is still there but they’re not remodeling the physics portion. They’re remodeling the geology portion.

Smith: Now thinking back over all of your years here as a physics prof, Bob, which administrators and faculty come to mind as important leaders within physics to begin with?

Bennett: Well, I guess –

Smith: Some of your colleagues, some of your chairmen.

Bennett: I think the department members all were good but Vance Johnson was very very important and was nationally known - nationally recognized. In fact, he was - part of the reasons he was gone, he was the national executive officer for the American Association of Physics Teachers and publishing the national - editing the national journal and so on. This is the time they didn’t count. That’s why he was the senior person but came out low on the teaching - having too few of teaching credit hours.

Smith: Now Bob, let’s ask essentially the same question but let’s think over the entire University and this is personal opinion. There’s no right or wrong. Who were the campus leaders among the administration and faculty that you felt were of a special significance to the progress of Central?

Bennett: Well, Jim Brooks comes to mind of course. He was - he was very significant - He was very important and significant all the way through or for many years. I remember as a faculty member initially feeling that he represented the legislative views too much but then when I happened to be sitting in on a
committee meeting with him with legislators I found that he represented the faculty view very well to the legislators so I saw that he was helping to make the transition between faculty and legislators and faculty didn’t like it when it was a faculty meeting and the legislators didn’t like it when it was legislative but he was doing a good job of bringing the two closer together and working on that, I think, very hard and was very important.

Smith: Now you as with many departments on campus went through some series of reorganizations into divisions and schools and now colleges. What were the divisions that were superior to your department level?

Bennett: Well, for a while we were - they joined geology and physics as a under - they were saying that it couldn’t be a geology or physics department or one department. Never really was because the budgets were always separate. They had one chairperson and one secretary and one phone number but the budgets were always separate and the faculty met separately. For part of the time they met together but then they found that the physics faculty felt that they really had nothing to say about the geology labs or field trips. They couldn’t contribute much on that and the geology faculty didn’t feel they could help the physics department decide which physics courses ought to be rearranged in certain ways and what topics should be in certain courses, which textbooks should be used or things of that kind so they quit meeting together and met separately even though they were under the same chairperson. That went on for a couple years at least. I do not remember - it doesn’t come to mind that we ever were really operating other than a physics department.

Smith: You do not recall any body above that that might have been –

Bennett: When we had the different deans and so on but I guess I - we were functioning as a department primarily.

Smith: Do you recall any particular deans that were either good or bad for the physics department?

Bennett: Dean Williams was - seemed to be very supportive. I - later on when we got involved with a national program the Energy Studies Program Dean Comstock was extremely helpful. Very much - very supportive of that program. That was again one which was an interdisciplinary kind of activity a second time.

Smith: Now Bob, did physics ever get to the point where you were allowed to grant the masters degree?

Bennett: We granted the masters degree in a - what do they call that? The interdepartmental masters degree. We had one student I think - I was his thesis advisor that got a masters degree from Central primarily in physics, in physics and mathematics but primarily in physics and I think that that’s really the only one we had during the whole time that I was there.

Smith: Now, as you think back over all of your years in physics here, how much was the progress of the physics department deterred by limited funds? Was that your major problem?

Bennett: I think the problem - I think there was a historic problem that sort of predated all that that was a bigger problem in terms of physics particularly when I compare it with what was happening say at Western Washington and so on and that is that in many colleges there in the breadth program that you have - the science breadth program or the breadth program you have you have a science component and it was for example at Western Washington physics was specifically included as one of the options that you could - well, I guess they had to take at least one quarter of physics and here at Central, at least when I came initially, the science breadth requirement was so broad, you could take courses in the home ec. department and satisfy the science breadth and you could take courses in all kinds of areas. Not just in chemistry, biology or physics but you could get them in a number of other areas and these were much - students choose the easy options and so it was very very difficult to get an enrollment base that allowed for the
sustaining the department. It - these things were tightened up as we became more of a university and this is one of the things that I think Dean Williams was particularly helpful on. Tightening up some of these kinds of requirements so that it ended up then that you would get more students into the introductory courses and then you would have the chance of getting some of those - a small percentage of them going on to become majors. But you also had a enrollment base that justified having a teacher. I think that that lack of tradition of basic science particularly basic physical sciences - the biology department was strong. The education department seemed to favor biology in terms of where they would send their students for getting some science background not recognizing that in most all of the elementary schools science is highly physics based. You talk about things like stars and volume of things and weight and mass which the real concepts are physics. These were not - there was not an inner school support that caused students to come in the direction of the physical sciences. I think that was a bigger problem than financing although it probably contributed to financing.

Smith: Well certainly we all were aware that the total number of credit hours that a department was able to generate was significant in the granting of funding for materials, equipment, additional faculty and everything else. That was the open sesame was credit hours. Now, since I was an advisor for at least 30 years here at Central, I became very very aware that there were certain subjects traceable perhaps to the high schools in which students came but there were certain subjects that absolutely generated fear within students that kept them from exploring, kept them from testing, kept them for trying other things. I can think for example of the number of times that I tried to interest students in taking a basic physics course and it was not just a matter of I don’t like it, it’s a matter of I’m scared to death. Yet, of course, those students who had taken some beginning physics found out it wasn’t quite as bad as they anticipated it would be but certainly you were up against that fear factor and I trace it back to the fact that the students that came to Central did not have exposures in their public school background that equipped them to move into a physics course.

Bennett: Well, that’s a - I think a real problem and I think part of it - we were partly on the cycle of their teachers hadn’t had any physical sciences and so they were afraid of it to start with so it gets started way back but there’s no question but what the - I think that the physics teachers across the nation have probably contributed to the fear and during the Sputnik - post Sputnik period the emphasis on science certainly wanted to encourage people to take it but part of the emphasis was to try to include more science, beef up the courses and I remember one university in Florida that failed something like 60% of their class because they were trying to upgrade the standards of the sciences so they said it you don’t do it but those kinds of things didn’t help and it was happening various places and I think we may have been influenced by that to some extent and made the courses too rigorous. Also there was a - within the science community there was an attitude that we only want to teach real science. We don’t want to teach about science. We want to teach science and that probably made it difficult. The - and I recall seeing that in - when I was in graduate school at the University of Oregon there a student came back wanting to do some graduate work - he was a teacher wanting to do some summer work in the physics department and the physics department would not give him graduate credit for any course that he was qualified to take because it would have been a junior or senior physics course and so what he did was ended up taking graduate credit in school administration. He would have been much - he wanted to take some more science. He was a science teacher. It would have been much more appropriate for him to get some credit as - on a graduate level or a post bachelors degree but even though he was taking what we would call an upper division course. The department just wouldn’t consider it and so attitudes were carried over to the rest of us.

Smith: Now, in your years as a student, did you skip the masters degree?

Bennett: No, I got a masters degree.

Smith: You did get a masters?

Bennett: Yes.
Smith: Oregon?

Bennett: Yes, But I just went right on through.

Smith: Right. I’m thinking of some of our colleagues that went from bachelors to doctorate and I can think of one especially, Dean Don Cummings did that from bachelors to doctorate and our salary schedule couldn’t quite cope with that. Here he had a doctors degree but he didn’t have sufficient time in to move into a next salary bracket and many times I have heard him say if I had it all to do over again I wouldn’t get so eager to get the doctorate. I’d go ahead and get the masters and then move on because that’s the way academia assumes that everybody progresses.

Bennett: The - at the University of Oregon, the way it was really sort of set up when you get along far enough to get a masters you take your exam and that exam for your masters degree was - if you thought you might like to go on for a doctorate you would indicate it and they would add an additional section to that exam so the same exam was sort of used as the qualifying exam or I’m not sure the title of it. Prelim, I guess exam for going on to start your PhD work. The degrees were bachelor of arts, I mean master of arts that I got rather than master of science.

Smith: Now I have my last two degrees out of Oregon and my - my finals in my masters degree were accepted as partial preliminaries for my PhD. If you did exceptionally well on your finals for your masters you were pretty much a shoo-in to get into the doctoral program.

Bennett: That’s what I meant. The - you had your masters plus an additional section was the prelim.

Smith: Did you feel you got a good education out of the University of Oregon?

Bennett: Yeah.

Smith: Equipped you to do the things that you had to do here?

Bennett: Yes, yes.

Smith: Good, that’s good. Any comment on the quality of students that you inherited out of the public schools of Washington?

Bennett: The - generally speaking, I think they were quite good but this may partly be related to the thing that you commented about, the pre-selection of the students that chose to take the subject to start with. We may have had not the average. The last couple of years that I was teaching I had a situation which was rather awkward and unpleasant and that is that it was associated with the Flight Technology Program in which the students coming - some of the students coming into that program from one particular school were so focused on flying and not the academic requirements and they seemed to be getting counseled that they didn’t need to pass these academic requirements and there was some students that were really kind of disrespectful in class and not wanting to do the work and they - it was disruptive and they were complaining that it was too hard and such and that didn’t seem appropriate behavior. I had not experienced that kind of behavior before. That was the one time where I felt that it was really bad.

Smith: At Whitman and then here again at Central, were you ever under pressure to publish articles?

Bennett: It was always desirable. If you published it was recognized that you had a better chance of getting either a salary increase or promotion but it was obvious that there were people that had been there a long time that weren’t doing it in both institutions so that you didn’t - even though you knew it was desirable and it was appreciated that it wasn’t a perish situation.
Smith: Of course. Now, was there ever time and money available to the physics department that would allow you to have some time for research outside of teaching?

Bennett: I felt that I was able to do a fair amount and had on several occasions small grants or did some work at the Manashtash Observatory as a project. Was often doing work with - in collaboration with the college at the University of Washington and it - so I felt like - I chose to use my summers that way instead of doing summer teaching and often was able to get financial support but not always.

Smith: Did you have to move out of Central in order to do that in the summers?

Bennett: No.

Smith: You didn’t?

Bennett: I - I would if I was working - that’s why I say I didn’t always have financial support. I mean it just - I’d maybe choose to stay here but I was going back and forth between here and the University of Washington so it was close enough that I could do it. The thing - the one thing that happened when finances got tight that did I think deter us and I didn’t realize it at the time so much but as I look back I recognize when they cut off the availability of the scan line for financial reasons my contact with the U of W began to weaken just that I wasn’t keeping in contact as much when I had to go down to a departmental office instead of being able to call from my own phone and I think that that really was- as I look back that was when I kind of dropped out of the program over there. It was a slow process but I think that that was a significant part of it.

Smith: Now, at any time during your academic career were you the recipient of any awards or honors?

Bennett: No.

Smith: Okay. What specific contributions do you feel you made to the progress of your department? Did you introduce new courses?

Bennett: I think that I was the primary person for involving students in research more than any other member of the department. The new courses that I taught with - there weren’t - that I was involved with really were interdisciplinary or at times there was one period when I was teaching courses in the math department in order to get the - because of teaching loads and cutbacks and another time I was teaching them in the PNIE in teaching surveying and such. So I taught outside the department in various times but I think that the - as far as the physics program goes, I think that the thing that I did was caused more students to be involved in research activity.

Smith: Good. Now one particular period of our careers, our University became involved with a black day at Central, We became involved in a reduction in force. Money had become so scarce that it was necessary to reduce the total number of faculty and staff. Did the physics department lose some faculty during that period?

Bennett: Which time? It happened twice?

Smith: At least twice.

Bennett: Well. I mentioned earlier that they were going to release Vance Johnson and then they didn’t but that took a -
Smith: Was that decision, however, made because of campus wide reduction in force?

Bennett: Yes, yes.

Smith: It was?

Bennett: Yes, it was the first time that that happened and then the next time that that happened physics was cited to lose a faculty member and by that time I was the junior faculty member and so I would have been the one to go because this is the second time around and I think that it was - it had been stated in the paper that the physics would be losing money and so I assumed that that would be me and then that got reversed and I think probably by Garrity himself that they said no, we will not cut the physics department but I don’t know for sure.

Smith: Now, you and Mrs. Bennett had children?

Bennett: Four.

Smith: Any of them participate in any period of their life in going to school at Central?

Bennett: Well yes. The - I should comment that Arlene got a masters degree in counseling here, my wife. After we got here. Connie our oldest daughter did her four years here and got a degree in - what did she get it in? Philosophy and drama or something.

Smith: Possibly.

Bennett: I think that is what it was.

Smith: Interdisciplinary?

Bennett: Or a dual major. Then our - David, our third child, had gone to WSU for a while and then dropped out and then after being out of school for a couple years he decided - he was doing some construction work and he decided to take the construction management program here at Central and got a degree in construction management in Central and so those were the only two - those were the two that got degrees here.

Smith: Now, did the other two simply get married and start their families?

Bennett: No, one got a bachelors degree at Pullman. Diana went to Washington State and Larry got a - his bachelors at University of Washington. They both - Diana went on and eventually got a doctors degree and is teaching at the University of Arizona in linguistics and Larry got a masters from Stanford and is an engineer with Hewlett Packard.

Smith: Now the other two children are doing what with their –

Bennett: Connie went on and did library - became a librarian and did advanced work in medical librarianship and library administration and she just recently became head librarian in Silverton, Oregon.
Smith: Silverton, Oregon?

Bennett: Just started last week and David is working at Boeing in a fairly responsible position.

Smith: Good. Did you ever work on a building committee while you were here?

Bennett: I was working on the building committee when we were working on the design of the physics building when I first got here and then that got dropped and then I was working on the building committee for the science building the last two years I was here.

Smith: Dean Hall?

Bennett: No, the one that is being built.

Smith: Oh, the one that’s being built?

Bennett: The physics part got dropped out of that program also. So then I worked on some building when they were looking at remodeling Lind.

Smith: Did you ever serve on the faculty council or the faculty senate?

Bennett: Yes, I served on the faculty senate.

Smith: Do you feel that it was an organization that served its purpose?

Bennett: I thought so. I felt that as the years went on in got more and more focusing on salary and not enough on academic issues. When it was first - earlier on I thought it was a good place for considering academic issues.

Smith: Did you ever take any courses while you were here at Central as a teacher? In any outside department for example I took a course in pottery because I wanted to learn how to throw pots.

Bennett: The - I don’t remember. I took some real short ones on computer work and but I don’t recall. I sat in on some math courses.

Smith: That’s fine. Now if there’s anything that we haven’t touched on that you would like to comment on for posterity because it is going to be preserved let’s hope forever. Feel free to make comment.

Bennett: I think I’ve already talked enough.

Smith: Okay, good enough. Thank you Bob.