Robert Jones interview

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Robert Jones

(Transcription of Tape 1, Side 1)

LL Today is August 7, 1997. And we’re interviewing Bob Jones, who retired from the CWU Library. And the interviewer is Larry Lowther. Ham Howard is operating the equipment.

Bob, before we get into your Central career, would you tell us a little bit about your personal background – where you were born, your family, where you got your education, and any career you might have had before coming to Central.

BJ I was born in Denver, Colorado on April 20, 1927. I lived my early life in [inaudible], Colorado, just north of Denver, and eventually, we ended up back in Denver, my family did.

I went through high school at the West Denver High in Denver. I was a high-school dropout. I joined the Navy before graduation time. My mother walked through the line and got my diploma. This was in 1945.

I was in the Navy for all 15 months. And during that time, I had a year’s sea duty. I served on four different ships, and I got to Japan and back.

After getting out of the service, I worked around Denver for short a while. And finally decided I’d better go back to school.

And ended up going to college at Western State College in Colorado, which is a small college. Essentially, the same kind of thing that we have here – or had here. It was a normal school originally, and then began being more liberal arts-oriented.

After graduation from Western in 1951, I taught school in [inaudible], Colorado for four months. I started in the fall, and I had an offer from the tech schools at Lowry Field in Denver that paid half-again as much as I was making in [inaudible], so they tended to agree that maybe I should leave.

And I spent the next year and a half in Denver, teaching at the tech schools at Lowry Field, an Army Air Force base. By then, got to the point where I couldn’t stand the city, and the military, and the civil service any longer.

So we moved to the Western Slope, and I took a teaching job in [inaudible], Colorado in 1953, I guess it was. I taught there for eleven years. I taught math, was the assistant baseball coach and also was the school librarian.

I came into a library career in kind of a strange way. I had decided that I had to leave teaching, because I just wasn’t making enough money to support the family. And I told the principal my thinking, and he suggested that since the librarian was leaving, if I’d go back to school that summer and pick up enough library courses to be accredited, why, they would add another month’s salary to my salary.

So, all things considered, I decided that maybe this would be a worthwhile endeavor. And I went back and picked up the required hours that summer.

And one thing led to another, and over a period of time, I picked up a Master’s of Library Science from the University of Denver by going back to school during the summers.
It was kind of an awkward situation, because my folks lived in Denver – we had a small farm at that time – and I would leave my wife and four kids at home on the farm, and I’d take off to Denver to go to school. Looking back on it, I don’t know how we managed this; but somehow, we survived.

I completed the degree at the University of Denver in 1964, and took a job at Cheney, at Eastern Washington College, a State college at that time. We were there for four years. And I always felt that – uh – I always felt a little more at home in the [inaudible] than I did around Spokane and in Cheney.

Even though I’d been in Seattle in the service, I’d never been inland here in Washington. I read everything I could about the state, but nothing I ever read indicated the kind of fog problem that they have in the Cheney and Spokane area.

And the first winter was a real problem, because we all had cabin fever. The fog would roll in there, and stay for two or three weeks at a time. The temperature never varied but two or three degrees during a 24-hour period. And it was a strange place to live, from our background in Colorado, where the sun came out almost every day. Or at least you’d expect that would happen.

Anyway, as I mentioned, I felt a little more comfortable in this kind of environment here; and discovered that George Fadenrecht, who was the Director of Libraries here at the time, was looking for a cataloger.

And I had explored the possibility of getting a second degree at Eastern, but because of the [inaudible] there, the possibility of a second degree at Eastern was very remote, if not impossible.

So I discovered that I could get a second degree here in Instructional Media, which is the one that I was after. And all things considered, I moved down here. And expected to stay three years, but here I am. [laughing]


LL Now, what year was it that you actually came here?

BJ I came here in August of 1968.

LL And did you come here as a cataloger?

BJ Yes, I took Mary Green’s place as the head of Cataloging. At the time I interviewed for the job, I think there were four professionals under Mary; that is, the cataloging process had five professional librarians. When I came, there was one left. I don’t know exactly what went on, but anyway I got a different job than the one I intended or expected to fill.

LL Just tell us briefly what your duties would entail in this job. Cataloging specifically what? What is it that you’d do?

BJ No, cataloging at that time was – entailed a lot of original cataloging, as you actually took the book and cataloged it yourself. There was some cataloging available from the Library of Congress, but a good share of cataloging we did was more the manual sense, so to speak.
As time went on, it became a little more automated; until today, the cataloging is done by the OCLC system, which is a – it’s hardwired or directly connected to our library here with a system is in Dublin, Ohio.

LL  What does OCLC stand for?

BJ  I wish you hadn’t asked me that. [laughter]

LL  OK!

BJ  It started out with the – it was the Ohio College Library System, I think. But today, it’s called the online-something, I can’t tell you exactly what it stands for.

LL  OK.

BJ  But OCLC is just an acronym that you hear every few minutes in the library world. It’s just something that I kind of wiped out of my mind, I guess.

LL  OK. Now, when you came, you said there was one other cataloger, and you two worked together? Or was this person under your supervision?

BJ  As head of the Cataloging Department, these people are under my supervision. I can’t tell you how many. There are also some clerical folks, in addition to the professionals.

I think we ended up finally with two professionals and myself. So we had a three-professional department. Plus, there must have been maybe eight or ten clerks – clerical staff – involved in the thing.

LL  These were non-professionals?

BJ  Yes.

LL  And did the numbers that would be involved in cataloging change much over the years?

BJ  They did, in that we … the Library budget was based upon a variation of the Clapp-Jordan formula, which came from California. And it was based – or, it was determined by the State at the state level, after the budgeting on campus, [inaudible].

So as we began to become familiar with ways of manipulating this formula, we discovered that we could generate additional monies each year. And these became quite sizable, as a matter of fact.

About 15 years ago, we were able to devote something like a million dollars towards materials, both monographs and materials.

LL  How did you generate this money?

BJ  Through the [inaudible] levers the State had developed as a result of modifying the Clapp-Jordan formula that they were using in California.

LL  Clapp-Jordan?
C-L-A-P-P-J-O-R-D-A-N, I think. But this continued until … oh, I’d say about seven or eight years ago now, and they finally abandoned this. So the Library is more or less at the mercy of the budgeting process here on campus now.

But up until that, we had – at times, I felt we had more money than we could reasonably spend. It was a real difficult thing to find materials that would be appropriate to a college library collection. There just wasn’t enough stuff out there that we needed to support our particular program.

Now, you were considered a faculty member, were you not?

Yes.

During all the time that you were here?

Uh-huh.

This wasn’t something that you had to fight for?

Well, it was something they were always concerned about. At Eastern, we wouldn’t have faculty status, and that’s one of the things that attracted me here. Because that allowed us to be on the faculty schedule, the faculty salary schedule.

At Eastern, the salary schedule there was somewhat below the faculty. And we had no power, no bargaining power, whatever. We were more or less at the mercy of the directorate and the college administration.

Here, at least, we have the kind of protection that the faculty enjoys, as far as our salary is concerned. Although I’m sure that teaching faculty [inaudible] and could be doing better.

That … the faculty status was an important part of my consideration of staying in this place.

Did you do any teaching of the students of Central while you were in the Library, or did you teach in some other department during your career here?

No. This is one of the things that the librarian and the administrators were always at odds about. We were finally able to convince them that we did actually teach, but it was more on a one-to-one basis. We didn’t actually teach in a classroom.

Although some of the staff did teach – what was it? – ILS145, that’s the Introductory Library course – I never did [inaudible].

Now, you were working in Cataloging. Did that give you many opportunities to interact with students?

Oh, yeah. Well, we had a lot of student employees, and there were all these questions that came up – about how the catalog was to be used, what was in there, and so on and so forth – that the reference people didn’t feel qualified to answer and in demonstrating.

But come to think of it, you asked about teaching. I did teach certain segments or sections of Helen Patton’s Library course at the time. Nothing on a regular basis, but more or less at her request.
LL  OK. Do you recall any problems that you would class as significant during your time at Central?

BJ  Well, you mentioned the salary thing. There was a point in time when, because of the way the Legislature defined “Library staff,” that the Administration on campus chose not to include us in the faculty salary increase at the end of the year.

So our salaries were frozen for about six months, from January to July. And then some money became available; and because of all the racket we raised over this thing and whatnot, we were put back on the salary schedule again.

LL  Was that during the 1980s?

BJ  It was in the 1980s, I don’t recall exactly the date. But it was something that the Library staff [inaudible].

LL  Yes, I remember that. Now, when you came here, you were working under George Fadenrecht. And you probably worked with two or three Library Deans or Directors after that? Do you have any impressions of them as administrators that you’d like to share?

BJ  This is kind of a ticklish area, I guess you can say. But when I first came, George Fadenrecht was the Director. He had some personal problems and chose to resign.

And the Library faculty then chose to lobby the Administration for a Dean. Because George didn’t feel that he had the kind of clout he needed to have in order to be in the Deans’ group.

So the Administration agreed that the next person to come in to replace George would be a Dean. And it turned out that Dick [inaudible] was that person. And I think he must have come in about 1972, 1973, something like that.

And he was replaced by Frank Schneider in the late [19]80s. These dates haven’t stuck in my mind. And when Frank retired, Gary Lewis came on board. And I guess Gary was really the only —

LL  Let’s see … Frank Schneider came during [inaudible]’s Administration?

BJ  Right.

LL  Was it early in [inaudible]’s Administration?

BJ  Yes, it was. Quite early.

LL  So probably the end of the [19]70s or early [19]80s?

BJ  Yeah, right. Because … you’re right. My timeframe is all screwed up. [laughter]

LL  And Gary Lewis, he must have come about 1990, something like that.

Anyway, what I was going to say was I’ve always felt that Gary Lewis was really the only administrator that really knew what was going on, and was able to deal appropriately with various policies and so on.
I at times felt that I was either too early or too late, because I would like to have been able to work with Gary a little longer. It was a much more enjoyable experience than some of the other things that came to pass.

LL  Now, Frank Schneider – when he came, I think some people were a little concerned, because they felt he didn’t have the appropriate background to be a Dean of Library. What’s your opinion on that?

BJ  Well, he was a real autocrat. An authoritarian. And had some very different ideas about librarianship that carried back too far in the library world, the library scheme of things.

He was adamantly opposed to automation. And as time went on, I became responsible for automation in the Library, as well as other things. We were usually at odds about what was going to happen next.

And since he held the purse strings and various forms of power, why, there wasn’t really a great lot that could be done as far as modern systems was concerned. There were some things done, but we were always having to try and pull him along to try to keep up with what was going on in the library world.

When he came, he was 59. I don’t know why that sticks in my mind, but it does. We figured we could stand him for six years! [laughter] He was going to retire when he was 65, but the laws changed and allowed him to stay till 70.

So the last five years were pretty disastrous, as far as progress and improvement of the Library services.

LL  But it was primarily because of his anti-technology attitude?

BJ  Yes. During that time, I set up Library services at Columbia Basin College over at Edmonds [Pasco]. And we also had the ones over in Seattle – SeaTac and … there’s one south of SeaTac there, I don’t remember the name of it offhand.

Anyway, we had four off-campus centers, and we had Library services established. Because we had terminals there, we had careers going twice a week, ordinarily.

And we eventually incorporated the Edmonds Community College Library holdings in our database, so that students there could use our databases, while our students here were using theirs. It really wasn’t that much of an advantage to our students, but it did serve them very well over there.

LL  I was curious about that, how the Library over here would serve the off-campus centers. And you mentioned that you sent couriers over regularly? Would that be vans with books in them?

BJ  Well, this was a system that we worked out with Jean Putnam. She was quite interested in approaching and providing this kind of service. Because it did enhance the program she was responsible for.

And I think the first one we set up was down at Columbia Basin. Hal and I and she went down and spent the day getting this thing going.
Anyway, the terminal down there spoke the same language as the terminal here on campus, so that you could query the system to determine whether a book was available – whether it was in the collection and whether it was available. And if it was available, you could put a hold on it. And then it would be transported down there with the courier.

They had – I think their circulation privileges were somewhat extended or expanded beyond those on campus, so that their [inaudible] the courier interaction. But there was quite a lot of traffic going between these various off-campus centers and our library as well.

We also provided material in the public library here – as far as I know, it’s still down there – so that if – to the public library here in town, you also had access to the college library holdings.

We were supposed to at one time have incorporated the holdings of the public library; but their database was not in a format that was compatible with ours, and I’m not sure anything was ever done about that. I was done and [inaudible].

But during the period from 1980 to 1990, these were the kinds of [inaudible] things that were taking place in the library world. And I was involved to the extent that Schneider would allow us to be involved.

LL And once again, how were students in these centers able to determine what was available in the CWU Library? Were you connected by computer at that time?

BJ Yeah, we were hardwired to each of these off-campus centers. So they had instantaneous access, just like we would have here on campus.

LL And did that begin in the early [19]80s?

BJ As I recall, it must have been early [19]80s that we installed that one down at the Columbia Basin.

LL OK, and soon after that, they were installed in the other centers on the coast, or in the Puget Sound area?

BJ Right.

LL OK, another topic. You’ve worked with a great many colleagues in the Library. Do any come to mind as being particularly outstanding in some way that you’d like to reflect on?

BJ I always felt that the Library kind of rolled along with its own momentum, because the quality of staff we had there was just … most of the people had at least a second master’s. Some of them had a doctorate.

And the direction at the top really didn’t seem to have much effect in the way that we were able to provide a service that we as a group expected and wanted to.

I think all the folks there were outstanding. It was kind of amazing, when you look at the background these people had and compare them to other library staffs, there must be no comparison.

Why we ended up with the kind of staff we had here, I really don’t have any idea. But I was really very pleased to be a part of this thing that we put together here.
How does CWU's Library rank in terms of libraries of comparable institutions around the country?

It's been a long time since I've looked at numbers and whatnot, but …

You had personal experience at Cheney.

I remember coming here and starting to spend some time in the collection and whatnot, and I was somewhat disappointed at what I saw when I first came down here. But because of the kind of money I mentioned being available to us, we were able to weed the collection and add to it, to the point where I think now it’s as good or better than anything else in the state of comparable size.

Right. And so, in terms of the collection itself, you’ve seen a great deal of improvement since 1968.

Oh, yeah.

OK. Now, did you have much contact with the higher Administration – Provost, Vice President, Board of Trustees?

At various times, I was responsible for the operation of the Library, the daily operation of the Library. When [inaudible] would take off on vacation, or [inaudible] or whatever, why, this usually was dumped in my lap. And at that point in time, I would have significant contact with [Edward] Harrington or [Robert] Edington. But it was not the same kind of contact or same relationship that [inaudible] would have with these people, of course. But it was considered a contact.

Do you have any particular comments on your relationship then with the administrators, and the quality of their performance?

I guess I had a lot of respect for Ed Harrington. I know that there were times on campus when he was not all that well thought of; but all things considered, why, I think he did very well. He gave the institution a fair shake. He used the Library budget as a bank account. And we would get this lump sum of money plunked into the budget at the beginning of the year. You don’t spend it all at once; you’d dribble it out over the year, so that you’d have a workload to keep the staff occupied for the full year, rather than one lump sum [inaudible].

So early in the year, up until about the first six months, why, there was a surplus in the Library budget. And Ed, from time to time, would borrow against this. But he always paid it back. He never took it and ran. He always managed to find money somewhere else in the campus budget to repay this money that he borrowed.

I can’t tell you offhand why he was borrowing this money; but there were expenses there wasn’t money available for at that point in time that he didn’t [inaudible] in some fashion for. I think mostly it had to do with the off-campus program but I’m not certain.

Edington? Any reaction or comments?
BJ  Edington wasn’t really around long enough to have much of an impact on the Library. As a matter of fact, I think he wasn’t even aware that the Library was part of his responsibility.

My contact with Edington, I guess, had to do with my involvement with the Athletic Committee.

We had a – it was kind of an interesting relationship I had with Edington. It didn’t have anything to do with the administration of the Library, or my relationship to him as a librarian or a faculty member or whatever.

It kind of came about as a result of the Dean Nicholson thing. And [inaudible] in the whole affair.

And I felt at the time, he had the right ideas; but for some reason, he wasn’t getting any kind of support from the various supporters that he needed to be able to pull some of this stuff off.

And I don’t know. I never dwelled on it long enough to figure out why he wasn’t able to continue to do some of these things that he would try to initiate.

LL  So you were on the Athletic Committee at the time of the Dean Nicholson era. Do you have any comments on the way that was handled?

BJ  Well, I think this is a reflection on Gary’s administration. I felt that the coaches, to some extent, were misled into believing that they could do what they did.

And when the time came that some of the events became public knowledge, Dean became the sacrificial goat. And I think anybody – everybody who was involved in Athletics then knew what was going on there.

Why the Administration chose to ignore it, I don’t know. Because they could have gotten it under control early on, and they could have dealt with the whole program differently. But it was a matter of saving various people’s necks, I guess, that caused Dean to be shoved down the road.

The interesting thing about the consequence of that whole thing was that it would – the Athletic Committee –

And I chaired this thing at various times. I chaired it at the time that Edington was here. And one of the things that – one of the charges we were given was to come up with a roles and responsibilities statement for the Athletic Program here on campus.

And we did that – we modeled it after the NCAA model – and presented it to the Administration. And they ignored it.

And as a consequence, you’ve seen some of the circumstances that have transpired since. In NCAA schools, the president is directly responsible for the athletic program. But the President chose not to assume that responsibility. And the consequence –

I don’t know what’s going to happen. I guess I’m still interested in the Athletic Program here. And I find it to be tragic that they find themselves in the kind of situation they are.

LL  How long did you serve on the Athletic Committee?

BJ  I don’t know. I was on the Athletic Committee back in Bink Beamer’s days for a while. I chaired the thing at that time.
That would be back in the [1970s, wouldn’t it? Early [1970s?]

Yeah. And then –

Were you on it until you retired?

And then I was off for two or three sessions, and then I got back on again when Gary Fredericks – by that time, Gary Fredericks was chair of the committee. I think I was on it until the last year. I must have been on the committee to [1991], say.

Was there a difference the way Athletics were handled among the different presidential administrations? Or did they all handle it about the same?

No, I think it was somewhat different under Gary’s administration. And it’s certainly different now under Nelson’s administration. I always felt that Gary was quite interested in Athletics himself. But when –

Was Athletics more favored under his administration?

Well, I think probably.

Did the relationship between Fredericks and Gary seem to flower to some extent, and possibly give the Athletics Program some advantage?

I’d have to go back and look at the budget picture to whether or not that’s true, because then we could see the whole thing. So I don’t know whether it was a matter of a personal relationship, or whether the personal relationship carried over into budgetary allocations.

If that were the case, then Gary might have been more inclined to support Athletics than [inaudible] was.

I see. And was there a change then when Nelson came in?

I think it was very definitely changed.

In what direction?

It deteriorated. But the Athletic Program here has always been a standout part of the campus endeavor. And when Dean was let go of the basketball program, you know, it went on; but it certainly doesn’t have the attraction that it had when Dean was here.

The football program has had its ups and downs. Right now, it seems to me that Athletics are probably on the down slope rather than on the up slope.

Particularly because of their commitment. You get into NCAA competition, why, it’s going to be years – if ever – before you’ll be able to compete at that level.

Now, let’s get back to the Library. Did the Library fare differently under the different presidential administrations?

Well, when Schneider came, he always maintained that one of the conditions of his coming was that Gary would give him all the support that he wanted in the Library.
And I think Gary pretty much honored that. Because this money that was generated out of the formula could have been used for other purposes, under the authority of various people on campus.

As soon as Schneider left, the first thing that I recall happening was that they took $100,000 out of our budget. They just took it. And there’s nothing anybody –

LL  Is that still under [inaudible]?

BJ  Yeah. Yeah. And shortly after Gary Lewis came – I can’t tell you the figure offhand – but it seems like we lost about $250,000 right off the bat over a period of a year there.

This was money that wasn’t going to be generated out of the formula, because the formula had already disappeared in the past. But still, we had expected in the Library that they would maintain the same level of budget that they had maintained in the past, and they just didn’t have it.

Pat McLaughlin has given me the figures here lately. But it seems to me like the total [inaudible] budget has been reduced about 30 percent. And when you consider the loss due to inflation in addition to this loss, they’re probably able to buy about half of what they were able to buy about ten years ago.

LL  Would you say then that within the last few years, the Library has tended to decline, in terms of the quality of its collection?

BJ  Oh, I guess you could assume that to be the case. But on the other hand, as I mentioned way back when, when we had a surplus of money, we were buying some very ephemeral things.

And the stuff that they’re buying now is probably more dedicated and more appropriate to various campus programs. So the quantity has deteriorated, but I wouldn’t necessarily say that the quality has gone the same direction.

LL  OK. Now, you were in Cataloging rather than Circulation, but I want to ask you anyway. Do you have any impressions of which departments made heavy use of the Library, you know, across campus?

BJ  Well, I guess I should tell you that … I should give a little more history of where I am, where I fit into the picture here.

I first came as head cataloger. And in about three years, I was made Director of Technical Services. This was a behind-the-scenes operation, which included Cataloging, Serials and Acquisitions.

And I guess that continued until we moved into the new Library. The title changed at that time. It was essentially the same job, I was still head of the Technical Services area.

And then when Schneider came, they chose to put Waddle back in Acquisitions. And since I’d been involved with that, why, I became Administrative Services Librarian. My office was up there besides Schneider’s on the second floor.

And that continued some other personnel problem occurred, and I was put back down in Technical Services, and became responsible for that whole operation again.
During my – what was it? – 24, 25 years here – I moved around behind the scenes considerably. There was not a great lot of cataloging being done after my first few years here.

OK, back to your question now.

LL  Yes. Do you have any impressions as to the departments that used the Library most heavily?

BJ  Well, in the library world, you talk about [inaudible]-oriented and non-[inaudible]-oriented disciplines. Of course, we saw a lot of the History people, we saw a lot of the Social Studies people. We didn’t see a lot of Science and Math people, because their disciplines are not [inaudible]-oriented disciplines.

So any … well, Geography, for instance. Those folks were always there. We saw a lot of History people. English. And Psychology.

I guess primarily the Math and Science people tended to use the Library the least, simply because they didn’t have a reason to. Unless they were there doing research or whatnot. [End of Side 1]

(Transcription of Tape 1, Side 2)

LL  … category, you know. Education, Technology …

BJ  Well, at that time we had the curriculum Library collection, and it was heavily used. People out of professional studies didn’t need the Education parts, of course, but they were heavy users of that area, as well as the general collections we had.

LL  Were there any faculty, administrators or departments that gave the Library problems?

BJ  Hmm … I wouldn’t say problems. I think they gave us more assistance. The first one that comes to my mind is Ray Smith. He’d spend a lot of time in the Library.

And whenever we had some money that became available at the end of the year, one of the problems we always had was that we had books on order, but they hadn’t billed. And if the money wasn’t expended at the end of the year, why, it was lost.

So we would cancel those orders on paper, although we left them standing. And this money then was freed up for use at the end of the year, and Ray was one of those people that we always asked if he had something in mind that we could spend a big chunk of money on.

And he always had something. [chuckles] So he’s probably responsible for making sure [we have] the microfilm collection here.

LL  He was particularly interested in newspapers, wasn’t he?

BJ  Yeah, yeah, but there were all sorts of other things. But he is responsible, as you say, for the background of the major share of those – the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor and – well, those are the only two that come to mind at the moment.

There are also some other collections there. Gordon Warren also got involved in this thing, and I mean, when he was Library representative, he had some – he usually had some things. I think
he worked through the department on the stuff he was buying, primarily. But I’m not sure about
Ray, whether he –

LL  Well, Ray, of course, was Director of Humanities; but he also taught in the History
Department for a long time.

Did you have any association with the group that Jim Brooks started, Friends of the Library?

BJ  I remember it. And I remember it becoming a thing of the past. There was always a –

LL  But it’s still going on.

BJ  Yeah. There was always a Friends of the Library allocation in the budget. And … I don’t
remember any money coming into that thing. Now there is money going into it, and Friends of the
Library is quite active again, under Jim’s direction. But I think it was almost defunct, if not
defunct, particularly during Dr. Schneider’s tenure.

LL  OK. Now, I know you probably didn’t have too many opportunities to make judgments about
students, but do you have any impressions of any changes in the student body, the quality
of students that we got over the years?

BJ  The one thing that sticks in my mind is – again, I can’t give you dates, but remember when
the Work-Study Program first came into being? We were just [inaudible] work-study
students. And the quality of these students was [inaudible], let alone go
to college.

That’s no longer true. The students that are coming into the Library for student help now are
different. They’re much more tuned in and qualified.

LL  Right.

BJ  That would be my only recollection at the moment.

LL  OK, now let me get to that list of things for you to react to, or not to react to, as you choose.

The salary schedule?

BJ  The one thing I’ve already mentioned in regard to the salary schedule was that pay
increases for the Library were frozen there for six months.

I guess in my own mind, I always felt that we were kind of at the bottom of the heap as far as
salary was concerned. I can remember Ham making mention of the fact that his wife was making
more in the public schools than he was. I don’t whether that was true or not.

So I’m sure there were times when we were at a disadvantage as far as salary was
concerned. We didn’t get the kind of support that we might have, that I would have expected
from the Administration.

But all in all, the salary thing, in my case, worked out quite well.

LL  The Faculty Code?
BJ The one thing about the Faculty Code that we were always concerned about in the Library was the fact that status wasn’t defined in the Code for the Library staff. There were times when we had to stand up on our hind legs and speak our peace, in order for that provision to remain in the Code.

I don’t know whether it was a concerted effort on the part of the Administration to get rid of us as faculty, or whether this was happenstance. But all in all, there were times when we felt that we were really at risk.

LL Academic freedom – did you ever feel any pressures in the Library in the direction of censorship? To exclude certain types of works, for example?

BJ No, I think that in the library world, there’s probably less pressure in this direction as there might be on the teaching faculty, because the library world has always given a considerable amount of credence to freedom of expression, freedom of thought and ideas. But there was never any attempt to either remove or add particular content or material.

LL OK. Board of Trustees?

BJ I don’t recall anything about a relationship with the Board of Trustees.

LL Did you have much of an awareness of the board, who was on the board, what they were doing or anything?

BJ There were some people that I thought at various times were quite respectable. There was Herb Frank, Sterling Monroe – these two for some reason stick in my mind.

Herb Frank especially. I thought that during the time that he was on the board here, we were going in the right direction.

LL The Legislature?

BJ No.

LL OK. [chuckles] Financial support? I think we’ve already spoken to that. Faculty-Administration collegiality?

BJ Ummm … well … my only thought there would be that there were times when there seemed to be a barrier between the faculty and the Administration, as far as communication was concerned. There were some problems, but I don’t know that we in the Library were particularly involved.

LL The Faculty Senate?

BJ I was in the Senate several times, and I was always kind of disappointed in what was accomplished at the end of the year. I think the Senate probably rode herd on the Code. Well, that and the Curriculum Committee. They were probably the two primary or main objectives or responsibilities for the Senate.

LL Town-gown relationships?
BJ  I don’t recall any particular problems in that area. I know there is a relationship, but it seemed like in the circle that we moved in, it didn’t seem to make any difference whether we were part of the college or [inaudible]. We were accepted.

LL  Long-range planning?

BJ  [Chuckles] I always thought this was kind of a subterfuge to keep people off guard; that certainly planning has its place, but it can be overdone. And I think it has been overdone at times.

LL  Did you find that the plans were usually implemented?

BJ  Well, on the many committees that I served on, on campus and whatnot, they’d come up with these grand plans. But they were kind of stuck in a drawer and forgotten about – like the roles and responsibilities statement for the Athletics Program.

There’s a tremendous amount of time spent by some committee members on these things. And it turns out to be a big, fat waste of time.

LL  Academic organization? You know, there have been a lot of changes over the years, and I don’t know whether they affected the Library very much or not.

BJ  No, I don’t think it really had any effect on the Library. Personally, I’m not sure that was the [inaudible] for the organization. You still have to be partners to it; you still have to provide the materials for them in the same fashion. So it really didn’t have much effect on the way the Library functioned or served its public.

LL  Building-naming policies?

BJ  I never really understood that. [chuckles] I don’t suspect it will ever change either.

LL  Hiring policies and practices?

BJ  In the Library, I always felt that we were operating at somewhat of a disadvantage. I never could quite figure out why.

When I attempted to hire a head cataloger – one previous to the one that’s here now – I went through four nationwide searches trying to find somebody who would come into Central – Ellensburg – and be willing to stay and do the job.

There’s something about – I never did know whether it was the campus atmosphere, or the location geographically, or what was involved. But it was very seldom that I found somebody who really indicated an interest in coming here and staying here, and wanting to be here.

And that has changed somewhat now, primarily because of the reduction in funding of the Oregon schools. There’s been a lot of people coming out of Oregon into Washington State in higher education.

LL  “Publish or perish.” Was pressure put on librarians to publish?

BJ  Yeah, to some extent. It was – it was known – it really wasn’t expressed, but it was known – there had to be a certain amount of publishing done in order to achieve promotion.
LL  OK. What other committees did you serve on, in addition to the Athletic Committee, [other] campus-wide committees?

BJ  Hmmm ... I was on the Board of Academic Appeals. Chaired that a time or two. I was on the Library Building Committee. There was another thing, the building … the thing that [inaudible] became chair of.

LL  Oh, the … the Space Committee.

BJ  Yeah, the Space Committee. I was on that thing several times. Those are the only ones that come to mind.

LL  Do you have any comments you’d like to make about any of those committees, or any problems they encountered?

BJ  No, I think I’ve already mentioned the Athletic Committee. I thought that [being] on the Board of Academic Appeals, that [it] was a really fun and interesting part of my committee career. We wrote the procedures and whatnot.

And I got involved in several of the appeals, none of which were carried through to completion, because the students decided that they really didn’t have a leg to stand on.

But other than that, I don’t know anything that comes into my mind.

LL  Well, Bob, thank you very much for this interview.

BJ  Thank you.