

Ernie Harrill

Interviewee: Ernie Harrill

Interviewer: Courtney L. Tollison, Ph.D.

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Transcript

PART 1 – 00:00:00

Dr. Tollison: Today is August 4th, 2003, and we're sitting here in the president's suite at Furman and I'm talking with Dr. Ernie Harrill?

Dr. Harrill: Ernie. Everyone calls me Ernie.

Dr. Tollison: Everyone calls you Ernie? Ernie Harrill who was a Political Science professor from 1949 to 1983 and the Dean of Students here from 1962 to 1968. Let's start off with how you came to Furman in 1949.

Dr. Harrill: In 1949 I got engaged to be married. So, I was waiting really for word from the U.S. State Department, had I passed the Foreign Service Office exam, and they told me it would be at least a year before they called me up, and so I needed something to do in that year. So, the Graduate Dean, he was my advisor on my master's thesis, called me up one day and said "Do you really need a job?" and I said I needed a job for a year. He said "Well the Dean from Furman is coming up here to see prospects from Political Science."

Dr. Tollison: Dean Bonner?

Dr. Harrill: No, that was Dean Tibbs

Dr. Tollison: Tibbs.

Dr. Harrill: Bonner and I came here in the same year.

Dr. Tollison: Oh. I'm sorry.

Dr. Harrill: '49

Dr. Tollison: I'm getting confused... we're going back. Gotcha.

Dr. Harrill: This is late in '48 or early in '49. And so, I said "Yes, I'd like to talk to him. I could use a job for a year particularly since I'm getting married in December." And so, another fellow, a Political Science student, a graduate student in Political Science, and I came down together to be interviewed. We talked to Dean Tibbs and he took us in to meet Dr. Plyler and then – this was all on the old campus of

course, there was no thinking about the new campus at that time. But Dean Tibbs was an interesting [inaudible], he taught Philosophy. He was always putting his foot in his mouth. The first faculty meeting that year... he was introducing the new faculty – well I'm getting ahead of myself. They offered the job to the other guy who came with me and he decided to go to Hendrix College out in Arkansas, so then they offered the job to me, and I took it. But the interesting thing was that when I got here and saw the campus, the first time I was here, it was pretty dilapidated. All the buildings were old except for the government pre-fab buildings which were scattered around over the campus. There was one men's dormitory that was a pre-fab. There was a classroom building called West Hall, which was a pre-fab. And there were several others, but those were the two largest pre-fab buildings. But it was a pretty dilapidated campus, but there was something about it that I liked. The Dean told me and called a Mrs. Cox who lived just half a mile from campus. Her husband had been a dean here, a Physics teacher I believe, and had died, and she still had a big two-story house which she rented it out to unwed faculty members, male. So I went down and talked with her and she showed me the room. It was a big old room in that old house, and one bath for four rooms. There were two other faculty members in two of the rooms and one room was empty. A couple of weeks later I moved in.

Dr. Tollison: Who else was living there?

Dr. Harrill: Who was in there? One was an English professor who was older. His name... well he taught Shakespeare... this was before Crabtree came. The older I get the worse my memory gets. I can see him and hear him but I can't think right now what his name is. But anyway, he was in one room and a young new man in History, Walter Heacock, was in the other room. And he and I became very good friends. He was a Furman graduate who was finishing his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin at the time in History, American History. Anyway, he showed me around. He knew all the places. And I think he was one of the reasons I was excited to stay here. But anyway, I had one class for the first three or four years I was here, I had an eight o'clock class in the morning on the women's campus. So, my first class at Furman was all girls and it was somewhat nerve wracking for me. I soon noticed, the first year, it was under the auditorium in a basement, semi basement, half level. Those girls were very interesting, and I remember they gave me a wedding present. They were very interested in the fact that I was getting married. They gave me a wedding present and all that kind of thing. But I had that eight o'clock class for two or three years but I got really [inaudible] when I got another class later in the morning. I'd gotten tired of the eight o'clock class. But one of the things I noticed about that class was when they moved from under the auditorium to a regular classroom which was under the girls' rooms. But every morning the girls would come by, over two thirds of the girls would come in with raincoats on whether it was raining or clear or cold. So I finally asked one of the girls "Why do they wear raincoats?" She said "Well they can get ten more minutes sleep if they don't dress." So, they'd just get out of bed, put on a raincoat and come downstairs. Made a lot of sense.

Dr. Tollison: So all women in the class?

Dr. Harrill: All women. At eight o'clock in the morning, none of the men would come over for a class, anyway, there were several sections of government class. I was very interested after I had been there about two months and one day after class this girl stayed and came up and said "Dr. Harrill I want to make a confession to you." She said "I did something wrong this morning and I feel very guilty about it." I said "What was that?" It must've been some ol' sinful thing. And she said "Well my roommate didn't want to get up this morning, so when you called role I answered for her and she wasn't here." I thought "Well that's something. If they're all this honest I don't have to worry about that." But anyway, it was rather uneventful. I used to get two or three of them, I drove from the woman's class on the women's campus to the men's campus after class, usually two or three of them would ride with me, they didn't want to go on the bus. Then I had all my classes on the men's campus in a pre-fab building. It was wooden, shaky, it had about six, I guess, classrooms. It was heated by a coal-burning furnace and sometimes something would happen to the furnace and the building would fill with smoke – coal smoke. It was usually that you had to go outside on those days. Some days it didn't work at all and that was usually in mid-winter. So I took my class over to the women's dormitory that was just across the street, the women's dorm, they had one dorm of women over there.

Dr. Tollison: Manly? No.

Dr. Harrill: Manly.

Dr. Tollison: Was it Manly?

Dr. Harrill: Manly. I'd go over there and have a class in the parlor there. But it was a... Gene Looper [Charles Eugene Looper], who was the only other person in Political Science at that time, he had a little office about half as big as this room, big enough for two small desks and one small metal file cabinet and two chairs. And any time that anybody came in to talk to one of us, particularly Gene, because they knew him a lot better because he'd been there several years, he said "Now you leave if anybody comes in, to make a place for them to sit down. If you'll wait outside," but he said, "unless I ask you to stay." Gene was a very handsome, blond, athletic, you know. His wife helped [inaudible]. But he said "Unless I ask you to stay, in which case you can stand up by the window." But he says "Sometimes these girls get pretty forward and I'd like for you to stay in here with me." So occasionally he would ask me to stay. I remember one year I was teaching summer school, those buildings were just as hot in summer as they were cold in the winter, and in one of the classrooms that year there was a fan up on the ceiling and I thought "This is great, it really helps move the air a little bit." Then Dr. Leeds, who's dead now bless his heart, the psychology teacher, he came into the office one afternoon when Gene was gone and said "I took up money from my class to buy that fan, and I think you ought to participate in the cost of the fan, which would be such-and-such." He had it

figured out down to the room. And I said “Dr. Leeds, I really don’t feel like I need to. I didn’t ask for it. I didn’t know it was coming. It just appeared one day.” He said “Well think about it and if you decide to pay your share, well fine.” I said “I’d be willing to move across the hall. I think that room is empty perhaps.” Which I did. I just didn’t like the idea of his doing something and then asking me for money for it after it was done. Later I discovered he was quite a money-saving man, and I thought he demonstrated that. West Hall, it was across the street from the rest of the campus and you had to go up a little hill, about four steps, boards, wooden boards, up that little bank, either that or, there was a driveway down by the side of it. And it was not paved at all, it was just mud in the wet season. But when it was wet or raining you got very muddy getting inside of that building. It had none of the amenities that you would expect today, so when we finally moved out here in the 50s it was quite a nice jump.

PART 2 – 00:14:00

Dr. Tollison: So whatever happened with the State Department?

Dr. Harrill: I got a letter from them in April of my second year here saying that I should report at such-and-such a date, this was about 30 days later then the draft, right at the end of our exam period and I said “I can’t leave the last month before exams and during exams. That just wouldn’t be right.” And my wife was working. She worked at the Children’s Center, she’s a social worker and she placed children for adoption and one of the interesting things she did,...she would get letters of recommendation from people who knew the person who wanted to adopt the child. So somebody had given the name of a pastor of the [inaudible] Street Baptist Church who was really active in Furman affairs and very conservative. He was one of the people that could tell something to Mary. And this man asked her what did she do, was she married, what did her husband do and she told him I taught at Furman and this interested him very much. He said “Do you know there are people at Furman who believe it’s alright for a married man or woman to dance with someone other than their husband?” Well Mary and I had chaperoned a dance, an SAE dance I think it was, the night before that. And Mary had come home saying those boys were so nice, they all could see that I could dance. And this man was saying that was a terrible, terrible thing. He said “I wouldn’t let my wife let another man put his arms around her.” She goes, “Where did we come?” This was her first year here. We were married in December and she went to work the first of January. And she didn’t tell him that she had been to a dance and she thought the boys were very nice to dance with. She wasn’t very much older than they were. That was her introduction to the Baptist beliefs at the time. Restrictions on the women were very abiding. There were no restrictions on the men that I could find out. They came and went as they pleased. They didn’t have to come in at a certain time or, they could hang out.

Dr. Tollison: What about their behavior, their sort of guidelines, ethical guidelines?

Dr. Harrill: Well no drinking of course. But there was some drinking. And one time the police raided a house of ill repute downtown. See we were right in town, so it was easy for everybody to get into town. You would just walk down Main Street. They raided there and they found in the registration book there, and the names "John L. Plyler," "George Christenberry," George was vice president and taught biology, but their names showed up and they called them up to check on whether they'd been there or not. Of course they knew nothing. Never, never been in the place.

Dr. Tollison: Just students that were...

Dr. Harrill: Yeah, students who had given the wrong name and used the names of those two. But we would go to football games in the stadium, there at Sistine Stadium, which still is used by Greenville High School. But it was not a comfortable stadium, and not a very pretty one, looks much better now than it did then. But everybody went and dressed up for football games as if they were some big social event. And the fraternities then were going strong, the women of course had no sororities, but the fraternities would have parties which were formal parties in which the men dressed and the women of course dressed up.

Dr. Tollison: Off campus parties.

Dr. Harrill: Oh yes, all off campus.

Dr. Tollison: Where were some of the parties held?

Dr. Harrill: The Poinsett Hotel was a good place, the Greenville Hotel.

Dr. Tollison: Where's the Greenville Hotel?

Dr. Harrill: It is now a home for low income people. It's a block or two above the First Baptist Church. It's across the street from the First Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Tollison: Oh, I know where you're talking about.

Dr. Harrill: They had a room we could use. The American Legion Building was another favorite spot for them. And then they would have Mountain Party once a year. We chaperoned one of those and then said after that "We'd never do that again."

Dr. Tollison: What was that about?

Dr. Harrill: There were cabins up in one of these mountain parks and of course the girls, the girlfriends, were in certain cabins and the men were over here in certain others. I caught one boy three times going into the women's cabins and kicked him out

and I told him I was going to send him home the next I caught him. I remember it was later on, I was down there in Atlanta talking to the alumni group and he was there, and I started telling that story. And he said "Don't ever tell that. I wouldn't want my children to know that I ever was doing such things." I said "I didn't use your name." He said "I know, but I knew who you were talking about and I'm sure somebody else there probably knew." But anyway he was worried that his children might find about their father. And those were about the only social activities except the Baptist Student Union was big. A lot of people belonged to that, and they were...

Dr. Tollison: Do you think the majority of students belonged to that?

Dr. Harrill: Yes. They would have parties but they were always on campus with just punch and cookies and talk. So they got pretty tired of that before very long.

Dr. Tollison: Well the off-campus parties, did people dance at those?

Dr. Harrill: Oh yes.

Dr. Tollison: And were alcoholic beverages served or no?

Dr. Harrill: They weren't served, but they were available. They usually had them just outside in somebody's car.

Dr. Tollison: Oh, okay.

Dr. Harrill: But they did not serve alcoholic beverages. They knew better than that because if that had ever been reported, they would've been out.

Dr. Tollison: So they were just discrete about...

Dr. Harrill: They were very discrete about it except when they got too much. I remember one boy... I used to be a chaperone of a lot of those things because the older faculty members would not, they did not like to chaperone social activities off campus. So the younger people like me were doing most of the chaperoning. I remember one boy whose name was, he was in SAE, and his name was Hubcup and I kept forgetting his name. And he had been drinking, you could smell it, and he came up to me and he grabbed me and "Come on out here." And we went outside and he said "Now you see this?" and it was the hubcap of a car. He said "When you see me remember 'hubcap,' 'Hubcup,' – 'Hubcup,' 'hubcap.'" I never did forget his name and I still remember it years later. I think he's a lawyer down in Florida now. But anyway, I never had any serious trouble about things just because the rules were so rigid you sort of expected them to be broken. I did. I'd come from Chapel Hill where everything was free and open. They had a Veterans' Club on the campus where alcohol was served. So, I wasn't shocked by these things but I knew better that to let them get out of hand.

Dr. Tollison: Were you asked any questions about whether you drank alcohol or were you a Baptist or those kinds of things?

Dr. Harrill: I was asked to sign a statement. They gave me a slip of paper to sign that said do not indulge in alcohol, and I didn't ever return it, and nobody ever said a word. I don't know whether they didn't check it or whether they checked it and decided it's better not to ask.

Dr. Tollison: What about... were you ever asked if you were... Are you a Baptist?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, I'm a Baptist so that was okay.

Dr. Tollison: So did they ask you?

Dr. Harrill: I don't remember. I came from a very Baptist family so there was no problem there. But they did ask me about alcohol.

Dr. Tollison: When do you remember first hearing talk about moving to a new campus?

Dr. Harrill: After I had been here several years, three, it would be about three years, I began to hear rumors that Furman was gonna move, and they were looking for land around Greenville. And that of course turned out to be true, but I wasn't in on any of that.

Dr. Tollison: Were people excited?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, they were very excited, you know, we wondered would it be us, would we, whether we would have to move. We didn't know where it was going to be.

Dr. Tollison: The condition of the campus I think was...

Dr. Harrill: Rundown. Dr. Plyler had let it run down because he had a pretty good idea apparently that he would move. Anyway, they didn't repair things. We lived first over off of Daniel Avenue in an apartment of a couple... they had an apartment one end of their house, it was a big, white, two-story house on Daniel... that was a good address back then, I guess it still is... What they originally had was a sunporch. Anyway, it was closed in. The front part of it was our living room, next to that was a kitchen, and over here was a bedroom. The bedroom was a part of the original house, bedroom and bath, and they had just opened up the rest of it. But it was so small that when Mary's brother came down after we had been there for a couple of weeks. He came down from Greensboro, North Carolina, and a friend of his, they just came by for breakfast and then they went on. But I remember serving them breakfast, the only thing we had was a circle table that was just big enough for two people in the kitchen so we seated them in the living room. Mary was coming this way with a tray, and I was coming this way with coffee, we couldn't pass each other, one of us had to back up. It was that small. They were very nice people who owned it. But anyway, we stayed there

for about nine months and then we moved into a pre-fab over on campus. They had pre-fabs for faculty.

Dr. Tollison: Who else lived in those pre-fabs with you guys? Is that where Dr. Babb lived as well?

Dr. Harrill: Dr. Babb lived over facing Augusta Road. There was a string of them there. We weren't in those. They were upper "Slobbovia." We were in lower "Slobbovia" which was...

Dr. Tollison: What was it called?

Dr. Harrill: Lower "Slobbovia." "Slobbovia" was a place in a comic strip so that's where it got its name. Ours was sort of the second class, the younger families and next to us was the KA house and we were on the end next to the KA house.

Dr. Tollison: In a pre-fab, the KA?

Dr. Harrill: No, they were in a little bungalow they built there before the war. And across the street was a pre-fab building that was a dormitory for men. Let's see. We didn't have any difficulties up in the pre-fab because we had more room than we did in that little place on Daniel, and they were well heated with one big gas stove in the living room which heated the whole apartment. So that was never a problem, but if anything broke down you called Mr. Childress. He was the only maintenance man on the campus. He fixed everything. One time we had called about something about the lights in the living room not coming on, coming on and not going off, whatever it was. Anyway, when we came back he had come and fixed it, but on the wall about this high beside the door there was a footprint of a man's big shoe. We never could figure out what Mr. Childress was doing getting his foot up almost as tall as I was. It was just there very clean. But anyway, he was the only one, and he tended to fix things with a piece of string, a piece of wire and a pair of pliers. We lived pretty well in those. Everybody pitched in hanging wallpapering and stuff....

PART 3 – 00:30:32

Dr. Tollison: ...get torn down after you all moved? What happened to them?

Dr. Harrill: They tore them down after we moved. They tore down all the pre-fab buildings. That was about all we could do with those. Well, in fact, they tore down the regular buildings on the campus and built a shopping center there, which didn't make it, and so it was turned into county offices. But the KA people didn't bother us very much. I remember Lehman Hamrick was in that group. He lived there. He's one of the trustees, they call him James now though, but we called him Lehman when he was here.

Dr. Tollison: I think I'm supposed to interview him.

Dr. Harrill: You probably are. He lives in Spartanburg. He was an executive with...

Dr. Tollison: Oh, Milliken. Yes, he is on the list.

Dr. Harrill: He would be. He's been on the trustees and so forth

Dr. Tollison: He lived in the KA house?

Dr. Harrill: He lived in the KA house. He was a... let's see... I believe he was a Math Major then. He graduated and went to Duke and got an MA in Political Science and ended up working for Milliken all of his active career, and doing very well with apparently. And his wife was one of the Cater girls, who were a series of sisters who came, there were four of them I believe. Each one was a May Queen, and Homecoming Queen in their day, and then the next one came, and she was, and so on. They were from Easley, but they were beautiful girls...

Dr. Tollison: Cato?

Dr. Harrill: Cater. C-A-T-E-R, yes. They, let's see, Lehman Hamrick lived there, among others, I'm not sure about who some of the others were, of course he took all the Political Science courses, but he was a Math Major and then he got his masters' degree in Political Science. Oh, I was talking about the building, the pre-fabs. The most exciting thing, not really exciting, but nerve wracking in connection with that building was, George Christenberry was the dean at the time, and he said, "I want you to help me." "What do you want?" "We have a very difficult case coming up and I need somebody who knows the students. Would you be willing?" I said, "Yes, I'd be willing." It seems that one of the boys who lived in that dormitory had come into his office and told him that a certain boy in that dormitory was homosexual, and George had gone in and gone through his trunk, which you wouldn't do now, but he did then, and found some love letters from another boy who was at Furman. And then he said "We've got to have a hearing for him to see what's going to be done with him. Well, you can imagine, when we called that boy in he sat there, and George explained to him what happened, he started crying. It was a very difficult time.

Dr. Tollison: I'm sure. This was in the 50s?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, in the 50s. I hadn't become dean of students. I was dean of students after we came out here.

Dr. Tollison: So this was on the old campus.

Dr. Harrill: This was on the old campus in a pre-fab building. Anyway, George showed him the letters that he'd found in his trunk and the boy cried and cried, and said you can't, that this will ruin me, my father will never live through this, he will never

understand my condition, and all that. Well the thing was, after George sent him back down to his room, and told him we'd let him know the next morning what we were going to do. And George said "There's nothing to do but send him home." Well, the love letters were from a boy who had graduated from Furman the year before and was in the Baptist Seminary in Louisville, which muddled the waters considerably. George said "We have to send him home. We can't let him stay here on the campus in the dormitories." And so he said "I want you here when I tell him. I've got to have a witness." So, he called him up and he told him, and the boy went into another crying fit. I don't know that I ever felt sorrier for anybody than I did that boy. There was nothing he could do. His father arrived that afternoon. George called me and said, "his father is here, I want you to come on up and help me talk to him." So, I went up and his father started crying, and both of them were crying. It was a sad and teary time. I tell you what. The boy was sent home and I have no idea whatever happened to that young man. I never saw him, I never heard anything, I never asked anybody what had happened to him. But I would think that it would be handled in a much more humane way nowadays than it was back then.

Dr. Tollison: I'm sure the student wouldn't be asked to leave. It probably wouldn't have even occurred.

Dr. Harrill: No. I understand there are some publicly homosexual faculty members now so it would be very different thing back then, you could hardly say the word much less kept anybody here who was. Anyway, that was one of the worst things I ever got involved in back then. There were some funny things. I don't know if you're interested in hearing those things or not. The pre-fab apartments were connected two in a section, and in the other half of our section was a man in Physical Education. He was a big, brawny, he was a lot like Steve, in size, and he was inclined to swagger around. But anyway, he came by one morning and said "Listen, I have to go out of town and I have ordered a play set for my children to put in the back yard and they're going to bring it this morning while I'm gone and my wife won't be here. Will you be able to be here a such-and-such an hour?" And I told him I would. So, they came with the play set and they said "Well now the man who ordered this said that there would be somebody here that would put it up, and we were not to put it up." Well I had never put up a play swing or that kind of thing in my life, but he had told them so I said "Okay." So, I worked the whole day on that thing trying to get it... it got up half way... it was sort of shaky. George says "Oh what do you mean? There's nothing to it." Then he came back and I told him. And then one day he came over and said "Look I saw a snake under my apartment. Would you mind crawling under there and getting that snake?" I said "George, I don't mind doing a lot of things for you but I'm not gonna crawl under this house looking for a snake." He said "Well I'll get somebody else to do it." I said "Why don't you do it?" "I'm afraid of snakes," he said. As I said, he'd been swaggering around, you know, a big shot, and then he was afraid of snakes. And then, I went back to Chapel Hill to do some work on my dissertation, was up there five months, and when I came back, oh we moved up there for that time, I wasn't going to be home at all. You know how that is.

Dr. Tollison: (laughs)

Dr. Harrill: So we moved up there. And then the next summer we were moving back to Greenville from Chapel Hill and I had a truck. Mary's brother had [inaudible] half of North Carolina. But anyway, he had loaned me a truck to move our furniture back down here. Back then you had to move everything that you could save. I had the uh, ... well I forgot this story, very important, about Julius. He said "Now it's gonna cost me more if they have to deliver it." So, I told him I'd pick it up in the truck but "Would you mind borrowing a truck from Furman and driving and up town," the place sort of was in downtown. "Julius, why don't you do that now [inaudible]." "No," he said, "I don't know how to drive a truck." I said "I've never driven a truck before in my life but I can learn in five minutes." He said "Well I don't have time." Anyway, I had to drive his truck, it's the first time I'd ever driven a truck, right down Main Street to the other end and he never did drive the truck. But we came back from Chapel Hill, it was August and it was hot and there was no air conditioning in the truck of course. And so when I got there, I called Julius and said, "Julius, I'm not gonna be in any condition to load that truck. You promise me that you'll be there to load it and I'm gonna pick up the truck the next morning at eight o'clock so I won't have time for you to do it in the morning." "Oh yes of course I will. I'll get it loaded that night and I'll leave it down there." So I left it down there and that next morning the truck is standing there, just as empty as when I left it. His wife was in bed. His wife came to the door and says, "Lyles has gone to referee a softball game and he won't be back 'til eleven or so." I said "I can't wait. I have to be back to Chapel Hill by this afternoon and I can't stay here all that time." And she says "Well do you mind loading?" And I said "Well I can load some things but I can't pick up a refrigerator and load it in that truck or any of the heavy stuff." She said "Well I'll get somebody to help you." So we went out there and we loaded the big things on then got all the smaller things. "Anything else?" And she said "No." She said that. I said "Well clearly there's a sterling silver pitcher, about yay-big, lying out there in the middle of your front yard. Do you want it to go? Or what do you want done with it?" And she said "Oh I forgot about that." And she picked it up and threw it on the back of the truck. And I decided then that I would look in the refrigerator, so I looked in it. Everything was in that refrigerator that had been in it in the house. Whatever had been put in several days before was still there. Like I said it was August, it was gonna be steaming hot all the way to Chapel Hill. "Betty, you mean you?" She said "Yes," she said, "just leave it. It won't hurt." So I drove to Chapel Hill and I had told her, I said "Now you've got to drive. You all will get up there before I will. By the time you get packed and get in the car you'll get there before I will. And I'm gonna have to rest a while before I drive back to Greensboro to leave the truck." She said "Oh yeah not a problem. We'll be there." So I got to Chapel Hill and drove out to Victory Village which was a little village right off campus for veterans and I couldn't get in the front door. Walked around the back and there was Betty and Lyles and their children sitting under a tree. "What in the world's going on here?" And I had told him, I said, "There's a place there in town." I told him where it was, where you could go, there's labor who wait there all the time for odd jobs and he could pick up two or three people to unload it. But nothing had been unloaded. He said "I can't get

in." I said "Did you try the office center?" He said "Yes, but they closed at three o'clock or something. Anyway they're closed now." So I said "Let's see if I can get in." So I went around and found a window that wasn't locked. So I crawled in the window and opened the doors and said "I am through. You can unload that. I'm gonna take that truck to Greensboro an hour and a half from now and if your stuff is still on it I'm gonna take it to Greensboro." And so he went down to the place I told him about and got a couple men who came down and they unloaded it so I didn't have to take it to Greensboro. But that was just sort of odds and ends that could happen anywhere I guess. But we came back then and moved into another pre-fab but this one was back off of the line of pre-fabs that faced Augusta.

Dr. Tollison: Across the street?

Dr. Harrill: And there was one running this way. There was a bakery right up here, a big bakery, Claussen Bakery. So, we were in the one closest to it. But you could smell that bread cooking every day. It smelled so good. But anyway [inaudible], Lewis Frazier, do you remember Dr. Lewis Frazier, he was the registrar. He had a son [inaudible]

Dr. Tollison: He's an attorney [inaudible]?

Dr. Harrill: Yes. But anyway, Judy and Lewis were buddies when they were little children, and they started school at the same time, and Judy's parents said they should not be spending the night together at that age, so she told Judy she shouldn't spend the night with Lewis, and Lewis could not spend the night with her, without explaining why, or any reasons for it. And those two kids were just indignant that their parents wouldn't let them spend the night together. Well anyway, we moved from that place to out off of [inaudible] street, and we lived there for a few years, and we had another child, so we just had two babies, so we needed another bedroom, and we bought the house on Broughton Drive after living in there, thirty something years ago.

PART 4 – 00:47:45

Dr. Tollison: Were you here for the Groundbreaking of the campus?

Dr. Harrill: Oh yeah.

Dr. Tollison: What was that like?

Dr. Harrill: Well there was nothing here, absolutely nothing, except for a few trees, but I couldn't figure out where in the world campus was going to be, and where the lake was going to be. They told us there was going to be a lake. Finally figured out there'd be a lake. What's the road that runs behind campus?

Dr. Tollison: Old Buncombe?

Dr. Harrill: No, back of Furman.

Dr. Tollison: Whitehorse?

Dr. Harrill: No, it's the street.

Dr. Tollison: Oh. Roe Ford.

Dr. Harrill: Roe Ford?

Dr. Tollison: Road.

Dr. Harrill: I believe that's it. Yes. Something Ford. There was nothing here, except there was a big thing like that (making u-shape gesture with his arm), it's still there. There's a, a clubhouse there for that settlement, with a swimming pool now. But it was the only place that looked like this (making a u-shape gesture with his arm), that was deep enough, so if they wanted to dig anything it would be there. So that's where the lake is going to be. But turned out, it was on the other side of the campus. But I was there for the Groundbreaking. There was a good crowd there, and everybody was very excited about moving.

Dr. Tollison: What were you all told about the new campus?

Dr. Harrill: We were told, I mean as the faculty, a group, we were told very little about it. We were finally told where it was going to be, and we would start building, I guess that men's dormitory was the first building. I'm not sure. I think it was, one of the men's dormitories. When they started that, and when they started building up the lake, you could tell then, sort of, what the shape of the place was going to be. But I didn't have anything much to do with the move. Hal Sanders was in charge of the moving. He had done that while he was in the Army, so they put him in charge of the moving, furniture and stuff.

Dr. Tollison: He coordinated everything?

Dr. Harrill: Yeah.

Dr. Tollison: So, when did your office move here?

Dr. Harrill: Gosh, I've forgotten the year, but it was after the classrooms, the Furman classrooms, hall, this building.

Dr. Tollison: Furman Hall?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, this building and the one next door was built, because we were in it. We had two offices up on the second floor, the Political Science Department with

the History Department. The rest of the rooms up there were History Department.

Dr. Tollison: So, who was the other Political Science person?

Dr. Harrill: Well after Gene Looper left to go with Wachovia Bank in Winston Salem, the headquarters, he became the Vice President of Personnel for Wachovia Bank, after he left here. He's dead now, and his wife is dead now. She died last year. Their daughter teaches English at, well, I can't think of it.

Dr. Tollison: High School? College?

Dr. Harrill: High School, ...Traveler's Rest. Traveler's Rest High School. She's still teaching there, but she's not a Looper anymore. She married, and her husband died. But anyway, her father was the head of the Political Science Department. Only two of us for a couple of years.

Dr. Tollison: Who were the History faculty?

Dr. Harrill: Dr. Gilpatrick, Dr. Babb.

Dr. Tollison: Was Ed Jones here?

Dr. Harrill: He came a little later. He had been a student. I don't remember who all was here in the History Department when we came up here.

Dr. Tollison: Where were you all? Which end of Furman Hall?

Dr. Harrill: In the middle.

Dr. Tollison: Downstairs in the middle?

Dr. Harrill: Upstairs.

Dr. Tollison: Was there a canteen downstairs in the middle?

Dr. Harrill: There was a sort of canteen, right in the middle. It ultimately became more of a canteen, when they started making hamburgers, and that kind of a thing.

Dr. Tollison: Did Julius Gladney run that?

Dr. Harrill: Julius was the one who ran it. Then he took over the one in the student building when it was built. He's dead now.

Dr. Tollison: Tell me about Gladney. Did people call him Gladney?

Dr. Harrill: People called him Julius. He was an awfully nice man, very accommodating, very

friendly. The students liked him. The faculty liked him, and he was just a good man.

Dr. Tollison: He was here for a long time, wasn't he?

Dr. Harrill: Oh yes. He was here from the time that building was opened until sometime in the 90's...

Dr. Tollison: He had a stroke in...

Dr. Harrill: When did he have a stroke?

Dr. Tollison: I think he had a stroke in September or December of '87...

Dr. Harrill: 87?

Dr. Tollison: He died in 1988.

Dr. Harrill: Yeah. I remember going to the hospital to see him the time he was there. But they haven't had anybody in that building like him since then. Betty Alverson came, but she didn't come until the building was built. There was no student center.

Dr. Tollison: She had been a student in the fifties.

Dr. Harrill: Who, Betty?

Dr. Tollison: Yes.

Dr. Harrill: Yes. I didn't know her then, but I came to know her because in the sixties I became Dean of Students, in the early sixties, and Betty was hired when that building was completed...

Dr. Tollison: 1965.

Dr. Harrill: She was the first director of the building, and I worked very closely with Betty for several years, and she started the, uh...

Dr. Tollison: CESC?

Dr. Harrill: Yes. That was her baby, and she really built it up. She did a lot of things. She started a lot of things.

Dr. Tollison: What all?

Dr. Harrill: A series of conferences with people downtown, about various things. She got a conference with the attorneys, and she got a conference with the city officials.

People like that. She tried to keep up the ties with downtown. The ties were not nearly as strong as they were when we were right downtown. And when the yellow bus ran everyday between the two campuses, right down main street, Furman was always a presence down there, but that ceased when we moved, except that the yellow bus ran from the women's dorms to out here, after the men moved here. The first year the men moved in with hard times, because there was nobody out here except that freshman class of men.

Dr. Tollison: 1957?

Dr. Harrill: Somewhere along there.

Dr. Tollison: And the campus was not ready for them?

Dr. Harrill: No. Except two or three people that taught freshman classes out here to teach them. They stayed out here in an empty dorm, but they had absolutely nothing to do, and they ate then at what became the canteen.

Dr. Tollison: In Furman Hall?

Dr. Harrill: Yeah, mostly stuff that had been brought over from the old campus or the dining hall at the women's dorms.

Dr. Tollison: Where were the classes held?

Dr. Harrill: They were held in that building (Furman Hall). The classroom building was finished.

Dr. Tollison: So, just for the freshman men?

Dr. Harrill: That's right. They were there, and nobody else was here. Oh wait, they lived in one dormitory, one men's dormitory.

Dr. Tollison: Was it Manly?

Dr. Harrill: Is Manly the one in this corner? It's the one on the corner closest to the lake.

Dr. Tollison: So, the back corner?

Dr. Harrill: I always call it the front corner. It's the one right across the street from that new, uh...

Dr. Tollison: Hipp Hall?

Dr. Harrill: Hipp Hall (nodding his head yes).

Dr. Tollison: OK. I know where you are.

Dr. Harrill: That one, and the only one at the time. There was no gym, no anything for them in the way of recreation. John Plyler, Jr. was in that group. He lives in Charlotte. He comes, he's very interested in Furman.

Dr. Tollison: I had lunch with him yesterday.

Dr. Harrill: And uh, Mrs. Plyler had a lot to do with decorating the first buildings that were here, particularly the dormitories. The women's dormitory, and the second and third dormitories, the ones on the far side. She decorated the lounge in between those two. And she used, this is not being critical, but she used antique furniture and that kind of thing.

Dr. Tollison: In the boy's parlor?

Dr. Harrill: In the lounge between those two men's dormitories. New couches and everything. Everything was very beautifully done, but it soon became very dilapidated. The legs were broken off of the chairs, and some of them off of the couches, and the draperies were torn. It wasn't long before they'd messed up that lounge completely. But uh, it was done later in a more commonplace fashion. They had learned what young men can do to a building. But anyway, Mrs. Plyler had a lot to do with decorating them. She was a beautiful woman, still is, and she was then. Dr. Plyler was a bit older than she, and he was a real old Southern gentleman, very courteous, very gracious, but not very warm.

Dr. Tollison: Not very warm? So he was real distant?

Dr. Harrill: Sort of aloof, I guess.

Dr. Tollison: How did Gordon Blackwell and Dr. Johns compare with Dr. Plyler?

Dr. Harrill: Dr. Blackwell was uh, by the time he came I was Dean of Students, so I came to know him very well.

Dr. Tollison: Plyler made you Dean? Or Bonner?

Dr. Harrill: Bonner was the Academic Dean.

Dr. Tollison: Did he ask you, or did Plyler ask you to be Dean?

Dr. Harrill: Bonner. You see Bonner and I came the same year, 1949, and they lived in the pre-fabs for a while, so we became very good friends of theirs, in that early time, and still are, and our wives are good friends. Nilaouise calls about every night about 7:30. She's so confined. She has to find out what's going on in the world, and talk to somebody.

Dr. Tollison: She takes care of her husband.

Dr. Harrill: Let's see. We lived, most of the faculty at that time lived downtown still, and I use to carpool with Jay Walters, after he came, and John Crabtree, after he came. The three of us carpooled. [Inaudible], but Jay died, and John has now retired.

PART 5 – 01:00:50

Dr. Tollison: Let's talk about when you were Dean. Dr. Bonner asked you to serve as Dean of Students?

Dr. Harrill: Yes.

Dr. Tollison: In 1962?

Dr. Harrill: He said, now if you don't like it, you want to leave at any time, I'll take your, I'll accept your resignation when you tell me you want to leave, and I will put you back in Political Science. [Inaudible]. When I first took that job, I was Dean of Students, Chairman of the Political Science Department, and had a two thirds teaching load. So, I was a very busy man during those six or 8 years. Nothing very big happened during those years. The Citadel raid, which you've heard about, I'm sure.

Dr. Tollison: Tell me about it.

Dr. Harrill: The Citadel boys, before a Furman football game. Bonner got, that was before the early sixties, before I became Dean of Students, but anyway, Bonner got a telephone call from the State Patrol, and there was a whole cavalcade of Citadel students that had left the campus were headed to Furman. They were going to paint it up. So, Bonner got ready for them. He organized all the men in those dormitories.

Dr. Tollison: The night before a football game, or the day before?

Dr. Harrill: The day before. He organized them all. All the gates were locked. When the Citadel boys arrived, they started climbing over the fence, back there at the back (of campus). There were no Furman students there, and he caught them one by one, as they got over, and put them in the basement of one of the men's dormitories, and I don't know what all happened in that dormitory, but it was sort of like prisoners over in Iraq, in that the boys, I think, shaved some of their heads, and that kind of thing. But anyway, they didn't paint it up, and they did get them.

Dr. Tollison: Is that when they did something to the horse?

Dr. Harrill: This came a few years later. I was Dean of Students then. The white horse was

stolen. It was a much more beautiful horse than the one they have now.

Dr. Tollison: What was the horse's name?

Dr. Harrill: Mighty White Man. I was going to say, unfortunately, it was named Mighty White Man, which wasn't a good name at that particular time in our history, but that was its name. And uh, the Citadel boys came up again and stole the horse, and took it back to the campus in Charleston, and loading it and unloading it off the truck, it lost one of its eyes. But I don't think they intended to do that. I think they were just trying to get it off the truck and hit something, but anyway, that ended that horse's term as our mascot.

Dr. Tollison: Was he the first? Was he the first white horse?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, he was the first white horse. Let's see, I believe Dr. Blackwell's, not the Dr. Blackwell who was president, but the one that was here in the Math Department...

Dr. Tollison: R. C. Blackwell?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, yeah, his son rode the horse, the first white horse. Let's see, I'm trying to think of some of the more interesting characters...

Dr. Tollison: You mentioned the fraternity problem, and then desegregation also occurred.

Dr. Harrill: Oh, the fraternities. That had been brewing for quite some time. The Baptist State Convention didn't like it. They kept threatening to ban them on the Furman campus. Well, nobody on the campus, that I knew of, was in favor of banning them because we figured that that would be a bad time, but the Convention finally passed it during the sixties, a resolution banning fraternities.

Dr. Tollison: I've been told that the reason, ...they wanted to ban them for quite some time, and that when the men moved to the new campus there was talk of building...

Dr. Harrill: Fraternity houses.

Dr. Tollison: Right, and that was a situation that...

Dr. Harrill: The Convention didn't want any fraternity houses (laughing).

Dr. Tollison: They didn't want any fraternity houses, and they used, I guess they just decided to piggy back on the turnover, and thought it would be a good time...

Dr. Harrill: Well I don't know if the houses were the biggest thing. It was just that the Convention thought, they were led to believe by some of their leaders, that fraternities were centers of sin, and that all they did was get drunk and have affairs with girls, and that was the basic, I think, the basic reason why they

finally decided to do what they, the Convention, you got one or two firebrands in the Convention that led the others into banning them. But the boys immediately called them social clubs. SAE's, for example, were The Centaurs. The Knights Eternal were the TKE's.

Dr. Tollison: What was KA?

Dr. Harrill: KA, oh what were they?... I remember KA's use to have rowdier parties than most of the others... But anyway, they became social clubs, but they could not be recognized as a fraternity. Still no dancing on the campus. So, Sapp Funderburk lived in town, and Sapp was a very active Furman alumnus, and he came up with the idea that he would get prominent people who lived in big houses in town to have dances at their houses for them, or at least a group of them, and he did get them. I had to provide chaperones for them. Most of the time it ended up my wife and I, we had to be chaperones. Nobody else wanted that job. But uh, he managed to get some, so they would have dances. The Poinsett Hotel would loan them the ballroom for them sometimes. Sometimes they were held at the homes of the people, and they always made homes for them, a lot of room. But they survived. We all survived, with the idea that fraternities might be gone, but their powers, the subsequent ones were, ... fraternities were never anything but a name, national affiliation did not matter.

Dr. Tollison: What about desegregation?

Dr. Harrill: Bonner was the one who largely took over that job. He decided that there was, that we had to stay integrated. Several of us in the administration [inaudible], and the next Trustees meeting, each one of us had a group of them to talk to about integration. Well some of them talked to the Trustees, and some of them talked to the alumni. All of them were here. So, I had the Trustees to talk to about why it was important to be desegregated.

Dr. Tollison: And what did you say?

Dr. Harrill: I told them that we were losing students because of segregation.

Dr. Tollison: Losing white students and African American students?

Dr. Harrill: We didn't have any African American students. We were all white.

Dr. Tollison: Losing potential African American students?

Dr. Harrill: Losing those, and we were losing some white ones because they didn't want to come to a segregated school. And that we would be losing more in the future. But anyway, I made a talk. I tried to be as political as I could, and the guy who was, he was chairman of that group, they were Trustees, but I can't remember if they were all the Trustees, they weren't all the Trustees, I think. They filled that room which is now the Vice President of Business Administration's office. They

filled that room, whoever they were, and the person that presided was a lawyer from Atlanta, and I think he had been President of the American Bar Association. Very well known. Anyway, when I got through, he (the chairman) slammed his hand on the table there and says, "the day that Furman admits a nigger in school is the day I have nothing more to do with them," and as far as I know, he hasn't. I haven't seen his name in anything. But uh, that was his reaction.

Dr. Tollison: Would you care to share with me, and we can keep it closed off if you like?

Dr. Harrill: Uh, I can't think of it right now, but if I think of it, I'll call you.

Dr. Tollison: Thank you.

Dr. Harrill: He, uh, his attitude was not unusual at all. Back then it was not unusual for people, ministers, and other people, to be very much against integration.

Dr. Tollison: Did you find opposition from any of the other Trustees?

Dr. Harrill: I can't think of any others who ever said anything to me, but I would be surprised if there weren't others who did support him. We didn't take a vote in that group, and Bonner went ahead with his integration. He had already been up to Johnson C. Smith in Charlotte, a black college, and talked to Joe. I forgot who gave him Joe's name, but uh...

Dr. Tollison: Didn't he and Sapp Funderburk go to Sterling High School and select Joe?

Dr. Harrill: They may have. They may have, but they did it very quietly. They didn't tell anybody. They didn't tell me, and I was Dean of Students then. But anyway, Joe came with very little publicity. The press people at Furman didn't notify the region that we were going to integrate, but we did, and Joe was, on a whole, he was a good choice, but there were some things about him..., I know..., one of those [inaudible] I was talking about, that somebody gave him, I wouldn't say [inaudible]. Joe got stinking drunk, and I had to get two other boys to take him back to the dormitory, but other than that kind of foolish, youthful misbehavior, Joe was a good choice. He was intelligent, personable, and was not militant, so he didn't make personal enemies like some of the people did back then.

Dr. Tollison: Do you think it was a difficult experience for him?

Dr. Harrill: Did he have a difficult...

Dr. Tollison: Do you think it was a difficult experience for him?

Dr. Harrill: It was difficult, but not as difficult as it might have been. There was no organized resistance that I knew of, to him.

Dr. Tollison: Do you have a feeling that most of the students welcomed his presence?

Dr. Harrill: I don't know that they welcomed him, but they accepted it. I'm not sure how much of a welcome it was, but they accepted him. I can't think of a more accurate description. There were some other things, before we integrated..., I guess it was afterwards. The band use to play "Dixie" all the time at football games, and this black student, at the time he was here, and I can't remember his name. He played in the band. The only black in the band, and they started playing "Dixie" one Fall, and he got up and walked out of the stands and out of the stadium, in protest against playing "Dixie," and what in the heck do you do? Anyway, I asked the presidents of all the student organizations, religious, fraternal, or whatever it's called, the Baptist Student Union, all of them. We had a meeting, and I said I want to find out how your people in your organizations really feel about having a black here. If you're going to oppose it, or if you're going to accept it, continue to accept it, because some of them were mad about this. Some of the band people had told about him walking out, [inaudible].

Dr. Tollison: [inaudible].

Dr. Harrill: But anyway, I said well, as for what I wanted, I said now I'm going to start over here in this corner, and each one of you tell me how you feel, and your organization feels about this, and just by chance, I picked the KA's, the most Southern fraternity on the campus. After I had turned to them and said I'm going to start with you, I realized that was the very last person I should have asked to start. But I'll never forget, that boy stood up and he said, "You know, I don't know that my organization is happy, but we will accept it, and there will be no trouble from us, and we won't have any trouble about the band and 'Dixie.'" Well after that it was easy. Nobody else was willing to say that they were opposed to it, and it would create a problem if that boy was allowed to stay in the band, if he wanted to stay in the band...

Dr. Tollison: And they weren't going to play it?

Dr. Harrill: And if the band agreed not to play "Dixie" anymore, which they did. The band did, and we didn't play "Dixie" anymore. But..., it was pure..., that boy was so, I thought, very brave to stand up and say that any KA..., because everybody knew that their big thing in the Spring was always The Old South Ball, and they'd dress up in Confederate uniforms and...

Dr. Tollison: They revere Robert E. Lee., I think.

Dr. Harrill: Yeah! Uh, they..., that was their club name, "R.E.L."

Dr. Tollison: What was it?

Dr. Harrill: Robert E. Lee, R. E. L.

Dr. Tollison: R. E. L., ok, that was..., gotcha.

Dr. Harrill: But I thought he was very brave to stand up and say that they wouldn't cause any problems. They would accept it, and then applicate it. But uh..., there wasn't anymore..., that was one of the difficult periods we've had, but we got over that. Then some black girls started coming in, and they proved to be very good citizens.

PART 6 – 01:19:00

Dr. Tollison: What about Olivia Futch and Marguerite Chiles?

Dr. Harrill: Olivia Futch taught Education when I came here, and I didn't know her very well at first, but then Dr. Plyler made her the Dean of Women, but to tell you the truth, most people thought that was a very poor choice. She was, in fact, very shy, but it came across as very cold and un..., uh, un..., just wasn't very easy to know. Because you have to know her. You know, you wouldn't..., but anyway, when I became Dean of Students, she was Dean of Women. Marguerite was her assistant. But I came to know her, and to realize that she really had a heart, and she really..., well I walked in her office one day, and she was sitting there, and tears were dripping down her face, and I said what in the world is the matter. She said, "I just had to suspend a girl, and the things she said to me were awful, and I didn't want to suspend her, but she had broken rules so often, and so many that there was nothing else I could do, if we were going to have the rules." But you see, I don't think any of the girls would have ever thought Ms. Futch would begrieve over them, but she did.

Dr. Tollison: Was she an effective administrator?

Dr. Harrill: She was good at the paper and ink part of being an administrator. She knew the rules, and knew how to follow them, but she didn't warm up to them like Marguerite did. The girls mostly loved Marguerite, but Ms. Futch didn't have any of that warmth that Marguerite had. She was an efficient administrator, Dean, but not more popular than...

Dr. Tollison: How long did she stay after you became Dean of Students?

Dr. Harrill: Oh..., let's see...

Dr. Tollison: You were technically over her?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, over her, and the Dean of Men.

Dr. Tollison: Who was the Dean of Men?

Dr. Harrill: Well the first one was Dean Hardaway.

Dr. Tollison: The first one on this campus?

Dr. Harrill: Yes. On the old campus it was Dean of Women of that campus, and she ran it, and Ms. Futch started there. She had administrative jurisdiction there that she didn't have after she came out here. She just had more [inaudible]. But Dean Hardaway, yeah, that was an interesting thing to me, which was personal. Frank Bonner called me into his office one morning and said, "I have hired a Director of Men's Activities." I believe it was going to be called something like that. Who would become Dean under that title, and Marguerite would have the same title for the women. I said, "You have already hired him? You didn't mention that to me. If I am to be responsible for them I should have something to say about it." He didn't tell me anything. He said, "We are going to start a retreat up at High Hampton in two weeks, uh..."

Dr. Tollison: Where is High Hampton?

Dr. Harrill: It's up in..., the resort is still open, up in the mountains, up above..., well, you go...

Dr. Tollison: Caesar's Head area?

Dr. Harrill: Somewhere up in there, and it's still open now. I see it advertised in the better magazines. But anyway, at that time some man had houses on the edge of the High Hampton area, and the man turned it over to some colleges, and they could have a group come up there, and the inn would have a woman come out and cook breakfast for them, and clean up the place, and then you had your lunch and dinner at the inn, so it was a very nice arrangement. [Quoting Bonner] "We're going up to High Hampton, and I want you to go, and your new assistant for men will be a retired general." I thought to myself, that's that last thing in the world I want, was a retired general. I had been four years in the Army as an enlisted man, and I didn't have too high of an opinion of generals. I thought he'd be very much aware of ranking, and all that business. We went up there. [Inaudible] come with us. Marguerite went, and I went. [Inaudible], and uh, we stayed in this house. It was very nice, several bedrooms, and had breakfast together in the morning there, and then we..., Marguerite and I spent the rest of the day with Hank, getting to know him. He was one of the nicest persons I have ever met in my life. Hank was a real jewel. I felt being a general, he'd feel like he had to be the top man wherever he was, but Hank was no problem. He was just a great person to have on it, and he stayed until..., let's see, I left, and then Crabtree came on as Dean of Students, and Hank stayed. He liked Crabtree, but then they began to bring in two or three different men from the outside, and none of them worked out, and one of them Hank just despised.

Dr. Tollison: After Blackwell..., I mean Crabtree?

Dr. Harrill: Crabtree got along with them, or they got along with Crabtree...

Dr. Tollison: You said they were bringing in people from the outside..., to serve as Dean of Students?

Dr. Harrill: [Dean of] Men, men only. They were with the men only, and Marguerite was with the women.

Dr. Tollison: How long did that continue?

Dr. Harrill: Well, let me see. They had two or three of them they brought in, and none of them worked out well. One of them was so bad that they reorganized and made Marguerite..., by that time I had gone back to teaching, but they made Marguerite Dean of Students, so she had charge of both the men and the women, and uh...

Dr. Tollison: She became the first Vice President for...

Dr. Harrill: That's right. They made the Office of Vice President instead of the Dean. Marguerite did an excellent job I think, working with men, which she had never done before. She worked well with them. They uh...

Dr. Tollison: I'm going to check on this [the audio visual recorder], keep talking..., so Marguerite, you felt like she did a good job working with the men?

Dr. Harrill: Yes.

Dr. Tollison: Ok, we've got about six minutes left on the tape. I can take it, and put in another tape.

Dr. Harrill: I said Marguerite did a good job working with the men, and that's why they have the Chiles-Harrill Award, which is now \$10,000 a year.

Dr. Tollison: Tell me a little bit more about that award.

Dr. Harrill: Well, Frank [Keener]..., uh, whatever Frank's last name is. I can't think of it right now. He had been an SAE while he was here, and a golfer, and not outstanding in any particular way. He was just one of the boys. And I was surprised when he organized that, the gift, the award, for what it is, and for putting my name and Marguerite's name on it, but he did. He was a nice fellow. He was from Asheville, during the time he was an undergraduate. I remember that about him, but I was surprised.

Dr. Tollison: What kind of qualities are..., students who receive the award, what kind of qualities do they exhibit...

Dr. Harrill: These are staff and faculty...

Dr. Tollison: Right. I'm sorry...

Dr. Harrill: And no students...

Dr. Tollison: Committed to serving students...

Dr. Harrill: Betty Alverson, I think, got the first year. She's the kind of person that I think Frank had in mind, to receive it.

Dr. Tollison: Did Mrs. Cloer receive it this past year?

Dr. Harrill: This past time, she did, yes, exactly...

Dr. Tollison: It's commitment to student services.

Dr. Harrill: That's right. The way it's worded in the catalog, I think, is people who help students the most, uh...

Dr. Tollison: Faculty award staff?

Dr. Harrill: It's been mostly staff, the girl who, the Registrar, won it one year. Betty won. About three years. That's about as long as it's been in existence. Frank Keener..., Keener is his last name. I was surprised that he was interested in that kind of thing. I never thought of him as needing or getting personal attention. Apparently, he appreciated what we did. He set it up, and I don't know how much he gave, but this year it was \$10,000.

Dr. Tollison: Marguerite Chiles, she served as Dean of Students for about two years?

Dr. Harrill: Vice President, she was...

Dr. Tollison: Vice President.

Dr. Harrill: Oh, longer than two years. She..., until her retirement. I think Marguerite enjoyed being Dean of Students very much. She's a very conscientious person. I think her only problem was overworking, coming in [inaudible] hours a week. Let's see. What else?

Dr. Tollison: Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Harrill: Oh, Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Tollison: Let's talk about that.

Dr. Harrill: Phi Beta Kappa. Frank Bonner was Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Alabama, and I was Phi Beta Kappa at the University of North Carolina, and there were three or four others on the faculty...

Dr. Tollison: Crabtree...

Dr. Harrill: Crabtree..., [nodding yes] when he came. He didn't come when it first started, but he came before it got here, but he was [Phi Beta Kappa] University of North Carolina too. John [Crabtree] is one of my greatest friends. He is, to me, a very interesting, entertaining person. You know his wife is going blind?

Dr. Tollison: No, I did not know that.

Dr. Harrill: For years she's had some sort of eye trouble, but if you see them, she's always holding onto his arm. It's getting worse now. She's always holding onto his arm, very tightly. He will, when you go to their house for dinner, you usually, John will meet you at the door and take you in and sit down, and you'll have something to eat and drink, and you won't see Anne, but after a little while Anne will come out and take your plate, and he will go into the kitchen. It's done very smoothly, so you're hardly aware of it, but they work out a system. She can cook still. She can see absolutely in front of her, but out beyond that it gets to be a problem, she can't see, and it's getting worse all the time, it's worse now than it's ever been, and apparently there's no way, no cure for it. They have handled it. If you were to see them at a concert or something, you wouldn't be aware of the fact that Anne is near blind. Oh, Phi Beta Kappa, Francis Bonner decided we should have Phi Beta Kappa...

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Dr. Harrill: I said that'll get you off the hot spot, and I won't have to put up with it. He said, "No, you're not going to do that. That will not be right." He said, "I am going to tell him that I was the one who asked you to do it, and I wrote the letter, and I did all of the things, and all you did was put your name to it." And so, he did, and we had several speeches on the [inaudible] of having blacks in our congregation, or endorsing blacks for public office, that kind of thing.

Dr. Tollison: Was it an African American person writing that was writing for the...

Dr. Harrill: Oh yes, he was pastor of a black Baptist church at the time.

Dr. Tollison: And who was the minister at First Baptist then?

Dr. Harrill: His name was..., let's see ...

Dr. Tollison: It wasn't Hardy Clemons was it?

Dr. Harrill: Oh no, before Hardy Clemons...

Dr. Tollison: David Matthews?

Dr. Harrill: Before David Matthews. David had another scandal.

Dr. Tollison: I've heard.

Dr. Harrill: You've heard. But this one was uh..., let me think. He is retired now, but somewhere down in the lower part of the state, he had a church after he left here. James..., James something. I'll think of it later, but it'll be too late. Anyway, he had confessed to the jury about all he had done.

Dr. Tollison: What was the reaction?

Dr. Harrill: The reaction was the man who had been leading the opposition was sort of taken by surprise, so he didn't know what to say, so he didn't say anything, and nothing was ever done about it after that.

Dr. Tollison: Was this in the Eighties?

Dr. Harrill: Seventies, I guess..., but we have black members now. There's a couple in the choir, all sorts of places, and there are always five or six black members at church, and nobody objects now. One woman in the church, one member, called me, and blessed me out on the phone. I was going to ruin the church for certain, doing things like that. That was before Jim had told who did it, and he didn't tell the whole congregation ever, he just told the deacons and let them leak it out.

Dr. Tollison: Tell me about Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Harrill: Phi Beta Kappa? Bonner started that movement for that. He took all the faculty members who had been Phi Beta Kappa, who were members of Phi Beta Kappa, and gave us each an assignment. Mine was, on the application for Phi Beta Kappa, was to get the names of all the people who had graduated Furman, and who became Phi Beta Kappa after they graduated, in graduate school. I had to go through Who's Who and learn, and you know what fine print there is. I had to go..., it took days going through that Who's Who, and reading to find out if you graduated Furman first, they show that first so you can do that very quickly, then I had to find out if they were members of Phi Beta Kappa, and that took reading the whole thing because it was in the body of the..., but that was the dreariest job I ever had. My job was to go through that, and that's what I did, and then I went to England with the students a couple of years later, and that's when Phi Beta Kappa finally voted us in, and I was not here for the inauguration of Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Tollison: You chaired the application committee?

Dr. Harrill: For what?

Dr. Tollison: For Phi Beta Kappa ..., when it was successful.

Dr. Harrill: I don't know. I did several things in Phi Beta Kappa after I got back, but I don't remember what all they were.

Dr. Tollison: In Al Reid's book he says that you were the chair of the application committee for Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Harrill: Well, I must've been, because Al Reid..., Al was particular about being accurate, and whatever he said you can pretty well take it for that's the way it was.

Dr. Tollison: So, people were pretty excited when Furman got Phi Beta Kappa?

Dr. Harrill: Oh yes. It turned out that the National President of Phi Beta Kappa was a black man...

Dr. Tollison: John Hope Franklin, a very good historian...

Dr. Harrill: And he came here and installed the chapter, which I thought was great.

Dr. Tollison: Let's talk about the presidents, how they've been different.

Dr. Harrill: Well, Dr. Plyler was an old Southern gentleman..., really, really, in the best sense of the word. He was extremely courteous and polite, and when you'd see him talking to a woman he had his hat off..., all the things an old Southern gentleman would have done. He was not really concerned with the academic side of the school I think. George Christenberry did that when I first came, then Dean Tibbs did it.

Dr. Tollison: Is George Christenberry..., is he alive?

Dr. Harrill: I think he's still alive. He was down in Georgia. He was president of some college down in Georgia.

Dr. Tollison: Oh, he's in Augusta.

Dr. Harrill: Yeah. George and Lib [Elizabeth Christenberry] get up here occasionally, but not very often. Dr. Plyler would depend on somebody like George, or Dean Tibbs, or then, Dean Bonner. With Bonner he found the perfect work mate, because Bonner would do all the work on the academic side.

Dr. Tollison: Did people have a lot of respect for Bonner?

Dr. Harrill: They had respect, yes. He was considered to be..., by a lot of the faculty, to be officious and un-, what's the word, unwarm. He was regarded as cool and efficient, rather than beloved. He did such things as implement a rule that on Sunday at noon, at lunch in the dining hall, this was after we moved out here, that the men had to wear coats and ties, the formal dress, and they had to wear socks during the week. They could not come to class without socks on, but

nobody on the faculty was going to inspect to see if they had on socks, but Francis would walk around the campus and he'd see some student, some male student, he could see they did not have on socks, and he'd send them back to the dorm to put on socks. That kind of thing did not endure him to students, but he was a good academic dean, and he was willing to work and take over duties that, I think normally, a vice president wouldn't have had, and when Dr. Plyler died, or resigned, he was acting president until they got Johns, no Blackwell, and then Johns.

Dr. Tollison: How did President Plyler..., how did he die?

Dr. Harrill: I think it was heart attack. He lived several years after he resigned, but I think it was heart, he finally had a heart attack.

Dr. Tollison: Was he an older gentleman at that point?

Dr. Harrill: Yes, he was. He was considerably older than Bea, his wife. She's getting up in years, her nineties now. But Bonner was good. The faculty members who wanted to do what they wanted to do, and didn't want anybody else telling them what to do, and there's always some of those, didn't like him.

Dr. Tollison: Why do you think that he never became president? Was he ever in line for it, you think?

Dr. Harrill: I don't know how much the Trustees talked about him, but most of the faculty, at least the ones that I knew well enough, did not want him to be president. Some of them liked him as a Vice President, but they didn't want him to be President. He was a friend of mine. We had come here together. We were neighbors in the pre-fabs, and our wives were good friends. I felt that I had to be loyal to him, but at the same time I didn't agree with all of his things, like socks, and dressing for lunch, and that..., they didn't seem important to me, and they were important to him. He made decisions on his own, without including faculty very much. I remember one year I was in England with the students, and Francis had decided that the two long semesters and the two short ones were not working, and needed to be changed, and this was in the late seventies, I believe, so he started a campaign to get it changed, and he wrote Willard Pate, who was over there with me. He wrote her, and he wrote me.