

INTERVIEW WITH "FACULTY BRATS"

July 26th, 2011

Gwinn, Michigan

START OF INTERVIEW

Russell Magnaghi (RM): Interview with faculty brats. Gwinn, MI. July 26th, 2011. This is going to be a little different interview in that I will pass the microphone around and get the comments of the individuals sitting here and they will start by introducing themselves and then mentioning their names when they make a presentation and that will help the transcriber.

Norman Thomas (NT): Norman Thomas, my dad was the head of the English Department starting in 1939. He retired from Northern in 1964, at the age of 68. He taught a wide variety of classes: Shakespeare, American Lit, Rise and Development of the English Language. That course was required of all English majors and one of the students at that time said to me, "Yeah, we call that course of your dad's the downfall of English majors." Dad's specialty is in research and he published articles in this field on the development of English as a language and how it changed. I still remember when I was in high school, he was working on a paper and he had all kinds of notes on 3 x 5 cards that he operated with. I said, "What're you doing?" He said, "I'm writing an article." I said, "What's it about?" And he said, "Well, it's about the development of the word 'of'." Another one he did was he did a couple of articles on common usages. The one that stuck in my mind was "cannot help but," which he said previously had been improper grammar but has now moved into the language as a proper piece of language. I remember Dad particularly for his Harris Tweed suits when the weather changed as inevitably it even does up here, he would wear seersucker suits but almost always a shirt and tie. The other thing that sticks in my mind about him was he was chair of the lecture committee for several years and he brought a number of artists and lecturers to campus. So, we heard some magnificent piano performers on the old Steinway in Kaye Auditorium. I'm particularly reminded of one person that he brought to lecture, the famous socialist candidate for president for many years, Norman Thomas. Norman Thomas came and gave a lecture at Northern, I went up afterward with dad and dad introduced me to him and he gave me a picture of, Dad had a picture of Mr. Thomas with him and he signed it to 'Norman Thomas from his friend Norman Thomas.' When I was a little kid, frequently my playmates when they'd see me coming, they'd say here comes the socialist. So I've always had to advise my students when I taught political science classes, that I'm not related to the famous socialist by blood or ideology. So the final thing I'd simply say about my dad was he was a lover of classical music. He had a hi-fi operation going almost before anybody else did and I grew up listening to Mozart and Beethoven and Heiden and Brahms, Mendelson. The only music today that I really enjoy, it's his legacy for me.

RM: Did you have—when we were having lunch there, did you have some comments about Hedgecock? Or who was...

NT: I only knew Hedgecock as a spectator at Northern athletics. I was not party to some of the foibles that Jack Schills related.

RM: Okay, okay. I guess while were getting started with Hedgecock why don't we...

Jack Schills (JS): Jack Schills. I was started at Northern in '48, Hedgecock wasn't coaching anymore but I had the Effective Living with him. And if any of you knew about Effective Living, Hedge had all the answers I guess. There was a number of stories about his coaching that I remember people talking about. One was they had a basketball game scheduled and I guess Hedge was probably Athletic Director and coach and well and that day, or night he had scheduled two games away. So, they split the team in two and Vick Hurst took one team and Hedge took the other, wherever they went I don't remember but they won two games that night. Other stories there were, I think, they had football practice, I don't know, it was right off of college back there, that field. Hedge was late for practice and he was a stickler with the other guys and with the team that they had to be on time and he still had his suit coat on and he threw it on the ground, stomped up and down on it and said, "Damn-it all! Had to be late and it had to be me!" The other story I remember is he had the real good team, what year was that Don?

Don Hurst (DH): '44?

JS: '44 and Hedge I think he thought he invented the fast break and he never sat with the team. He sat down on the end and I guess had hand signals as to what he wanted them to do and so on and that team was probably one of the better teams that Northern ever had at that time. Names like Norm Slau, Dave Anderson, Speedles, Hank Linderman, Nick St. Germain. Most of all who are gone now, I'm sure.

RM: Anybody else have some memories about Hedgecock?

Allen Roberts (AR): I'm Allen Roberts, my father is Forrest Roberts. But I was Coach Hedgecock's assistant and to score the tests and all for Effective Living and that was ever an experience! Yes, I had to—I remember he would rally against cake eaters. Now, that was an expression that Theodore Roosevelt, I mean, a cake eater was the equivalent of sort of a sissy and you didn't want to be a cake eater. Then he on one occasion said, "You know, a nice piece of angel food cake with a thin layer of maple cream frosting, on occasion is okay."

NT: Another thing I remember and maybe Joe, you might know more about this. Mrs. Hedgecock had to be a saint; she never knew how many was coming for dinner because he would bring football players and that for dinner and not even tell her about it. So do you remember anything on that?

Don Hurst (DH): Yeah, Don Hurst, son of Vick Hurst. Vick Hurst joined the faculty in 1925. So he and C.B. Hedgecock were the only coaches at that time. They had some previous coaches but they I think, served kind of on a part time basis but for many years it was my dad, Vick and C.B. Hedgecock that coached all the sports. There was football, basketball, baseball, tennis, track and field and any other sports that came along they were responsible for teacher or coaching it. There were times even when one year C.B. Hedgecock would be the head football coach and dad would be the head basketball coach and then another year they'd flip it and be each others assistant. So, things were a little different in those days when they had no assistants and now the teams have like ten assistant coaches on each team. So, that's been quite a change. My dad was on the faculty at Northern and of the John D. Pierce School for 36 years. He ended up—his basketball team won the 1961 State basketball championships in Class D and

then the school closed. Interestingly enough, Bishop Baraga who was the Catholic Class C School in town at that time, later on I think it was maybe in the 70's won the state Class basketball championship and their school closed. So, the omen was 'don't win a state championship if you don't want to close your school.' Our tenure in John D. Pierce, we considered being probably extremely fortunate kids, not just being faculty kids. Just going to John D. Pierce, we were privileged to have some of the best educators that ever set foot on this earth I think. They influenced us in the proper ways, they taught us the right way to live and the right way to learn and I think all of us can appreciate the fact that we were just very fortunate to have that kind of an education.

NT: Thomas, to reiterate what Don Hurst just said. I think we had as fine of an education at John D. Pierce as you could get anywhere in the country, in the best private schools. We had outstanding teachers, we knew all of our classmates, we had I thought a very, very fine social environment. One little tiny footnote that I would add here, looking at Allen Roberts, I don't know if you were aware of it Allen but the students at Northern, I was a senior or junior in high school, referred to your dad as "Jungle Bob."

AR: Do you know why?

NT: Forrest Roberts.

AR: His middle name was Amazon. And I completed the test but I was the first person to be with a group of Stone age Indians, I lived with for a while in the Amazon. So that...for me that completed the circle.

Jo Hurst- Shills (JHS): This is Jo Hurst- Shills, Don's sister and Vick's daughter.

Elizabeth Halverson (EH): My name is Elizabeth Halverson. I am the daughter of Lynn Halverson, who was the chairman of the Geography and Geology department at Northern and he came probably about 1939, no 1929. I was born in 1933, right here in Marquette. You know, as the daughter, I never paid a lot of attention to Geography classes. I always loved maps and I would go up to my father's office while he was in some sort of session and "babysitting" for me. I'd look at the maps and write on the blackboard but he traveled a lot and he gave classes around the U.P. to people and people that had him in class and I think our friend whose ill, Bob Money told me, he said, "Your dad is a really good teacher." I think he had that ability to amuse and inform and I sat in on one class where there were several little jokes before he started teaching. So, at home I'd say he was a lot in order kind of man. He would do this and he'd do it fast and you'd do it when I tell you to do it. But he enjoyed hunting and fishing and I'd say that was—along with keep up with his geography classes. He always did outside reading, he was always reading the bulletins or whatever the newest book, that was his greatest passion, was going hunting and fishing. I'm not sure what to else to say except as going to Pierce from kindergarten to graduation, I guess as a girl I would says I loved the music part of it because we got to go into the auditorium and we had people that were musicians that worked with the college kids, worked with us. The choir directors were always very, very good and we had an orchestra. John D. Pierce orchestra that I thought was good. I always remember the gym demonstration, nobody has spoken of that but they were really something. I remember one time they did a dance where they had painted, I think it was some sort of a sword dance but the swords were wooden but they had painted them some color so that it was iridescent and then

they turned off all the lights and then you could see that. There was always something special and people from Marquette, you know, community came to see the gym demonstrations. Well, my brother George was four and half years older than I was and he got to have Flora Louperre (?). She retired just before I was able to have her and I remember nobody was more surprised than my dad was because my brother didn't get all A's or anything in high school but he ended up with a history award for that year from Flora Louperre and evidently she thought maybe he understood the principals more than anybody, I have no idea. But, George was not somebody that was real interested in being a great student but he went on to become the Colonel of the Michigan State Police which he was for a number of years. I think during the riots too, the Detroit Riots of 1967. As far as anything else about going to John D. Pierce you know, we were a very small community so when we sat in the main room where everybody in the high school had a desk, there were only maybe a hundred people in the high school. I remember one thing they would do, when there was a big class—a prom probably, everybody would be wearing formals and suits and so on. We got lessons in etiquette, that you should turn to your guy and show him that you'd like him to take your coat off or maybe bring your coat to him at the entry way. They put on a demonstration of manners and etiquette and I remember assemblies there. I think we had a poetry contest for all of the freshmen, so we always had to pick up a poem to read. Of course, we had a chorus and I just loved going through the halls of Northern. On Saturday mornings sometimes we'd just get up and we knew how to get in or maybe I knew how to get in, in the underground and that was something else too. We had a lot of extra things, like we had the same facilities that the college had in learning how to cook, learning how to sew and I guess the guys would have woodworking and all that sort of thing. I think that's all.

RM: I have a question for you. Your father published a number of rather impressive articles for the time, very few people were doing it. About—I think there was one on blueberries in Luce County and some very, very specific and very well researched and written articles. I was just wondering, do you remember anything in his personal interest in the U.P.?

EH: Well, we did go out and collect blueberries. We did go out and pick blueberries every summer around the railroad tracks where it was hot and sunny. I didn't know he had a particular interest in that. He did not really talk about his job when he was at home. I know nothing about articles like that.

John Deveaux (JD): I'm John DeVeaux. I was not a faculty brat but I grew up with these kids. During World War II, I was a B17 navigator and on V-E Day we were flying over Paris and down the Seine River and we came upon the city of Rouen, France. And I said, "There was Rouen, France on the outside of a big bend in the river, just like Dr. Halverson said it." He was over in the corner of the room and he went...

JHS: My name is Jo Hurst-Shills, daughter of Victor Hurst, getting back to C.B., just a couple of things about C.B. Hedgecock. He used to come to our house all the time and pace up and down the living room and just gesturing in all directions and hollering at the top of his lungs and I was scared to death of him when I was little and I told my mother that one day. She said, "He's the gentlest person that there is. You don't need to worry about him." But people didn't yell in my house and so that yelling kind of bothered me. Another time, for Don and I, we spent so much time at Northern when we were little kids.

I'm talking 4 or 5 or 6 years old and my dad would have classes, just because he wanted to have guys come over and play basketball or volleyball or badminton. He let us run around the gym while he was having classes as long as we didn't bother and we'd go around—remember that track that ran around the old gym at Northern. We'd run around there, we'd run up and down the halls and then after all of the kids left, then Don and I could play on the equipment, particularly the gymnastic things. He had the mats, we would tumble and those rings that used to go across the gym and we'd swing back and forth across those and jump on the horses. We just had so much fun and then afterwards, after all of the guys had gone, then he'd let Don and I take a shower in the boys locker room. Another experience Don and I had was when dad was coaching Northern football and it was probably, when we went to Tech Don, what year was that? '43, maybe? Maybe even younger than that because Don and I did everything together and so when dad talked to us, he'd just say, "Well, were going to do this and were going to do that." He had a game at Michigan Tech that Saturday and so Don and I asked if we could go along with him because back then they went in cars, they didn't go in buses or anything. He said, "Sure, I have to go and get the guys and then I'll come back and pick you up." Well then when he came back and I started to get my coat on he said, "Oh no, Josie, you can't go. These are all men and I only can take Don." And well, I started to cry because I felt so bad about the whole thing. So, off they went and there I sat in tears. Pretty soon, a car pulled up to the house again and he came in and says, "Get your coat on, the guys say you can go with us." So, he instead of driving, he sat in the backseat and put me between his legs so that I couldn't touch any of the fellows. Then when we got up to Tech, it was a cold day of course in the fall and Don and I were each draped in one of those huge hooded, I don't know what you'd call it...cape-like, I don't know what you call them, sideline coats. They were like capes sort of with hoods and Don and I were huddled at the end of the bench for the whole Tech game and we thought we were the most lucky people in the whole, wide world.

Man: I still got one of those coats hanging.

JHS: I also like music. When I was in grade school and junior high and high school, I was in all of the choirs and glee clubs and all that kind of stuff. I also was in a girls trio, Janelle Anderson and Lou Frisk were the other two and Ms. Rareck(?) who was our music teacher liked our voices when we were in the glee club and so she asked us if we wouldn't form a trio and sing at different performances. Northern always had a performance at the end of the year for the public, Pierce did. So, we sang together and then after that we had a trio all through high school and then all through college and had the most wonderful time singing all over the place. I also remember the presentations at Northern. Pierce was so lucky because they would let our classes go to programs at Northern in the auditorium and they would always say we could stand up, get in a single file, shut our mouths and quietly walk all the way through Pierce, all the way through Northern, up Kay Hall, up to the auditorium and then we would see these wonderful programs and some of these others can remember some of them. The one that I remember the most was Martha Graham because I loved dancing and when she was first becoming famous, she was here. Another time I remember, Don and I were both in love with Hedgecock's 1944 basketball team and we were always hanging around those guys and my dad would say, "Leave them alone, don't bother them." But they were really nice to us, we were the coach's kids and they let us—they were just kind to us. When I was in the sixth grade, I'd had the lead in the school play and I had to sing a solo and

just as I was getting ready to practice the solo, my dad walked in with Eddie Olds who was my favorite of all of those guys. They sat in the front row and they played my introduction and I stood there, I could not think of a single word. The teacher came up to me and said, "The first words are..." She played the introduction again and then I sang for all of them. I also had the lead in the high school play, I was a detective of all things and I had about ¾ of the speaking parts. Remember that Allen?

AR: I do, I had one line in that play.

JHS: Well, maybe you remember Allen too, that people didn't learn their lines like they were supposed to from Ms. P _____. She was getting so angry with people and finally she said, "Alright, if you are not going to learn your lines, we might as well just cancel the play." So, we do that and we all said yes. That was her job, she had to put on a play every year and so, we left and Don Bottom came to see us the next day and he informed us in no uncertain terms- we were giving that play, we were going to learn our lines and forget it and just do what you're told and we did. There was also a Navy program, I don't remember the exact name of it, that they had it at Northern. I think I was probably about 6th grade, B12 program, I think. We used to go over to that all the time and they had a big commando course over there by Northern and the guys would go through that and we played on it every night as kids after all of the guys had gone but they also had to learn their general orders and of course, they didn't learn them like my dad thought they should. So he said, "Even my daughter knows the general orders." So, he stood me up in front of a class one day and he said, "Say the General Orders to these guys." And so I said, "My General Orders are to take charge of this post and all of our government property in view, to walk my post in a military manner, keeping always on the alert and observing everything that takes place within sight or hearing." Well, it goes on. So, to this day I do remember some of those things. I remember the gym demonstrations too. The wonderful times we had with different classes and doing different things: marching, dancing, tumbling, all kinds. It was a wide variety of activities that we had and we were lucky to have gym classes twice a week and have as much music as we had at Northern. Pierce was, some of you others can comment on some of those things too. I guess the only other thing that I want to mention now is that Don and I loved the old dark scary tunnel that was hot and it ran from Longyear Hall to the Power-Station. It was very scary and so that's what we liked about it the most and then the guys—I think the coaches hung the player's uniforms in there to dry also. A lot of things went on at Northern that don't go on anymore.

RM: Could you or could somebody talk about the faculty housing on College Avenue – the 600 Block?

JHS: The 600 Block of College Avenue, which was only one block from Northern, was called Faculty Lane because there were so many people there. Don Bottom's place was on the left as you were going west and then Slick's were next to that, and then there was a vacant lot, then the Fern's house and then the Hurst's house. Then across the street was Ms. Carey and the Halverson's and the Cluecus's and Brown's. Did I miss anybody? Several years ago, Janelle Anderson...

Man: Dr. Lowe had a place next to...

JHS: Dr. Lowe...Well, several years ago, Janelle Anderson and I put together a 600 Block party, just because they had moved all of those houses out of there to enlarge the hospital and therefore there

was never going to be a 600 Block anymore. Oh and hundreds of people came back for that and we had just a wonderful time.

RM: Does somebody want to pick up on Don Bottom?

AR: I'll say something about Don Bottom. This is Allen Roberts, again. Mr. Bottom was my high school principal and right about at the time I went to Northern, he became the Dean of Men. In high school, if you misbehaved, you got sent down to Mr. Bottom's office and if you really misbehaved and these were mostly just a few of the boys, he would apply what he called the "Board of Education," which was namesake after part of his anatomy. I never heard—I knew a number of kids that had been sent to his office and several of which experienced the "Board of Education," but they all realized that they had it coming. He would call the parents, once this had happened, explained what happened and I never heard of a parent who disagreed that it was not apropos. He had a marvelous sense of humor. I remember once in general study hall, he'd put announcements on the board and once he put announcements on, "Joe's daughters will not be meeting tonight. He started to walk out of the room and he came back and he signed it "Joe." He was very good, I mean he had a way with words like very few people did and he was so excellent with that. I had the good fortune of his secretary of many years, was Miss Densmore, Priscilla Densmore. She typed up the history of education that he had, because coming back from the war, the First World War, he became a teacher in Lower Michigan and in a year or so, they made him a Superintendent of schools in that area. So, he had this amazing, breadth of experience at a time of a lot of changes in our society. Miss Densmore told me that she had typed up a piece of work, his recollections about that and she thought that it should be circulated and that Mr. Bottom was against doing that. She thought that maybe I could put the bug in his ear. So, I took Don out to lunch one time and I talked to him about it and "oh, no," he just wrote that for his grandchildren. I said, "Well, would you show it to me?" He said, "Yeah, I will." So, I had a chance to read that over and I met with him again and I said, "You know, this has got—a lot of people would be interested in this, Don." "Well..." He said, "Well, maybe if somebody who was really writer would be willing to look at it." So, I suggested and he agreed with it but Robert Traylor who was the editor of the Mining Journal, I think at the time, should look at it and I talked Rob, and Robert said, "Yeah, this is publishable." So, he referred it again to somebody at Northern, I'm not sure who and it ended up being published, I think that's the bottom line but he was so, he never wanted to put himself out of the crowd.

JD: I just wanted to say something about Mr. Bottom. I used to correspond with him, with Mr. Bottom when I was overseas and then later on after I was teaching and this man had the most beautiful penmanship. I've never saw a man write so beautifully, if anybody else ever got letters from him and it was just remarkable. I just couldn't believe it. Most men had such poor penmanship, including me. I just wanted to say something about that.

JS: In our journeys, this is Jack Shills again. We would come from Battle Creek up to our place in Bass Lake here and we'd stop in at Frankenmuth and spend a half hour or so with Don Bottom and at that time he was having fainting spells. With his sense of humor, he ranked them on a scale of 1 to 10. He said, "Last night must've been a six because I knocked over the end table and the lamp that was on it." He lived to be 99 or a few months from being 100 and was still sharp as a tack. You could ask him now

about any student at John D. Pierce or at Northern and he could give you their whole history. He kept in contact with people all over the United States.

DH: Not on Don Bottom...This is Don Hurst again but speaking of misbehaving and the "Board of Education," so maybe we can relate it to Don Bottom, was Harry D. Lee when he was the principal of John D. Pierce school. Across the street from John D. Pierce was a private home and it had a couple of great, big well-producing apple trees in the yard and one day Bob Ferns, Bill's younger brother, Bob and I went over there. I climbed up in the tree, picked the apples, threw them down to Bob and so, we had a nice cache of apples. Well, that soon got back to Harry D. Lee and in cahoots with my dad, they said the next day I was going to have to meet with Harry D. Lee and he had a little dungeon down below his office where he would take you down and beat you with a paddle. So, I must've been 7 or 8 years old or so, I worried about that all night and the next morning I had got up and I put about six pair of pants on so that I wouldn't feel it so much. Dad dragged me over and we went into Harry D's office and it never happened, he didn't have a dungeon and I didn't get whipped but he told me that that was private property and we shouldn't be stealing apples.

JHS: Speaking of stealing or misbehavior, there was one other experience we had. On Memorial Day one year, Pierce was closed and so Don and I were just maybe six, seven, eight or something like that and the two of us and a friend went over to the Pierce yard and we were playing there, it was a beautiful day and we noticed the beautiful lilacs that were growing on the property. And we thought how wonderful it would be to take some of those lilacs over to the hospital to the poor people who couldn't get out and enjoy this beautiful day with us. See, we had been told at Pierce, this is your school, this is your yard, this is your... everything there was ours and we were to take very good care of it. Therefore, since it was ours, we could pick them and we did. We took it to the hospital and then we went home to tell our parents about this wonderful thing that we had done, this thoughtful gesture. Well, my dad met us at the door and he was very angry that we had stolen lilacs. Come to find out, the janitor Ripley, he knew us, of course and he had seen us take those and he called my dad and informed him before we got there. Well, we went up to my room and we were just feeling terrible that we had been misunderstood and that we had done this wonderful thing and now he got bought out for it. Well, pretty soon my dad called us down realizing that our hearts were in the right place and we had no idea that we were stealing anything and he just said, "Don't do it again."

JS: Jack Shills. I got one more Don Bottom and our visits with him. One day, he got talking about his first job in teaching and it was at Lake City in the Lower Peninsula and he went over the contract and the contract said he had to go to church on Sunday; he had to be there at 7:30 in the morning to start the fire in the stove. He couldn't go to movies and there were several other things that were a part of his contract at his first teaching job.

RM: See, I have a question, something that came up that we're trying, that I'm trying to identify and you folks were all on campus and might have an idea of, not so much what it is because it's still there but why it was created. I guess I can explain it. There was, below Carey Hall, a fellow found like a mosaic of animals that had been buried, but at one time it was above ground and there was like a horse, a cow

and pigs and it was in this kind of the northern end of campus. I was just wondering, did anyone, does anyone remember that or why it was put there?

Man: John, I thought you knew something about that. It was right on Waldo Street, right beneath where the library used to be and it was something from the people in the Art Department. Yeah, I don't remember the details except I went over and poked around and found it too and it was not something that was there when our parents first came in the 1920's. It was something later, an art project or something or other that kind of just got eroded away. It was right next to where the old tennis courts used to be, back in the 1930's.

DH: Then they had a ski-jump there, came right down to Waldo Street.

Another man: It didn't go back that far. It was kind of a Johnny-come-lately.

RM: Would you say it was like in the late 1930's maybe?

Man: I would say that whatever they did there was probably in the '40s.

Man: It was developed at an earlier time but then somebody uncovered it and then started going around like you are now and a little story came from here and finally somebody figured out exactly what it was and that was published. I mean in the newspaper and articles.

RM: Well, I ask because I was the one that was doing the checking and we got pretty close to what it probably was. It might've been a very late WPA project like right on the eve of World War II and that's why what you're saying here is that it didn't exist when your parents came and so on would make sense.

Man: I think that there used to be a tennis court in the early 1930's, maybe up to 1935-36 or so. Right there and I think that tennis court overlapped where these artifacts were but there was nothing there in the early 30's that I remember and Don, I used that ski jump too. That ski jump would come right over that area and there was nothing there then.

RM: This would've been what year?

Man: I might've been in junior high by then. I might've been ten, that would've been in the late 30's or early 40's and there was nothing in the way of the ski jump, no.

Man: I have a story about the Lautner's. Mr. Lautner.

RM: Do you want to talk about them?

Man: Well, I don't know but I know he was a very unique man and I said that there was an article that came out some time, I read something someplace about him in some book.

Another man: I know something about that.

RM: Because I bring this up...

[END OF SIDE A]

[START OF SIDE B]

RMM: Ok, side two; faculty brats. No I bring the Lautner up and if you can add to it, because the university, the Devos Art Museum, and the Marquette regional history center are going to be doing a big exhibit on John Lautner so if there's, if somebody has some comments,

Allen Roberts (AR): Allen Roberts here again, my camp is right next to John Lautner's camp and I was a friend of John's mother, Vida Lautner. We shared poetry together. And I asked Vida Lautner once, how she accounted for her son coming to be a well-known architect? And she said, "Any boy that was raised in the house," this is the Lautner house on the corner of Kaye Avenue and beginning of Presque Isle. "Any boy that was raised in that, and helped his father build a camp, would be interested in architecture." And my sister and I, our father Forrest Roberts, fortunately or unfortunately, he flunked John Lautner, and he made arrangements for John to make it up, but John was very lazy. And I, over the years, I live in Madison, Wisconsin. I've been a consultant at various times to Taliesin architects and I have a number of friends there that told me a lot of stories about John at Taliesin, and they said he was lazy, but he had a way about him that would overcome that. He would come down, a number of times I had breakfast with him down at my camp or up at his camp. He remarried and married a woman who spoke very little English, but boy was she a good cook. And she didn't, she could hardly talk and I think John appreciated that. My father had John in a play, he also had to, he didn't learn his lines very well. And I think it was in that play that John Lautner was, would ad-lib when he didn't know something. And Forrest said to him once "Mr. Lautner as this play goes on, it's sounding less and less like Bernard Shaw and more and more like John Lautner." And we, we saw him in 1940. Our family was in Los Angeles and we went the first time to the farmer's market in Hollywood. And all of a sudden we heard this booming voice from way down, "Professor Roberts!" And it was John Lautner that ran up and his wife, Mary-Bud Roberts Lautner was behind him and he was so glad to see somebody, anybody from the Upper Peninsula. He had just finished his work at Taliesin and at Taliesin, John would always come in, everybody was supposed to sit together and Mr. Wright had a real eye for the ladies and John's wife Mary-Bud was a beautiful woman. And John and Mary-Bud, everybody else would be seated and then they would make their entrance. And they both would do it very well and some of the other architectural students complained that it wasn't fair. And so Mr. Wright didn't mind one bit, but he had to call John and Mary-Bud in and say that this was upsetting the fellowship here. Thereafter they made it on time. The other thing I asked John here, I guess I asked him a year or so before he died, I said "John what was the best commission that you had?" He said, "It was the one for Bob Hope." I said, "What made that such a great commission?" He said, "Because Mr. Hope said 'You can do anything you want as long as you make Crosby's place look like a privy!'" and then he went on to say that was before I met Mrs. Hope.

RMM: Do you have any other additions to the Lautner story?

UV: I want to give this off the record, I don't know if it should go on there. Well, there was a friend of mine from Grand Rapids who had grown up in Marquette and he was, he graduated from Northern about 1928 or 29, Ted Frievoegel, he was a Frievoegel. And he told me that this John Lautner when he needed a wife, he went downtown to the bars and he found the youngest and most beautiful bar fly that he could find anyplace. And that's what he married, years later on, you remember she wore such interesting... you'd see her around when she had such interesting garments, very unusual garments and stuff like that. Could that be a true story?

AR: I don't think so because...

UV: Well he knew, he was in your school at the time.

AR: The woman he married, Mary-Bud Roberts was the daughter of Abbey Roberts and came from Abbey Roberts put up the money for Mr. Wright to build Deertrack. And Mr. Wright was very attracted to Mrs. Roberts and there are some stories about that but we won't put them on here. But John Lautner said, he told me once, he said "Allen," he said "the biggest mistake I ever made was in divorcing Mary-Bud." And he said that, oh, his heart was really in it.

Sarah Roberts-Osborne (SRO): That's right, this is Sarah Roberts-Osborne. I'm the daughter of Forrest Roberts and my brother Allen is right here too. I just have wonderful memories of John D. Pierce and the college and so forth. And going down, walking to school, waiting for Mr. Copper who was, he was... such a gentleman. He didn't have any children and I think we kind of bonded. He was a...and I was his daughter kind of. I would run to him and hold his hand all the way to school any time I could catch up with him and vice-versa. And, but memories like that with the faculty, students and so forth. Dad had many hats at Northern. I know most of these have been written down many times, and when he first went to Northern, it was in '28 wasn't it? And he was, ended up doing the plays, producing all the drama plays that were done at time. He even, during the summer time, right after Deerfield...Deertrack was built, they had a outdoor theater and dad produced some summer plays there at Deertrack. And I was along, Midsummer Night's Dream was one of them, he did. He had imported a lot of people for that and I was the fairy and I had one line. Somebody mentioned their drama debut, my line was "Weddy" it was supposed to be 'ready' but I had a little lisp and he hadn't caught that yet. And, but anyway that was my first drama debut. Dad did drama, then we went to California, we had a year off in '39, we went there and lived a year in California where he did graduate work in speech pathology. That's where he, then he came back and really organized speech correction in the Upper Peninsula and many weekends he would travel throughout the U.P. He'd have places, you know he had clients and kids all over where he would help children and a lot of kids from Marquette too. Then another hat he wore was the debate coach. And I think this is one of the things he really enjoyed the most was the, being the head of the debate teams. And many times we'd have college students come to the house, you know they would practice and they won many, many debating awards. And, but it was a worry for mother particularly, because they would be on the road so many times in the winter time and travelling, and so he did a lot with the speech correction all over the county. Winter-time, driving in those times, was he going to get home okay? You know, we lived with that for many years, was dad going to get back okay? That was another hat he wore. And later on he became, he was under Dr. Thomas, Norman

Thomas' father was the head of the English Department for many years, but then they decided that the college was growing enough that he became head of the Speech Department, they never had a Speech Department for many years and this, we did that. So he wore a lot of hats. And he was, I think Jim Rapport mentioned that he was a Renaissance man and I think he really was, he did so many things.

Don Hurst (DH): Don Hurst again, I'd like to just carry on a few comments about the community/family-type atmosphere that existed back in the days we're talking about here. My sister Josie and I were talking about the Thirties, when it was Northern State Teacher's College, and then it became Northern Michigan College, and then Northern Michigan College of Education, and then Northern Michigan University. So we go way back to the Thirties when it was Northern State Teacher's College, and there were probably only about a thousand students at that time, so everybody knew everybody else and the faculty all knew each other, and the unique thing about the faculty at that time, which differs from today's teachers and faculties is that they would socialize together and in particular, I think it was Wednesday evening, a group of the men would get together in the old Pierce Gym and play volleyball. And it was Golly Thorn, and I think Earl Ferns would be there, and my dad, and Cluecus, and Forrest Roberts and Don Bottom and they would play volleyball. And Jo and I would just kind of hang around and sit on the bench and watch them. Couldn't believe that, gee! I didn't think he was a person like that, he was...they were just ordinary guys having a good time. Whereas now-a-days if somebody's asked to work five minutes past five o'clock, no they say "Five o'clock, I'm outta here!" They don't give anything back to their fellow teachers, they don't want to step beyond their time limit. They don't seem to want to do like the faculty back then. And back in those early-thirty days, is when I was growing up as a little kid. I've got, I've still got a picture that my mom took of me dressed in a football uniform with a helmet on. I must have been five or six years old, and I was the mascot of the football team. So I always hung around them and as I grew older, I became the water-boy for the Northern football team. So I'd be running the water out at time-outs and back and so on. But then when I was in high school and playing football the old leather, soft leather helmet that I was wearing when I was five-years-old, we were wearing the same helmets when I was in high school! And pants that hung down to your ankles, and shoes that were too big and pads that were so heavy that you couldn't even run! So, that picture always reminds me of the...in today's professional football and college: interest in concussions. We must have had them and didn't know it, because I remember one time in high school, I was playing football, and I was playing linebacker and somebody from the other team kept making yardage through the line. I said to myself, "I'm going to meet him at the hole next time." I did but I don't remember it, the next thing I remember I was standing on the sidelines next to my dad, who was our coach, and he said, "What are you doing here? Get back in the game!" So I went back in the game! But those faculty members were real people and we had so much fun, when you got them in their off-professorial mode, they were fun people to watch and hang around.

(AR): Allen Roberts again. You know, one of the things that has come about as we've been talking here is that this was a community, it was a family. The faculty, they all interacted. There was a wonderful spirit, and when an institution gets large beyond a certain size; something is missing! And one of the things that, Forrest was hired by President Munson, who was, I believe he was a State Superintendent of

Schools and then he was sent up here to “clean house” at Northern; to get rid of the dead wood. So people would quake at the sight of Mr. Munson. I thought he was one of the most splendid people I’ve ever knew. He did not drive, he lived right across, next to the Lautner House, right across from the college. And every other week we would pick him up to drive him around, he loved to go around the island, we would drive him around. I was about four-years-old, and we came around where the zoo used to be, and out in front there was a deer there. And Mr. Munson pointed and he says, “Look Allen!” he says, “There’s a cow!” And I’m reported to have said, “It doesn’t look like a cow to me, it looks more like a horse!” And he was so delighted that he took me down to Donker’s afterward to buy me a candy-cane. And I thought this was the most wonderful man I’d ever met! The other thing, when Forrest was given his honorary doctorate at Northern many years ago, the students clapped. It was mentioned that in forty years of teaching, he only missed four hours due to sickness.

Unidentified Voice: Wow. Anybody want to talk about Riley Thorne?

Unidentified Man: We’ve had this ‘faculty brats’ for maybe six, seven, eight years or so and the last faculty member that used to attend this thing every year that he could was Riley Thorne, I know Allen has got a story about his chemistry class...

AR: I think Josie has got some stories!

UM: Is that right? Yeah...

AR: He was our seventh grade homeroom teacher, Josie. Remember that?

JHS: What was I supposed to remember about him?

UM: Well Allen’s got the story about...

AR: It wasn’t me that blew up things, although I did some blowing...chemistry was my hobby. But I did not do that. But it was Bill Mosier and Donald Friese who got into the chemistry class after, in the high school chemistry class. And they called, what I heard is that they called the FBI in to investigate because this was seen as a serious offense. And I was the first suspect and I was cleared very, very quickly. But Riley Thorne was a marvelous teacher. A lot of kids thought he looked....he was our seventh grade homeroom teacher. A lot of the kids thought he looked like Frank Sinatra, you know. And he was a wonderful story teller and we would get him going telling stories about when he and his buddies constructed an airplane up on Teal Lake back in the....after the First World War. And we could get him going for a while, and I think in retrospect, I think we learned as much from those stories as we did from any ordinary academic.

UM: He was a great bird watcher too.

RMM: Does anybody want to comment on some of the Presidents? Like, if you remember and some characteristics of them, like well...You mentioned Munson, there was Pierce, and Tape, people that were _____. I ask the question because we have very little information about, about the individuals, their

personalities or anything really about them except maybe they were President and maybe there is one picture about him. That's it.

AR: I can tell you one thing about President Tape! When I was a sophomore, myself and a fellow by the name of David Corbin, who had been a prisoner of war in Germany, plane was shot down, he escaped twice from the prisoner of war camp. But David and I were very interested, we became members of the United World Federalist Group, and we set up a chapter and we wrote up a bill that we thought should be put up in front of the Michigan Legislature, about... so that Michigan would give approval to the movement of the States into becoming a member...through the United Nations- a movement towards world government. And Casey Wiggans who was a professor of penmanship and everything was very active in the Democratic Party and we wrote this up, and he made a few suggestions, and he took it down and gave it to Sophie Williams, who became our sponsor and so it was introduced in the Legislature. We had no idea how easy it was to get a bill into the Legislature! And about a week or so later, it was passed by the house and it was turned down by the Senate. And for President Tape, I'm trying to think of the gentleman's name from the Sault, he was head of the finance committee...that was....before....I'll pass that by. Well he raised hell apparently with President Tape that, to the effect, have you got a bunch of Communist sympathizers up there among your students, you know? And I think it was very upsetting to professor Tape, I mean President Tape...and so he called me into his office, and sitting there was Don Bottum next President Tape. And President Tape said, "Well, this man is the head of a committee that has a lot to do with the money we get here. This is a terrible kind of thing here, would you be willing to negate what you said, negate this bill?" Well, it was...it had already passed the house. And I said, "No." And then he said, "Well when you get more old, get more mature, you'll understand why we need to do this." And twice during this thing, Don Bottom winked at me! Not a word was said, but he winked at me! And I've always felt sorry for the position that President Tape was in, because he was getting it from both ends.

(Inaudible)

Unidentified Male: I'll tell it!

Unidentified male 2: No, no, no, go ahead.

UM: Bill Smith and Allen, when they were young they buried some stuff in who's yard was it?

AR: On Ohio Street.

UM: Yeah, oh Ohio Street, what did you put in there all?

AR: Oh, a couple of Indian Head Pennies and some prized possessions. We were in the sixth grade, you know.

UM: Sixth Grade well...

AR: In a glass jar.

UM: Well, about three years ago, Bill Smith happened to get here, so they got the idea well let's go and dig this jar up. And it was raining pitchforks and so the picture in the paper showed them with their long coats on digging into this yard, they never did...

AR: Like something out of Frankenstein

UM: They never did find the jar!

MMR: Ok, any other observations about the Presidents that you encountered?

JHS: Got it in here? Okay. You know that dad was known as Forrest A. Roberts, nobody knew what the "A" was for. And a few people knew it was for Amazon. He had people run around calling him "Jungle Bob," at least the students did. And but the "A" was for Amazon, it was an old family name. But I know when the building at Georgia...Georgia Tech, Northern was made the theater was the Forrest Roberts Theatre, at first they were going to put the F-A-R Theatre

UM: The "F-A-R-T"!

JHS: Yeah, the "F-A-R-T!" And Jerry Parr (?) said "I don't think that would be very good. So now it's just the Forrest Roberts Theatre.

MMR: And you said that Amazon was a family name? Yeah, yeah. Are there any final observations, comments that anyone wants to make?

JHS: Well the 1951 class of John D. Pierce is having their sixtieth reunion this weekend. And you would never know how many people in this city do not have any idea what John D. Pierce is! Really, you know if you're under fifty you don't know what it is, so pass it on! And a lot of us are still ticking!

DH: Don Hurst again. Josie, do you remember any of the stuff that went on with the Faculty Wives' Club? The Faculty Wives, speaking of this family thing again; the wives...not just the men got together, but the wives got together too and...

JHS: I don't know much about what their activities though...

Unidentified Female: I know of one activity...

Unidentified Male Voice: They helped to shop around some of the sororities and to help the young ladies that haven't been to the Upper Peninsula to learn about social graces....

DH: And my mom, I recall she was a great sports fan too, being the wife of a coach. And she went to every Northern football game...home-game for fifty years without missing a game! She'd sit there till the last whistle, whether it was raining or snowing and we'd have to sit there with her most of the time.

JHS: Some of you all know this story, but my mother claims it's true. She was a young faculty wife; I think this was probably in 1929. Only been here a short time, they met down at the...they were meeting at the Women's Club right across from the Library. And all the wives were supposed to bring a recipe for people to copy, and of course this was before mimeograph machines or anything like that. So

everybody had their pencils and papers and were writing down their favorite recipes. Well, my mother had forgotten her recipe. But she had a fairly good reputation already as being a good cook, and for her recipe for chocolate cake. So she gets up there and thought she would wing-it. Well she goes, and people were writing this down long-hand, you know. Two cups of flour, three eggs and so forth and so forth and so forth. It sounded very reasonable, and then she said, "And a cup of radishes." "Ester, did you say radishes?" And mother says, "Yes, I'm very fond of radishes." And it went downhill from there! And she says, "Then you'll mix this all up and throw it in the garbage can!"

Mr. Ferns: As a faculty member, who was this?

All: You!

Mr. Ferns: Okay, every Saturday afternoon at...in the afternoon somebody, should...they played volleyball in the Pierce Gym. That's what I'm trying to say! And the faculty kids were up on, could look through the windows but not...well on the court. But that was in the winter months, that's what was going on. Your dad, and your dad...

Unidentified Male Voice: And your dad, Earl Ferns was always there for that volleyball. I remember seeing him many times there. Yeah, Earl Ferns.

EH: I do want to say one more thing. This is Elizabeth Halverson again. One interesting thing with the faculty people, my dad and whoever his friends were built the cottage that we had on Lake Independence, right across the lake from Big Bay. And next to us on one side were the Ferns family, and he had built his own cottage and it was like a beautiful boat house, where the top of it part was a cottage and then they opened a trap-door, you could step down into the boat. And we found that was really fascinating! We loved to go there. And next on the other side were the McClintock's, and he was on the faculty and he had a nice cottage. And then next to him were the Gants, Luther Gant, who was the Dean. Yeah, that's still in the family, his daughter Lorrienne Gant owns that. And I think that was the size of it but, it was kind of fun going out there with all the people that we knew.

Laura Ferns (LF): This is Laura Ferns, I'm a troll. I didn't come here until forty-six, so I'm really not part of the group, but I am a part of the group. The story I loved to think about was when Mrs. Hunt invited George's parents, and I wasn't there, but I heard the story. And she invited then to come to Thanksgiving dinner and they were going to have duck, I believe. And it was so very moist, oily fish...or animal. The boys were to take saffron rolls over, about an hour, half hour before the meal. Mrs. Hunt was just taking the duck out of the oven and she somehow spilled some oil and fell into it. And the duck's, the boys...I mean anyone who's cooked poultry knows how that feels! And the boys had to go home and tell their mother what they'd seen and then an hour later, they came back to have this meal. And here's this duck, very proudly pruned. And they had known what had happened, so it was fun.

Unidentified Female Voice: Do you have it on tape about those guys doing somersaults?

Unidentified Male Voice: Speaking of the Hunts, that professor Lucian Hunt was a very seemingly stoic, stern individual, I guess in his classes he might have been like that. But he had a very dry sense of

humor and my dad talks about a time, and there are more than one time like this, I understand. But they were dressed in their graduation ceremonial garb and the faculty had to parade in to the auditorium and right in the middle of the line, Lucian Hunt got down and did a front somersault, and then stood back up just as sedate as he could be and just kept walking. And I also heard a story that at a rose ceremony for the women, they invited some faculty men to come in and be a part of it. And he and McClintock did the same thing; they got down, took a front somersault and then, I guess they never were invited back to a rose ceremony.

RMM: Do you have?

Unidentified Male Voice: this is about, John Deveaux, this is an incident that happened in 1946, Duane Haskell was head of the music department and Lucian Hunt was the man you were just talking about. Well anyway they had these education conferences around the U.P. and when you went to stay, then you went, you went to a headquarters and you got, you were offered a room at some private home. And the two guys went out to this home to get there, and the lady came to the door and the lady said, "Well I'm expecting two women. Lucy-anne Hunt and Lou-anne Haskell!" I don't know how it came out!

Unidentified Male Voice: I got one more! I had organic chemistry from Lucian Hunt, and one of the tests we had; we were given a solution and we were supposed to test to find out what was in it. And they guy next to me tried everything and couldn't get it to react to anything. And Lucian kept walking by him and saying, "Well gosh, you've got to find something in there!" And Lucian knew it was just pure water!

RMM: Oh okay, anything else?

Unidentified Male Voice: Do we say Amen?

RMM: Amen, well thank you very much and future generations will thank you as well. And this adds greatly to the history of Northern and fills a lot of the gaps.

Unidentified Male Voice: A little lighter side?

RMM: And so, these were real people. And so we want to know something about them, so we get some very good insights. So I thank you all for cooperating, participating, and getting a sun-tan while we're at it. Okay, thanks!

END OF INTERVIEW