

This is an interview with Dr. Allen L. Niemi. Retired Vice-President for student affairs at Northern Michigan University. Dr. Niemi worked for the University for 32 years. He was head of the department of music in 1949, Dean of students in 1960, and the University's first Vice-President for Student affairs in 1969. He retired in 1981. The interview is being conducted on September 30, 1994 in Magers Hall. The interviewer is Brian Denmen representing Dr. Magnaghi's oral history class.

BD: Dr. Niemi, before we talk about your 32 years here at Northern Michigan University, could please tell me a little about yourself, your family, where you're from, where were you born.

AN: Well I was born and raised in the state of Minnesota, graduated from a small high school just out of Duluth, Clokey High School. Both my mother and father were born in Finland. And so it was a bilingual home for much of my early life. After graduating from high school in 36, I attended what was then called Duluth state teachers college. Where I majored in music and history. Graduated with a bachelors degree in 1940. and before I was called into the service I taught in two small towns, teaching all of the music in Bardem High School and a class in American History and also in social studies in Bardem Minnesota. From there I moved to Carlton Minnesota where I had much the same schedule, band and chorus and two academic classes. Uncle Sam called me in the service, and I spent most of my time with the army band. Having been stationed most of the time in the state of Colorado where we were members of the tenth Mountain division, the ski troupers. They broke up the band before the tenth mountain division went over seas and I was transferred to another band in Colorado Springs. Then moved on to Camp McCoy Wisconsin and to Battle Creek Michigan where we were assigned to the Percy Jones Hospital. After the war was over, and I was discharged I went to the University of Minnesota, perused my masters degree there, with a combination of music and public school administration in my masters degree. I left Minnesota and enrolled in Columbia University in New York and earned my doctorate there in 1949. Since the war was over, there were many wonderful teaching opportunities for a young man with a fresh doctrine in his pocket. And I was very happy to have been selected to become the new head of the music department at Northern Michigan University in the fall of 1949. Does that answer a good background?

BD: That's really good. You said that you were brought up here, at the time it was Northern Michigan College, in 1949 when you were department head of music, Could you tell me about some of the activities, some of the programs that were interduced that started out the music department?

AN: Yes, we were basically a relatively small department. There were six of us and one of our members taught half time at what was called the John D. Pierce training school. It was a laboratory school for a teacher education. But we did instigate a special



bachelor of music degree which they had not offered at Northern previously, and worked hard not only in the community to develop our musical groups, but each spring we would take tours of the Upper Peninsula. Our concert band would tour three or four days and then another tour that we organized would include a choral group plus a little symphony orchestra. And this way we brought music to almost all of the, eventually we brought music to all of the high schools in the Upper Peninsula and we felt it was also a good experience for our students to play those concerts and it certainly was good in our recruiting efforts to interest students to come to Northern. Not only the music students, because the students in various high schools may have preformed in their band or chorus or orchestra but not all of them were interested naturally in becoming music majors. They would come to Northern to study history or chemistry or what their interests may have been. The Northern music staff was also very much involved with the various high school music festivals. We took our turn in hosting the band festivals and the chorus and orchestra festivals. But we did instigate, and we started what was called the Solo and Ensemble Festivals. Which was an opportunity for the more advanced students to preform in smaller groups and by having these annual music festivals, they then could be performing before an adjudicator who would judge their performance and give them critic on how well they had performed. And then a number of the so called star performers then would perform for the evening concert before the public. So we were very pleased that Northern was able to host that Solo and Ensemble festival, and I believe it is still going on, because it's been a good highlight opportunity for the outstanding students in the various high schools.

BD: Do you have any comments about, could you talk about the NMU, Northern Michigan University Summer Camp? I know that still goes on today. Was it started in the 1940s?

AN: It was started, I think it was 1951. And I instigated that and in selecting, we thought that we should get some nationally known figures to come here as a guest conductor for the band performers. And we were very fortunate to get a man by the name of Frank Simon, who had been probably the last solo cornetist with John Philip Sousa's concert band. And Frank Simon had arranged and written just any number of standing contest solos, where as he was no longer playing he was an inspiration for the students to be able to play with a man who was such a distinguished musician. We had Dr. Simon on our campus I think for four summers and then he decided he was no longer interested in doing that kind of work so then we did bring on campus for six or more years a well known band conductor and composer, a Paul Youder, who was a big name in as the writer of band compositions. Paul was a younger man who certainly was, had a lot of spirit and fire and enthusiasm and the students that were with both Paul and Dr. Simon were just thrilled to be able to come to our campus, spend a full week. Heavy week of rehearsals and special lessons and we had social programs to go along with it to give them different activities and tours of the town. I do feel it was good for our staff to work with these



visiting musician, and it certainly was good for our students and the Upper Peninsula.

BD: You were the head of the department of music from 1949 to 1960?

AN: 61

BD: 61, and then in 1961 you became Dean of Students?

AN: Yes.

BD: OK, Explain maybe the change, I know your background was in education and what not but was there a little change in maybe authority or what not that you had to go through and your life style as being the new Dean of Students?

AN: Yes, in fact I might quote a comment, I was introduced once at a program shortly after I became a Dean by Ed Fall who at the time was Dean of Education, and when Ed introduced me to the audience he said that Allen has gone from fiddling to fuddling and I certainly would want to say that I am gone back to fiddling now that I am retired. But yes it was quite a change because Northern was very much involved in the building program, enrollment was growing. And whereas the President who had originally hired me was Dr. Henry Tape, he had passed on and his successor was Dr. Edgar Harden and Dr. Harden himself had been in student personnel administration and I must admit that I was some what surprised that he wanted me to take over the vacancy because where as my immediate predecessor as Dean of Students was Dr. Bill West for whom the West Residence hall was named after. But unfortunately Dr. West took over as the Dean of Students in July of 1960 but shortly after he discovered he had incurable cancer and he past away in January of 61 and so I then took over technically in July of 61 but Dr. Don Bottum who was such a member of the Northern family for so many years was a good friend and I might say a good compatriot for me to look to every once and a while when I needed a little professional encouragement or enthusiasm or whatever the situation may have been, because Don Bottum had retired and but we still were neighbors and found plenty of opportunities to get together in a social setting but I think one of the factors that did help me in my introduction into the position at when I became the Dean of Students they still had an enrollment was less than 2000 and so our staff was growing and with Dr. Harden's aggressive promotion of buildings on campus, we were building dormitories and developing programs and so it was a very exciting time for me to be able to hire additional staff members to take care of the growing campus's needs.

BD: In a definition if you can could you explain what Dean of Students means to you, a quick definition, or what not, of Dean of Students.

AN: Well the first one just administratively speaking is that the



Dean of Students office typically handles activities outside of the classroom. And I discovered very soon that my responsibilities included the health care of students and so where there had been a health center devoted primarily to care by professional nurses and a doctor would be brought in on certain days and a doctor would be on call, we always had the special assistance of the emergency room at the nearby what was then called St. Lukes Hospital, eventually became Marquette General. We did develop a counseling center to help students with special problems that they have and then of course there was a dormitory which included lodging and meals and we had, it was just amazing the growth because when I first came here Lee Hall had been just opened up that spring and so Lee Hall was where we would go to the cafeteria and there were conference rooms where we would have our special meetings, three conference rooms. And then of course up stairs there was a big ball room, and that is where we had all our college proms and dances, and dances were very important to the student life at the time. And I might say that those dances were always sponsored by different fraternities and sororities and clubs on campus and they would go about hiring the orchestra and the advertising and hoping to make a little money on it for their treasurer.

BD: I've heard a little about this ballroom with this staircase, maybe you could explain what you say, what you viewed there, your insight?

AN: Well it interested me definitely because when we first came to campus all of the classes were taught in Longyear Hall and in Peter White which was a Science Building and then Kaye hall was more or less a central building. And the very design of those three buildings, they were all connected and they were for seventy there were no lockers, and I think one of the things that impressed me so much about this school at the time was there were no lockers so it was not at all uncommon to have whatever the climate would dictate to wear, so you would see boots and rubbers and hats and coats because once the students got rid of their outer wear they could walk from class to class. And it was not at all uncommon that someone would forget their jacket or leave their books on the radiator and the books and their might be fountain thing right on top of these stack of books and the honesty was just real admirable and there was no side life that comes with that because when I first came their our music department had classes, classrooms in Kaye Hall, but then we were moved, they the entire third floor of the Longyear building for the music department needs. And so they put in sound proof doors, and put in a lot of sound insulation internally to help protect side classrooms with not too much interference and there we had lockers, we acquired some lockers and I don't believe that maybe two or three students wanted to put a lock on their lockers and there would be state owned instruments if the students were using them or privately owned instruments over the night, over the weekend. And of course we would often the students and say that you can't practice very well at home if you leave your instrument here. But I think the point that I am making is that



the great feeling of honesty in when I took my first inventory of musical instruments I arrived, and I then checked out those instruments twelve years later and we lost one pair of symbols and that was at a band day at a football function and one rather cheap, ineffective clarinet, and so it was a wonderful time to be here, and I might say that most of our students in the early years had certainly come from the Upper Peninsula, we were regional schools and most of the teachers knew, I knew all the music teachers in the Upper Peninsula by first name, and I think everyone, I know our music department knew the high school music teachers, and so it was kind of a family camaraderie and we knew the principals and superintendents because we dealt with them, and so I think it was almost as if the students were in their own backyard and they were bound behave themselves because discipline was never a problem in any of our classrooms, it was just a joy to teach.

BD: You spent nine years as Dean of Students, is that right?

AN: Yes.

BD: from 1960-1969. Then you were given the phrase the Universities first person of student affairs from 1969 all the way up until your retirement, myself as being a student I hear about the Student activity fee or the Student Affairs thing and if that's anything from what you started you seem to be Father of this Vice President of student affairs. Could you please tell me you know about the early years of doing being the vice-president of student affairs and then later on into your retirement?

AN: Well yes, let me more or less go back to complete what we started earlier about the Dean of Students because what I think had happened in the transition so many schools started out originally with a Dean of Men and a Dean of Women and Don Bottum had been the Dean of Men and Carey was equally long time Dean of Women and then when Ethyl Carey retired and Don stayed on he became the first Dean of Students and then what had happened quite universally in the United States as the administration was looking at their table of organization, gradually it became quite apparent that the Dean of Students position would be enlarged with greater responsibilities and would be given then a vice-presidency designation. And so that certainly happened on our campus because it got a larger number of students, and we then realized, and I should say that one of the difficulties that student personnel people face often times and that is that it is a negative image, because when I first became Dean of Students I not only had the responsibility of discipline on campus and if the decision was that it would be better for a student to depart the premises and they would be suspended automatically it was my signature that went along with the letter and of course often times the students and their families and friends were not appreciative of the actions that were taken, but it was one of the responsibilities that President and the Board had designated to me. Not only that maybe the fact that I had been academic admission for 12 years with the title of professor of music, I was also then asked to then chair



what was called the academic proficiency committee and this is a committee that would set up the rules and regulations as to what academic standards were to be upheld and when and under what circumstances a student would be asked to stay out of school. So then again it was my signature that went along with that, and I might say again there were people that did not agree with our decision. And I might say that the committee at that time that made the academic decisions was not exactly right in my way of thinking because I was but the two associate Deans were not academically, they were not teachers. And so we did change the, within two years, to make sure then that we would have faculty members both on the judicial committees and we had students brought in and there was a big organization of our judicial process that was instigated and again there were problems that were connected with it because many people need to realize when I became the Dean of Students anybody who was caught with alcohol on campus, anyplace, that was automatic suspension. And there were many times some students, you felt sorry for them but the decision was proclaimed and there were no exception made, because if you make an exception for one then what happens the next time, and so we spent a great amount of time advising the students that if you are going to be drinking please don't bring it on campus. So by getting faculty involved with the academic decisions then my role was changed to that of , I suppose I would have been called the secretary of the academic proficiency committee, because our clerical staff did all the paper work and the faculty members would meet with the students as they appealed and they would written appeal and then they would meet with the faculty and I would sitting in on that and then a student would be asked to leave, and the faculty would vote what the decision would be and then it was my responsibility to communicate the faculties message to the students and my letter would always say upon the recommendation of the faculty members of the academic proficiency committee I am in turn informing you that we find it necessary to withdraw you from Northern. Second paragraph, should you wish to be considered for reentry next semester, or year, whatever the committee decided. So there were so many negatives that were tied into that, plus the disciplinary part of it, and I might say that we too instigated from one man rule on disciplinary cases, bringing in the faculty first to serve on the judicial board and then the students were brought in of course, and so we had worked out really a double system of disciplinary action, one was where less severe charges would be heard primarily by students, and the students could make the decision, but those that were termed to be more serious infractions, then they would be heard by the faculty and student and my role then at that time was to serve as an appeal and so initial I was to have been the single person in the appeal process and that didn't seem right to me either, and it wasn't that I wanted to the responsibility. But we asked the academic senate to name a faculty member to serve on that and then we asked the ASNMU student body to name a student. And so there would be a student and a faculty member and a Vice-President serving on that final appeal. And we always, the student and I would work it around so that the faculty member would be the



chairmen of that committee.

BD: We are switching to side two now. Dr. Niemi, you were talking about the student and the faculty please continue with that.

AN: The initial work that was done by the student and faculty committee on discipline, and I don't remember the exact names, but they did a marvelous job. And they, of course, had the authority then to suspend a student or even in cases for dismissal, which meant that the door is forever closed. But naturally there were often times, circumstances where the student felt that we wanted to take every opportunity and so they would ask for an appeal to that decision. And again, I certainly want to congratulate the academic senate for the quality of concerned faculty that they asked to serve on that. And the same thing can be said about the representative from the student body that were selected by ASNMU because one of the things that I had noticed, that when I first became a Dean all of the faculty members and most of the students knew me as a faculty member. But after about 15 years, that was a long time to have been away from teaching and there were many people who would put me into the role of being an administrator. And there's nothing wrong with being an administrator, but every once and a while it was nice for me to know that, well you are one of us, being expressed by the faculty members. And I might say that the student body that were involved in making up our rules and regulations and the faculty members and the members of our student personnel, Dean of Students staff had to wrestle with many problems, because we had gone from the time when this rules were very strict. In fact, when I first came to Northern in 49 and they did not permit smoking in any of the class rooms and the fact is, that what happened then gradually there were certain administrators and others who liked to smoke in their office and so if they could smoke in their office, the faculty would say, well then we can smoke in our office. And they might not have remembered to put out their cigarette when they stepped out into the courter and I was even asked by President that he felt that it should be appropriate for the Dean of Students office. No, he had said that to Don Bottum, that Dr. had said to Don Bottum, then that he thinks that Don and his staff should ask faculty and students to not smoke in the corridor. Well he objected as I would have objected because we had enough problem dealing with the students and their needs, and certainly if a faculty member can smoke in the corridor, then I see no reason why a student shouldn't be able to smoke. But in any case the scene nationally had been changing, and where we had insisted on, the board had insisted that girl dormitories were for girls and men's dormitories were for men, we did have time on Sunday afternoon when they could visit but the doors had to be open and there were all kinds of regulations that went with that. So having gone from a tough, a get tough policy on boy's dorms and girl's dorms and so forth into one that was nationally changing to co-ed dormitories. We went through all of that, and it was not easy to do, because many people had been accustomed to it, parents were accustomed to man's dorms and women's dorms and so we had many publics to serve. The parents



would want it one way, and the students would want it another, and so they were needless to say, very interesting days.

BD: Was there any other things you'd like to add about your years of being a Dean of Student or about the transition into the Universities first Vice-President of student affairs?

AN: Well the Dr. Tate, was a gentleman and just a wonderful man to know, and I appreciated very much working with him. And certainly he was of the old schools. And I say that in a complimentary way, because he was the President at the time and that's what he was to do. But then a very dynamic young Dr. Ed Harden came up on campus and he said to some of us, said publicly, we were less than a thousand students, he said, "We're going to have two thousand students here in two years." And I must admit, that I was one of those that I wouldn't admit it out in public but at the time I thought no way. Not only did we have two thousand students, but we had close to three thousand. Because what Dr. Harden believed in was feeling of excellence. Excellence in the class rooms, let's not compromise, excellent in athletics, let's not compromise, excellent in music, and so where as my budget for music and supplies had been \$50.00 a year, for band, orchestra, and chorus. Now, I'll admit that a dollar went much further at the time. Dr. Harden said, "Al, I think you should have a marching band director. And get a good one!" And so that's when we got Dr.

to come on. And he was a good one. But you see, that's what permeated all of the departments. He went to the drama department and said, "I want good plays." He went to the students and challenged them, "I want a better newspaper." And so he hired good coaches, I shouldn't say he hired, he saw to it that the department heads were challenged to get outstanding leadership. And he and Dr. gave speeches and visited in every high school in the Upper Peninsula. And they gave commencement addresses, whenever possible. The only time they would turn down a commencement address was if they had already been booked to speak some place else. And so what they did, I think, was bring Northern Michigan College of Education to the forefront of the students and the administrators and teachers of the Upper Peninsula. And so of course, our enrollment went up. And he fought hard for extra dollars to build a campus where we could accommodate those students, and just brought all kinds of innovative ideas into it. And so the big period of growth was attributed to like Dr. Harden and Dr. Sponberg. I think I would want to say this, because it is personal biography, and I neglected to mention it. That my wife Marscella and I just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. And so she was with me all along, when we came to Northern. And I had three job opportunities in 49, one was at Northern Iowa, one was as an associate professor at the University of Wisconsin, and Northern. And there were many other job opportunities, those were offers. And so we looked the situation over very carefully, and made the family decision that we would come to Northern, and all three of our daughters, Our oldest Ann, is in teaching in Menominee, Michigan, our middle daughter, Linda,



is a counselor in Tampa, Florida, and our youngest is in marketing research in Phoenix, but all three daughters are graduates of Northern. And they feel that they got a good education and so my wife was advisor to the Alpha Z Delta sorority, because she herself had been a Alpha Z Delta in her college work in Duluth. And so the whole Niemi family was very much involved in Northern. And we loved every bit of it. Now in retirement, we still have a cottage North of Lake Michigamee, and so we spend four or five months of our year here in the Upper Peninsula, and so we can get to the football games, and we can get to the band concerts, and other activities, and I have been playing in the alumni band and will be playing in the alumni band tomorrow for the homecoming. And so this is still our home and we're here for the best part of the year, and then we go to a little town in Southern Arizona, Green Valley, where we spend the rest of the year, and I'm again, very much involved in playing the violin in Chamber music groups, so I play the trumpet in the concert band and then we have a marvelous stage band, four trumpets, four trombones, five saxes, and we play once and twice a week, and it's a marvelous experience, and I'm even singing in church choirs. So my life is very full and enriched with music.

BD: Getting back to the Universities first Vice-President of student affairs, you were there from 69 to 81 until your retirement. That's a position held for 12 years, is that kind of common to hold a particular position that long of a time period, through the last part of the 60s and through the 70s, and even a couple years during the 80s. Was that normal for faculty?

AN: No. I think I would have to admit that it was kind of unusual, in fact, I helped to develop and organize all of the Dean of Students or Vice-Presidents for Student Affairs, in Michigan, And had served as a President of that group, I think, for two terms. And what was good about that particular organization, was we could kind of compare notes; what's happening at Central and Western, and Eastern, and Ann Arbor, and Lansing, and so forth. And help each other better to understand the problems that we face and maybe even get some good thoughts out of how to approach problems as they develop. But there seemed to be a greater change over on many campuses, and I guess, I was just fortunate to have been able to stay on for many years, and since I hired everybody from the year 1961 to 1981, and I took great precautions and study in getting the people here that I thought would not only contribute to Northern, but would be happy to live here because, we realize that not everyone would be that pleased to live in a north country the way we do and the way we love it. And it's even important when you're hiring staff people, to consider the wife. Will the wife be happy here? And so I was fortunate to have higher, just outstanding people that carried on the bulk of the work, and I had the joy of guiding them and leading them on to do the kinds of jobs and financial aids and in health service and counseling center, and food services, and so forth. So really, we had to be dedicated to it. And I started on this topic earlier. That there were so many negatives it would be the obvious



things. "Oh who suspended you?" "Dean Niemi did." But what we worked at was the fact that the counseling center was there to help the students, the health center was there to help the students, and all of the programs that were developed with the student activities in working to assist, we needed a strong ASNMU and we started it. See it had been the called the student counsel, that was a rather ineffective group of students, when I was an undergraduate student I had been President of the Freshmen class and President of the Sophomore and Junior classes and we would plan a party or two and it was very ineffectual. And so it was important to us to have a strong ASNMU. And they needed to know that we were working to help them, not to tell them what to do or how to do it. But if they had needed any help, Hey, we got someone here that's right there to look in to that and do what ever they can. And when you think of the programs that we had in the residents halls, we began to realize that the resident hall is not just a place where you sleep and eat, but a lot of your life functions (I met my wife, she was living in a girl's dormitory in Duluth, and I was in the boy's dormitory.) So that there are many things of a programmatic nature that we had to build into the residents halls. And I might say that it was even a more difficult job sometimes than we had wanted. Because, we had to pay off the dormitories there were no state funds that ever came into the building of those. Where as, back in my home state of Minnesota, the President would say to the legislature, we need new dormitories. And they'd say either yes or no, but if they did the legislature built it. There was no going down to Lansing to negotiate for a loan to build a dormitory. And so built into the contract of borrowing that money, the people who lent us the money said, "you will insist that all students will stay on campus." And finally we were able to break it so that Seniors didn't have to live on, and finally we could say to the Juniors you don't have to live on. But there were times when we had over 4,400 students living in our 12 dormitories. And we were serving over 15000 meals a day. And we had our own, I imagine they still do, we had our apolstry shop, repaired our furniture, and we had our own electritions, and carpenters, and plumbers, and all the articcents. So it was an exciting time but basically we were doing what every we could to make the dormitory living as enjoyable as it could be. And a place where the students could study. If there was noise, they'd complain, we would say, "well, what kind of an organization do you have? You set the rules. This is your home." And so that we established quiet dorms, and they insisted that it be quiet. But of course there were some dorms that were not quiet, too. It was a marvelous life, and I enjoyed it, and I'm enjoying retirement now.

BD: I was going to ask something like that. It seems like, with the 30 plus years and even longer of education, that you gave to Northern Michigan University and your native state of Minnesota, that you are enjoying retirement. I think that's important. It's kind of nice to hear that you do come back here and you see some of the events and what not. That's very good.

AN: Well Northern will always be a part our lives and of course,



our three daughters are involved with the alumni activities. So it has been a great time and I was very pleased that one of our alumni members had established a scholarship in my name. And there is even an interesting story on that. Because without mentioning names, he proved that he had the academic ability to do good work in college, but like many, he did not put forth the effort that he should have. And he and I had a lengthy visit at one time, and I must admit, I had forgotten it until we happened to be seated next to one another in the plane. He reminded me that he remembers the dialogue that we had had. Where I had scolded him in effect to say, "Your test scores indicate you should be getting 'A's and 'B's. And how do you account for the fact that you aren't getting those grades? We're about to suggest that you depart from Northern for awhile." And I guess it kind of shook him up. Because he graduated and has done very well financially, and remembered that dialogue and had decided to establish a scholarship for student leadership in my name. And of course that was just a thrill. And he is a very dear friend of mine, but as he said, "Somebody needed to give him a kick in the right place." And so you win some, and that was one that we won. And then of course, I was just thrilled a year ago to have been designated as the recipient of a honorary degree here at Northern. It was just so wonderful for my family and all of our friends to be involved and included in the great celebration.

BD: Just to end it all, now that the University is in it's expanding stage, expanding time now, we see a lot of changes around the University and what not, do you see any potential of a new dorm going up Niemi hall or anything like that? Your accomplishments and what not of your services here, I see that in mind.

AN: No, I think that the recognition that I had with the scholarship in my name, and I certainly hope that people would contribute to that, my family has and we have also. But It's the scholarship that I'm very proud of because what it does, is it recognizes outstanding leadership qualities of high school students. And as they come here to Northern, then we are encouraging them to continue with the leadership activities on our campus. And then with the honorary degree, I think that was a point, and I must that I'm such a great admirer of Dr. Vandament and I feel that once again we have a President who is the right President for the right time. Because he does have some very difficult decisions to make now. But from all I can see, he is strongly supported by the students and the faculty. And it speaks so well of his capabilities and that special unique personality that you need when you have to make those decisions, because they can be made autocratically by a President, a one man decision. Or they can be made by the people who are involved by the effect of it. And where as either way if there are some real hardships that would be tied into it. I just have the confidence that not only will he take care of the problems as they come now, but the joys of building for the future. Because he's a man of great vision and great determination and the ability to bring all this teamwork together because that's the only way it can be done.



That's the way Dr. Harden did it and I know that that's the way that he would do it.

BD: Yes, from doing a little research myself, I've seen some, in talking with Dr. Magnaghi, you see a little bit of the same Dr. Harden and President Vandament, you see a lot of similarities. And it's kind of ironic that you did happen to mention that, I had that as a potential question. So you had seen it and it's good for the student body.

AN: I must admit that there's just a little prejudice in this too. Dr. Jamrich was a musician, so we use to kid about it, because we were both fiddlers. And he's a musician of great talent, and then of course when Dr. Vandament came on, I found out that he was a trumpet player, well you know, that puts him in to the right musical fraternity, but it's a joy for me to see a man of that distinction and great ability who will in a lighter moment, pick up a trumpet and play some dixie land music. And to play it well, it's not just superficial, he has the professional capabilities and as I have said to him and jokingly I would say, of course you're much younger than I am, but I truly am amazed because I know he doesn't have the time to practice and keep himself in condition. And so for him to pick up an instrument and play it, and play it so well, it's just a great joy. And needless to say, I'm sure you can tell from my comments, that we've had some fine moments of camaraderie tied in to our musical backgrounds. Because I know he worked his way through college playing the trumpet, as I worked my way through playing trumpet and violin.

BD: Is there anything else you would like to bring up as a conclusion?

AN: Oh, I think, maybe because of my history background and as an undergraduate student, we had to write a extensive theme it was a one semester course, and you had to do a historical research, and I was fortunate enough, my father actually mentioned, why don't you write a history of the city of Klockay, which was a rather interesting town. It was a large Indian, Chippewa reservation had been there for hundreds of years. And it was right on the St. Louis River that empties into Lake Superior, and so there was a lot of natural history that was tied into it. And so I became interested in local history, and one of the things that I did with in mind, when I was in student personnel work, every office had to submit an annual report. And I must admit there wasn't always a great deal of enthusiasm, but over a period of 20 years there was a documentation of everybody who had been hired and a little something about that staff person, and when who replaced them. Or what changes had taken place and each of the officers then would talk about their goals and objectives and how they reached them. And so I turned this over and after 20 years to the archives. And when they were handed over, the comment was, "I wish all offices would have this kind of a documentation," because from 61 then to 81 and so what I'm saying in essence is that I think it's very important for a project like this to be done, when Northern is



approaching it's 100th birthday. And that, I certainly wish you and your comity well in trying to dig out just of the history of the town formal and informal because the fact that you have already contacted Dr. Bottum who's in his late 90s is just marvelous because voice will not be heard long. And we correspond once and twice a year, and I must say that for at least the last ten years, he would close his memo with a little tongue and cheek and say, "Well this may be my last letter." I want to urge the comity to do just as well as they can, because if it isn't done now it will be lost forever.

BD: OK, this concludes the interview with Dr. Allen Niemi. Thank You Dr.