

Oral History Center
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Peter Hanff

Peter Hanff: Books, Bibliography, and The Bancroft Library

Interviews conducted by
Martin Meeker
in 2017

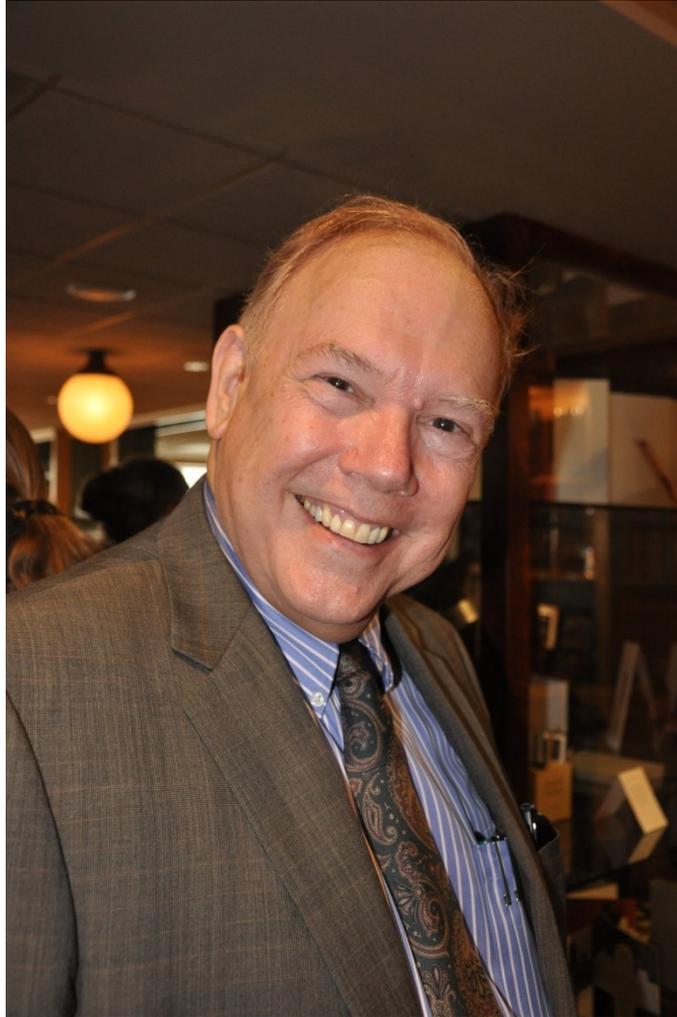
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Peter Hanff

Photograph courtesy of the International Wizard of Oz Club, Inc., 2019

Peter Hanff is Deputy Director of The Bancroft Library at the University of California. Hanff was born in Florida in 1944 and then moved with his family to Southern California in 1956. He attended the University of California Santa Barbara as an undergraduate and then the University of California Los Angeles where he earned his MLS. After an internship at the Library of Congress and a year and a half as assistant to the coordinator of information systems there, he was selected as a rare-book fellow at Indiana University's Lilly Library. Hanff then accepted a position as reference librarian at The Bancroft Library in 1970. Hanff worked in various positions and on a variety of projects over the years, including as Interim Director and later Acting Director of The Bancroft Library. Hanff also is a noted scholar of the author Frank Baum and his series of Oz books. In this oral history, Peter Hanff discusses: his education background and early interest in young adult literature and book collecting; the transformation of library and archival work from the 1960s to the present; the administration, personnel, and collections of The Bancroft Library; and his contributions to the documentation of the works of Frank Baum and other authors.

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Interview 1: January 6, 2017

01-00:00:00

Meeker: Today is the 6th of January 2017. This is Martin Meeker interviewing Peter Hanff for the university history oral history series and this is our first interview focused on the history of the Bancroft Library. This is interview session number one and we are here in the admin conference room of the Bancroft Library. We begin all interviews in the same way, and that is tell me your name and when and where you were born.

01-00:00:31

Hanff: My name is Peter Hanff. I was born in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1944.

01-00:00:37

Meeker: Can you tell me a little bit about the circumstances into which you were born, perhaps the kind of work that your parents did and such?

01-00:00:45

Hanff: Right. My father was an aeronautical engineer but without a degree, with that title. He, I think, graduated as a mechanical engineer from Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, although he had started at Worcester Tech at the beginning of the Depression and the Depression caused him to have to return to his family house, which was in Pittsburgh. He was scheduled and sent by the U.S. Army as a civilian employee to train glider pilots in Alabama. And at some point, up in Elmira, New York, at a dance he met my mother, who was a nurse, just finishing or graduating in her nurse's training program. And they hit it off. And she did something I think that must have been rather bold in those days. She took the train down to Mobile, Alabama, to spend some time with him and they decided to get married and were married in 1943 and I was the product of the union in January of 1944.

01-00:01:41

Meeker: Tell me a bit about your father's family. Who were his people? Where did they come from?

01-00:01:47

Hanff: My father was the son of Edward A. Hanff, who was a native of Rutland, Massachusetts. The Hanffs were in Rutland from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, I think. The great-great-grandfather of my great-grandfather married a Putnam and the Putnam family was very prominent in Worcester, Massachusetts, which is nearby, fourteen miles away, and in Rutland. And Morris Hanff was the town clerk. I think he was the postmaster. It was a very small town. And I got to know it in my childhood and then somewhat later. His widow, my great-grandmother, lived to about a hundred and she was there for a long time. So I do remember her from very early date. And then there were two sisters of my grandfather who continued living in Rutland for the rest of their lives. One had married twice and the other was a maiden aunt and she became the town postmistress and also the town clerk. So the tradition

continued in that area. There were other siblings. I don't think many of them moved very far away from New England. They pretty much stayed there.

But my grandfather struck out for the west and went to Pittsburgh, which is west to them, and had a career with various companies there. But he worked for a while for Westinghouse. And had quite a number of patents in his own name. But eventually he worked for Swindell Dressler, which was an industrial furnace making company in Pittsburgh, which was part of the Pullman Corporation. And he had a fairly affluent comfortable life in the Pittsburgh years and he lived to be eighty-nine. So he died young by family standards. His younger sister Hazel, one of the aunts in Rutland, managed to live to eighty-three, although she must have weighed three hundred pounds all her adult life. And Linda lived on until she was over a hundred. So the family on that side was fairly long-lived.

My mother's family were immigrants from the generation before her parents from England, although I think they had Germanic roots. And they came from Yorkshire and had perhaps been in the coal mining industry as laborers. I am not quite sure of that. But there was kind of an English tradition on the one side with some Irish intermixture on that side. And then there was my grandfather's family.

My father's mother, Nina Octavia Marks, M-A-R-K-S, died a month after he was born in 1916 from puerperal fever. And I think my grandfather didn't remarry until four years later. And I think my father was affected by that in a number of subtle ways. I did see a photograph of him in a family collection and I didn't know what it was I was looking at. It looked like a monkey. It was a skinny little monkey baby. And I started to laugh and my mother said, "That's your father." He almost starved to death because they didn't know how to take care of infants in those days. That was a lesson and I caught it at that very moment but never discussed it with my father. It just happened to happen in Florida when we lived in the south of Florida.

We were in Jacksonville from the time I was born until 1946, I'm guessing. Don't have exact dates. And then we moved to the Miami area with a house in Hialeah, which was still very rural. And we were actually out in the country with dirt roads. We lived across the street from a sugarcane plantation. The next block down ended in what we called the swamp, which was an extension of the Everglades, although I didn't know these things. But I do have memories of that time and remember learning how to climb under the barbwire fence with the neighborhood children to get into the sugarcane and break off the ripe brown stalks to chew on. And I wasn't supposed to do that because there were rats in the sugarcane field.

But in any event, I do have memories from about the age of three that are fairly photographic in the sense of things. We had a flood in October of 1947

which basically flooded out all of South Florida and so I do remember aspects of the flood because that was dramatic.

01-00:06:10

Meeker:

You said your father was in the service when—

01-00:06:12

Hanff:

He was a civilian employee of the United States Army training glider pilots. There was going to be an incursion from Britain by gliders into France. That campaign never actually happened but he had been an amateur glider pilot anyway and that's how he had met my mother. So there was that connection. But because of that aeronautical background, he was apparently the first engineer hired by the fledgling National Airlines, which started its business in Jacksonville, which is why we were there when I was born. And I have a sister two years younger who was also born in Jacksonville. But all of us, as soon as we were born, we were in Miami. And he stayed on with National until, I think, about 1947 or '48 and moved over to Eastern Airlines, which also had headquarters at Miami International, as did Pan American. So there were three major airlines in the Miami area. And he stayed on with Eastern Airlines until I was almost thirteen. By then I had three siblings so there were four children and he really wanted us to have an opportunity for a university education and California beckoned because in those days the University of California was essentially free. So he was courted by both Douglas Airlines and Lockheed and picked the Lockheed job. So we moved to Los Angeles in 1956 in December.

01-00:07:35

Meeker:

Did you ever get a sense of his interest in education? Was this like a core value in the family?

01-00:07:42

Hanff:

It must have been. But he didn't talk about it intellectually. What I do know is that he had a major passion for books and that influenced me for the rest of my life. In our Hialeah house, their master bedroom, which wasn't very large—we had a small house—had one very long closet and he built into it along the whole length of it—it was the whole width of the living room and length—bookcases. And they were filled with books, his books. And out of those books were the books he would read to me when I was very small. He started reading to me when I was three and I loved it. I remember his reading to me. I don't remember what my emotional feelings about it were. I just think I took it for granted that this was what he did and I enjoyed it immensely.

01-00:08:27

Meeker:

Do you recall the first meaningful book that he gave to you?

01-00:08:32

Hanff:

It's funny. I don't really remember books that he gave to me as such. What I do remember is that I was instantly addicted to the *Wizard of Oz* books, because he had quite a number of them. And I just loved those better than

anything else he read to me. But we also used the public libraries. There was a privately funded library in Hialeah run by the women's club which I could ride my bicycle to. But we went to the Miami Public Library, which was the Dade County Library, closer to downtown Miami frequently enough. And I was already taking books out and I do remember some of the books that I read. But when I was seven, Aunt Hazel sent us presents. I think it was what was called an Easter present. And it was a check so that I could go buy books. And I do remember going at that age to the local store that had books. It wasn't really a bookstore but a greeting card store. And I had a quest in mind. I wanted to get a copy of a book called *Ozma of Oz*, which is the third of the Oz series, which my father didn't have. And it had been story told to us when I was in kindergarten and I loved that story and they didn't have it. So I had to compromise and buy *Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz*, which came out the following year after *Ozma of Oz*. But the other thing I bought was a double volume that had both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* in it. And at seven I was able to read those, with some challenge. The prose from Lewis Carroll was a little hard for a seven-year-old but I worked my way through it with great delight. And my mother told me very late in her life that she remembered that event because I went in and told the woman what I wanted and I said, "I want *Alice in Wonderland*," and she whisked out the Disney animated book. It wasn't an animated book. It was a book based on the animated Disney cartoon of *Alice*. And my mother said, "You looked up at her with your big brown eyes and said, 'I'm happy to look at the pictures but I want a copy with all of the words.'" So I'm afraid I was a nut from the beginning.

01-00:10:35

Meeker:

[laughter] Were you introduced to the Oz stories through the film or through the books?

01-00:10:40

Hanff:

Through the books. And then when I was five, which was 1949, MGM rereleased the movie for the first time after '39 and my father took us to see it. It became something I didn't forget as an event because I was well-prepared for it. I wasn't afraid of the witch. I knew she was going to be there and I was excited to meet her, in effect. But we went into what was called the Miami Twin Theater. I remember the name of it only because of what happened. We went into the theater. They were showing the preview for the *Wizard of Oz*. So I saw what it was and it looked really good. And we sat down and then almost immediately the movie started and it was *Key Largo*. But I'd already seen *Key Largo* at five. And my father jumped up and said, "We're in the wrong place," and made us leave. And I became quite upset because he was taking me away from what I had just seen glimpses of. But it was a twin theater. It was basically an early multiplex. We had to go to the auditorium next door. And then I saw the movie. And so I saw that when I was five. And I was disappointed because it's a dream in the movie and I knew it wasn't. [laughter] I don't quite know how I sorted out reality from fantasy. I probably

didn't make sharp distinctions but since I knew there was continuity from book after book after book, the fact that they turned that into a dream frustrated me.

01-00:12:00

Meeker:

Interesting. Tell me a bit more about your upbringing. Did your family attend church? Was religion an important thing?

01-00:12:09

Hanff:

It was, I think, important to my mother. My father was not interested at all. And the church she belonged to and had grown up in was the Presbyterian church. So we belonged first to the—I guess it was called First Presbyterian Church of Miami Springs, which is just across the Tamiami Canal from Hialeah. It was the only Presbyterian church in the neighborhood. And then a group of people from that congregation formed a new church in Hialeah so we moved to that because it was closer to us. So I do remember that. And I went to Sunday school regularly. Eventually, quite a long time later, I joined the church very briefly, just as I was beginning to be very skeptical about such things. But there was a brief moment of membership. I've always believed, though, that we probably have a Jewish heritage blended into all of this because all of my friends once I got to Los Angeles were Jewish. I didn't have any Gentile friends until my high school, when I had one. And I went through bar mitzvah practice for the presentations that my fellow students needed to give and I attended temple with them on Friday nights frequently. Sometimes they came to church with me on Sunday. And my congregation actually had a number of Christian converts from the Jewish community. So there was always a kind of a presence of that sort in my growing up.

But I had been told already in Florida by a young man who was working with my father and another fellow on building a sailplane, a high performance glider, in our house, in our garage, that he thought I was going to really like Los Angeles because he already knew I was very curious about Jewish culture. And he said, "You're going to like Los Angeles, Peter. It's full of Jews." And I didn't know what he meant when he said it that way. His name was David Sugarman and I know now, in my maturity, that I should have known he was Jewish. But I didn't quite know that. But he did talk to me about bar mitzvah. So over time I got to know a little bit about things to expect. So that was kind of an interesting background.

And when we got to Los Angeles, as it turned out, as I said, I had three very close friends in junior high. I was being bused to Van Nuys to go to junior high school. And they were all Jewish. And their mothers made appointments to interview my mother to see if I was appropriate to socialize with. And so there was a little bit of an edge to the incorporation of my activities with them. But it was very early in my arrival and then I was just part of that community.

01-00:14:44

Meeker:

What was the nature of your interest in Jewish culture?

01-00:14:47

Hanff:

I don't quite know what it was. I know that in the third grade I approached my teacher, Mrs. Stack, Evelyn Stack was her name, and I said to her, without any self-consciousness, "Mrs. Stack, my friend Freddie Mohl is from Brooklyn, New York and he's Jewish. And when he reads from the Bible when we have to do the morning mandatory devotional reading, he should be allowed to read from the Old Testament because Jews don't believe in the New Testament." And she accepted that as wisdom. And his mother later thanked me for doing that. But I didn't know I was doing anything unusual. So I had an awareness early. I don't know why.

01-00:15:27

Meeker:

When you think of your upbringing and the values that were taught to you by your parents, is there anything that particularly stands out?

01-00:15:40

Hanff:

The values were pretty middle-class. There was a strong sense of morality, kind of conservative morality in a real way. And I remember more by example than any kind of lecturing. I think it was just not a thing that was much discussed. Also, in Florida, my parents, who were really conservative Republicans by background, were registered Democrats because there was only a Democratic party in Florida. So if they wanted to vote at all in any of the primary elections they had to be Democrats. And then when we got to Los Angeles they were once again Republicans. But it was never discussed. So I actually didn't grow up listening to political persuasion or political argument at all. I don't quite know why they were so quiet about it. But it happens that I am not that way. But all of my siblings are. Oh, no, that's not true. My brother is not. He's on the left of center, as well. But my two sisters are very conservative and we just don't talk about it.

01-00:16:44

Meeker:

When you went to Los Angeles, and you said you went there about age thirteen, is that right?

01-00:16:48

Hanff:

I was twelve, yes. Almost thirteen.

01-00:16:50

Meeker:

You were twelve. Okay. I'm curious about entering into the California culture and the new friend networks that you fell into. Did you find California to be substantially different than what you had experienced in Florida?

01-00:17:08

Hanff:

Yes. It was phenomenally important to me. Probably I was just old enough to be aware of it. In Florida we lived very modestly and my father didn't have a great deal of money. And we moved to Los Angeles and for the first time we were in a situation where we were in a custom built house with an acre of land in a converted walnut orchard. Suddenly we had fruit trees, including citrus, but other kinds, as well, and nothing like that grew in Miami. I guess orange

trees could grow farther north in Florida but Miami doesn't have rich soil. So we didn't have citrus trees even in Miami. Avocados grew there and papayas but in Los Angeles suddenly my mother was in her own element. She loved gardening and she loved the presence of the fruit trees and the grape vines and things of that sort. That was nice. I have to admit, I enjoyed being in a custom house when all of my friends lived in housing tracts. And so we sort of were an entertainment center. And my mother was a good cook. And my friends loved coming to her house for dinner. And this was a cultural difference between my family and my best friends' families. We had an evening dinner every night and then a Sunday afternoon dinner on Sundays and it was always a family meal. The other friends didn't have that. Each child had a different preparation of food and ate at different times. And I think they kind of liked seeing this other way of doing it. But it was the way we had always done it so for me it was just normal and for them it was special.

01-00:18:41

Meeker:

I'm curious. Do you recall any particular preparations, dishes that your mother made that—

01-00:18:47

Hanff:

They were pretty much traditional English driven, I would suppose. She was very good at doing roasted meats. My best friend, Steve Fish, who's actually two years younger than I am but was in the same grade as I was because he had advanced before I got to Los Angeles, loved the roast beef dinner, which was a Sunday dinner, and the Yorkshire pudding, although he always claimed it gave him terrible indigestion. But he always ate it. I wouldn't say there was anything extraordinary about that cooking but it was good cooking. Good farm cooking basically is what it was.

01-00:19:21

Meeker:

Where in Los Angeles did you live?

01-00:19:22

Hanff:

We were in the San Fernando Valley. We were on a street called Nordhoff Street, which is a major east/west street. We were on the eastern most block of it, the very last block of it before it merged into Osborne Street and what I continue to call Pacoima, although the neighborhood became Arleta because it was a substation of the Pacoima post office. But it's still Pacoima. And on that same street, way to the west, is the California State University Northridge, which opened while I was there. And I would ride my bicycle to it and did use the university library. It was open. And so even as a high school student I was in browsing the shelves and looking at older imprints and things like that. And it just always intrigued me to see publishers history and things like that just manifested in the books that they had produced.

01-00:20:09

Meeker:

You attended public high school?

01-00:20:12

Hanff:

Yes.

01-00:20:13

Meeker:

What high school?

01-00:20:14

Hanff:

Yeah. I went to John H. Francis Polytechnic High School. It was the name of an old high school in downtown Los Angeles that was moved with the creation of a new high school in Sun Valley, which is in the San Fernando Valley. It was about three-and-a-half miles, I think, from our house. And we didn't have bus service so there was a carpool setup and there were five of us students being driven in the carpool. And if I remember right, one mother for a week did the driving every day. But I might remember that wrong.

01-00:20:48

Meeker:

Tell me about the high school.

01-00:20:50

Hanff:

The Polytechnic High School was a general high school. It had tracking, although we didn't call it that. I didn't even know about it. But we had an academic campus and we had a non-academic campus. They were physically separated. One was on one side of the property and the other was on the other. I was on the academic side with all of my friends and we were all pre-university prep people. For our little group we had sixth period gym, which I know in retrospect meant that we didn't interact with the other students. They just decided nerds like us needed to be by themselves, and so we were. But the programs were good. The teachers were really outstanding.

And of particular interest to me is the high school librarian, whose name was Virginia Baygulow. And she became a major mentor of mine. It was interesting because she didn't like students. She was very intellectual. She primarily selected books for the collection to expand the minds of the pupils. And at some point, once I had really started collecting with a focus, I made an appointment to meet with her. One normally only dealt with the clerk. So the clerk made the appointment. And I walked into Mrs. Baygulow's office and she had her half-glasses on and she looked up at me and said, "What?" And I said, "Mrs. Baygulow, I wanted to ask if you could recommend a book binder that I might take a book I've bought to for repair." "My policy is that if a book needs repair I buy a new copy." And I just didn't blink. I said, "I'm talking about first editions." And that opened up a remarkable friendship and eventually she was cooking for my best friend and me French food, serving us wine. This is high school. It was amazing. She gave me a graduation present when I graduated, which was her own copy of Fredson Bowers *Principles of Bibliographical Description*, which I think is the weirdest present anybody could give but for me it was absolutely a key to my future and transformative in its own way. And we continued being friends until she died, which is kind of a nice thing. Yeah.

01-00:23:13

Meeker:

Do you look back and identify what your first book was that was the beginning of your book collection?

01-00:23:20

Hanff:

The Oz books were definitely, in my mind, mine, although they really were my father's. And they were actually the entrée to this group of friends that I had in junior high. We had them. I was reading *Tarzan of the Apes*, Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, all kinds of other things. And my friends had all been really smitten with the Oz books so they began borrowing books I had that they didn't or had not read and they got really excited. And so the four of us went to our parents and said, "We want to start a book collecting club. We know that there are used bookstores in downtown Los Angeles and there are used bookstores in Hollywood." My father was the one who introduced me to that, even when we lived in Florida. He brought me used books. And at first I was offended. Why would I want somebody else's book? He said, "You can buy a lot more because they're cheaper." That was all I needed to know. And so, yeah, they gave us permission. And so we would trundle twenty-five miles to downtown Los Angeles or Hollywood by public bus from the San Fernando Valley. Downtown LA in those early years had eight quite good used bookstores. Hollywood had even more. And so it became a kind of an education for us. And while we called it a club it was somewhat competitive. We were all after the same things. And so we might be sedate up to the front door of the store but then we would rush in as fast as possible to find the books. But it was a good experience.

Steve Fish's mother had been a cellist in Chicago and won the All Chicago City Music Competition in her high school years and she was very keen on our having exposure to theater and symphony and things like that and even coerced our parents into getting us season tickets for the Civic Light Opera one summer. And then the problem was that somebody had to carpool us because you couldn't rely on the buses to get to anything like that in a timely way. So there was a lot of cultural exposure around the edges that I just fell in with. And from the moment I was there I was hanging out with people who were very academically focused and high achieving and that had not been the case in Florida. I was somewhat like that but didn't know anything about how to socialize properly and I was always kind of a weird loner in that Florida context and suddenly I found an element where I was part of another kind of person.

01-00:25:44

Meeker:

When you and your friends would go to these bookstores in Los Angeles and Hollywood, were you looking for books in the sense of particular kinds of content or were you looking for editions? Were you looking for specific titles or editions or a combination?

01-00:25:59

Hanff:

Oh, it was very simple. Initially we were looking for Oz books. There are forty Oz books in the series, although I guess when we started there were not that many. One more was published after we started collecting. There were thirty-nine up until that point. And we had very little money and first editions, though not very well understood yet, because there wasn't any bibliography to speak of, were priced beyond our reach. And I didn't really see a sound copy of the *Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the first of the Oz books, until I was in high school. And my high school librarian helped. When I started doing my honors paper for my senior year, it was going to be on L. Frank Baum. And she introduced me to Roland Baughman, who was head of special collections at Columbia University, and I wrote to him and got wonderful material back from him. She had known him when she worked at the Huntington Library in the 1940s. And then she called up Wilbur Jordan Smith, who was the head of special collections at UCLA, and he invited me to come over and spend a Saturday with him so that I could look at first editions with him. And so that's how I began getting introduced to a world of first editions. I had been looking really for books with color plates, earlier than that, we all were interested in that. But we also were just looking for reading copies. So it wasn't quite a focused kind of collecting initially.

01-00:27:23

Meeker:

What was the special thing about first editions? Why does that attract the attention?

01-00:27:29

Hanff:

I have an interesting rationalization. I think that's really what it is. But it is also literally true. A first edition of an illustrated book, like an Oz book, was printed from the plates when they were first formed and those same plates were used and used and used for multiple editions until they completely wore out. So what I learned in my collecting era and this foray that I was doing is that the earlier the printing, the sharper and clearer the illustrations and the better looking the type was. And that's what I began focusing on. Initially I didn't even know that L. Frank Baum's books had been published with color plates. The ones my father had, at home, were illustrated only with black and white illustrations. The books by Thompson, who was the second contributor to the series, they did include twelve color plates. And in my child understanding of things I said, "Well, as the series went forward in time it got better." And I loved the illustrations that much, so that was influential to me.

Then there was a new book store in Van Nuys run by Betty Gaskell and she knew me well enough as an Oz person. And she had a fire at one point so she dusted off the smoke and soot from books that were salvageable and offered them at a very modest price, Oz books included. So I began buying books for reading that way. But I was talking with her one day and I told her about my idea of the colored plates. She said, "Peter, the first editions of Baum's books all had colored plates." And I learned that probably when I was fifteen or sixteen.

And when I was sixteen I visited Pittsburgh to stay with my grandparents. And my poor grandfather dutifully drove me around Pittsburgh to fourteen bookstores because I was looking for first edition L. Frank Baum books. And I had just discovered before that trip that the company I knew, Reilly & Lee, which published the Oz books, had probably been preceded by a company called Reilly & Britton. I had seen one book illustrated by the same illustrator as the Oz books that was published by Reilly & Britton. And I said, "Maybe if I can find Reilly & Britton Oz books, which I had never seen, they'll have color plates." And the fourteenth book store was Schoyer's and she had a shelf of Reilly & Britton Oz books and they had color plates. It's true they were from Pittsburgh, so the top edges of the book were dark, basically black from the soot, but they were in good condition. And ultimately I bought them all. But it took me a while because I had so little money. But Mrs. Schoyer, Maxine Schoyer, held onto them for me so that I could do this over about a year, to add to my collection.

And I'll give you a side story from that. Maxine Schoyer was this impressive individual who did that for me. And when my grandfather died in 1979 my father asked me to go back to Pittsburgh and help him shut down the house. And my grandmother, who was two years older than my grandfather, my step-grandmother, was mourning with anger. He had left her. And she basically sold the entire contents of their three-story house for the price of the brand new custom-made sofa that they had to a used furniture store. And in the attic I found all these books that my grandfather had.

[Side conversation deleted]

My grandfather had, in his retirement, been interested in collecting clocks and restoring them. So in his own shop in the basement he had a metal lathe and a wood lathe so he could make wooden and metal gears. And he had a sizable book collection about clocks, the history of them, the restoration of them, and so forth. And I asked my grandmother what she was going to do with these books and she said, "They're going to the Goodwill." So I called up Mrs. Schoyer and I said, "Mrs. Schoyer, this is Peter Hanff over in Black Ridge. And I once bought books from you back in 1960." And she said, "Peter, I've never forgotten you. And we use your bibliography of the Oz series practically every week." So I took the books over and she bought the collection for a very handsome figure, which was a surprise to my grandmother and her niece, because they just didn't see any value in old books. And some years after that there was an elegant obituary of Maxine Schoyer in *AB Bookman's Weekly*, the weekly trade journal for antiquarian booksellers written by a fellow in Pittsburgh whose name was Marc Selvaggio. And it was an obituary of Maxine Schoyer. And I wrote him a letter commending him for that and telling him my background. And much to my surprise, Marc Selvaggio ended up in Berkeley and brought Schoyer's bookstore with him and ran it as a business here in Berkeley. So I've found in my life that my little circle of book world is really quite small and it follows

me in effect. And only when Marc's wife died did he decide to go under his own name and he wrote me a letter to explain it and I thought that was very charming. And recently he sent me my letter. I hadn't remembered to keep a copy of it.

01-00:33:08

Meeker:

Did you have a job when you were growing up to provide you with income to afford these books?

01-00:33:14

Hanff:

No. No, I didn't have a job until I graduated from high school. So I was pretty much having to live on a very modest allowance. I had certain assignments around the property. With that acre we had the possibility of an agricultural water rate, which was important for that much land. But it required that the back two-thirds of the property be kept plowed. There could be no grass. And it was my job to keep it clear of grass and weeds. So my father marked out squares and I had a certain assignment each weekend to clear the grass. And my friends would come and lean over the fence. "We're going to Santa Monica beach. Don't you want to go with us?" And I never could. So I don't like gardening even to this day. [laughter]

01-00:34:02

Meeker:

I don't blame you. Did you have a favorite bookstore in Los Angeles, like one or two that you'd like to recall?

01-00:34:08

Hanff:

Yes. My favorite one, it was called Peggy Christian, Bookseller. And she too became a mentor of mine. I've had some remarkable mentors over the years, all of whom were women. She was probably the second one after the high school librarian. She specialized in modern first editions and other rare books but she always had good children's books. While I was an undergraduate in Santa Barbara I had my own collection of L. Frank Baum, which was getting to be fairly sophisticated, and I had Bowers to understand how to do bibliographic description of these books, so I was already doing this, working my way through Bowers for the four years I was an undergraduate. But in the meantime Peggy was not only selling me books but she was sending me rare books that she needed formal bibliographic description of. And I could do that. So I was corresponding with her and doing catalogue descriptions for her. And then in my senior year she wrote me a letter to say, "Peter, I have to make a confession. I have been sharing all of your letters with Jake Zeitlin," who was a major antiquarian bookseller in Los Angeles, history of science, medicine, and technology, "and he would like to hire you as a rare book cataloguer. Would you be interested in talking to him about that?" So I was going down to Los Angeles for an interview with Lawrence Clark Powell to see if I could get into the library school there, because by then I knew I wanted to be a librarian. And Jake took me to lunch and offered me a job the moment I arrived for library school. And the fact that he had done that I think had a great deal of influence on Lawrence Clark Powell, who had known Jake

for decades. And I had indifferent grades in my undergraduate years because I just did what I felt like I wanted to do. And Powell said, “You’re going to have to have a better grade point average for your senior year.” So I got a four-point grade average in my senior year because if I applied myself I could do it. But I did go in on probation because you had to go in to UCLA by being admitted to the graduate division, which had much higher standards than trade or professional schools. And so I went in on probation and it lasted one-quarter, then I was fine.

01-00:36:22

Meeker: Your father was an engineer, right?

01-00:36:25

Hanff: Yes.

01-00:36:26

Meeker: And a very solid profession. Here you are, a young man interested in books, in literature. Did he have an opinion of your more humanistic interests?

01-00:36:48

Hanff: He wasn’t demonstrative in a real way. He was a very cold fish in a lot of ways. And yet I can even get emotional thinking about something he did later. But I thought I was going to be an engineer. His father had been an engineer. My father was an engineer. I wasn’t good at math and it became clear in high school that I was challenged by math. So I didn’t quite know what I was going to do but I entered Santa Barbara knowing that I was going to be an English major. And that was fine with my father. He didn’t really care in that regard. But, still, there was no clear evidence as to what he thought. But in my sophomore year there was for the first time a book collection contest at Santa Barbara from the library. And with great trepidation, because my parents were deeply embarrassed that I was collecting children’s books—I think my mother might have been more embarrassed than my father. But as long as I called it a collection I got away with it. But I think that I was still immersed in children’s books as a young adult bothered them. I decided that I would enter that contest with my L. Frank Baum collection and, as it turned out, I won first prize. When I went to the reception to receive the prize the university librarian said, “There’s a surprise for you out on the terrace,” and it was my parents and my siblings. My father had taken them out of school to bring them up.

01-00:38:019

Meeker: So was that the first time that it felt like they recognized your passion?

01-00:38:21

Hanff: Pretty much. Yeah. It meant a lot.

01-00:38:27

Meeker: I bet. I bet. You all right to keep going?

01-00:38:33

Hanff: I will get some water.

01-00:38:36

Meeker:

Okay. No problem. So I'm interested in bibliography as a skill, as something that you learned over the years. And you had mentioned this librarian gave you Bowers.

01-00:38:52

Hanff:

Yeah, Fredson Bowers *Principles of Bibliographical Description*. It was originally published by Princeton University Press in 1949. Bowers was a major theoretician of formal descriptive bibliography and wrote this rather remarkable and monumental textbook establishing what the principles of description needed to be. There is an underlying purpose in formal bibliography, which is to establish as close as is possible from physical evidence what the author's intentions actually were because we know that whenever typesetting is done errors creep in. And sometimes the author makes changes after the fact and those creep in, as well. So Bowers' goal was to be able to delineate edition after edition, the variations that occur, and then to evaluate what the significance of those variations might be, always moving toward a sense of ideal copy or the ideal text.

01-00:39:55

Meeker:

So would that be a very short description of what the principles of bibliography are?

01-00:40:02

Hanff:

Probably not quite enough because you need to consider the physical evidence and that's partly what I was learning to do from reading Bowers. One is looking at all of the pages of text, one is trying to understand how those texts were produced technically through the printing process. One can also do things like analysis of watermarks and things in the paper. It becomes a very elaborate thing. It's a really dense challenging work overall and I have discovered since then—because I knew no better. It was what I had and what I worked through myself. It has always been very, very challenging to readers. It's arcane. It's very intellectually rigorous and many people now don't have a great deal of admiration for what Bowers was up to. But there is a major bibliographical scholar named G. Thomas Tanselle, professor of English at Wisconsin and an Indiana native, who has spent most of his adult years explaining Bowers because he's a clearer writer than Bowers was. But for some reason Bowers resonated for me and I understood what he was describing. An example of this peculiarity is that one of my good friends, a rare book librarian now at Chicago, disliked Bowers because he found the index almost impossible to use. And I never had trouble with the index because I understood how he had organized the book intellectually and I knew the index related to the organization of the book. Not necessarily you could look up a specific topic but if you knew enough about what he was doing you could figure out where in the index you needed to look. Peculiar way of doing it but it was sort of a background that I had and when I got to UCLA I was there at a remarkable time. Lawrence Clark Powell admitted me to the school and then he retired. So he wasn't there. But he had set up the UCLA Library

School to be the most intellectually rigorous of the programs in the United States, partly in reaction to the Berkeley Library School, which he was a product of but didn't like.

01-00:42:17

Meeker:

What was his critique of the Berkeley school? The Berkeley Library School?

01-00:42:21

Hanff:

I think he thought it was a little bit resting on its laurels. It was no longer as intellectually rigorous as it had once been. And he thought he could do a better library school. So he reached out and brought in specialists that were available to him. But I think the most important one from my perspective was Seymour Lubetzky, who was basically a Prussian scholar from Poland. Escaped the Nazis and settled in Los Angeles. He basically studied the principles of cataloguing. Now, I didn't even think of the relationship between principles of bibliographic description and the principle of cataloguing, which Lubetzky was dealing with until decades later. I didn't see a relationship of the two things. But I flourished in Lubetzky's approach to doing cataloguing and basically he looked at the cataloguing codes that existed in the United States. There were the American Library Association rules for filing in the dictionary catalogue. There was the Library of Congress rules for filing in the Dictionary Catalogue of the Library of Congress. And there was the American Library Association rules for cataloguing. And the rules for cataloguing had evolved over many decades with new rules setup for each new situation encountered that was different from anything that had happened before. So you could find lots of inconsistency and the Association of College and Research Libraries apparently hired Lubetzky, who was a theoretician, to analyze the cataloguing code. And sometime before I was in library school the Association of College and Research Libraries published a model code by Lubetzky and that model code became the Anglo American Cataloguing Rules, which was published the year I was in library school with him. And we had all of the theoretical presentation from him, rigorous lectures, each building on the one that had preceded. We had three hours a week of lectures followed by six hours a week of practical laboratory, it was called, with a very brilliant woman named Elizabeth Baughman, who had been a cataloguer at the Newbury Library. She worked extraordinarily well with what Lubetzky was doing on the intellectual side. On her side it was the practical thing. And I just did extremely well in it. I loved it. And it reflected my own interest in books, the evolution of publishers' imprints and things like that. So all of those things were sort of passions of mine anyway but here was a very formal program. And in my third quarter of this, because we had it for three quarters, Lubetzky summoned me to his office and said to me, "Mr. Hanff, on Wednesday I described the internship program at the Library of Congress but you evinced no interest." And I said, "Actually, ever since I discovered the Library of Congress classification of literature, which Dewey does not do, at the California State University Northridge, I have had a passion for the Library of Congress as a kind of a mecca." "Well, of all my students I think you are the

most eminently suited. May I nominate you?" And it just had never even occurred to me that I might have that kind of an opportunity. So I politely said, "Yes."

01-00:45:53

Meeker:

I'm going to stop you there because I want to get to the special recruit program, '67, '68, but not quite yet. There are still some other things I want to cover. The pursuit of bibliographic work I think is something that I don't know much about and I think is something that could warrant a little more explanation. Maybe by way of example, so perhaps using the Bower's method, could you maybe walk through the process by which you would create a bibliographic record for—

01-00:46:27

Hanff:

I might be able to do that. Let me try. Let's try using the *Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as an example. The book was published in 1900 in Chicago with a small company that was entering the trade publishing field but was primarily a bookbinding house. And the author and the illustrator had worked together the year before for a different book which they required to be printed in color, which was not normal for children's books in that era. And the only way the publisher would allow that is if they paid for the printing plates. So they had established that that worked very well. It became the bestselling children's book of 1899, so then they went to the *Wizard of Oz* as their next book. And this was the most lavishly illustrated children's book published in America up until that time. The text illustrations were integrated into the text, in that they were printed in two colors, black for the elements that really needed to be sharp in contrast to the text but the rest of the elaborate drawing would have been printed in a pastel color and the text of the book would have been overprinted over the pastel color. So it created a very unusual looking book. The Japanese printing tradition included such a design but it wasn't normal in American books. The book was evidently set up and they began printing it. I know from secondary research that I've done more recently that the first order was for 5,000 copies and before the first 5,000 were printed the publisher realized he had advanced sales sufficient to add an additional 5,000. It's my theory, not proved, but the evidence suggests that at least it's partly a correct theory, they paused at that point and went through and corrected typographical errors and repositioned quite a few of the text illustrations so that when the large sheets were folded up the illustrations didn't slide over to an adjoining page that was in an unrelated location within the folded gathering. And so from the bibliographic standpoint you will look at all these variations that you can discover by close comparison of copies and then you have to come up with a theory about what caused that to happen and why did it happen. And that's the kind of thing that you do through bibliographic description and analysis.

01-00:48:49

Meeker:

So it's mostly about the material culture? It's about the physical item itself? It's about its context, it's about its production. It's not a catalogue record?

01-00:49:03

Hanff:

It is not a catalogue record. If you follow Bowers strictly, most people don't, you would create a description of an ideal copy and there might be no real copy that is exactly like that. But because books have variations through time you try to sort out what's the sequence of events, what caused this kind of error? Was this an accident that was corrected in the middle of the printing process or was it corrected between one printing and the next and so forth? Bowers is really primarily focused, though, on the printing on the letterpress, the hand printed era. And in those days they didn't have the technology to preserve the type. So the books would be printed and then the type would be distributed. And if they needed more copies they would set the type again. So in the olden days each edition, which is all of the copies printed from a particular setting of the type, in the early years each new printing was a new edition. Then in the nineteenth century we began doing mechanical reproduction of a different sort, with photo engraving and various kinds of printing plates that could be manufactured from an original typesetting and then you could perpetuate the original typesetting and print it again and again and again. And because that's all one setting of a type, no matter how many impressions there are, those are all considered part of a single edition. So that's the kind of stuff you learn by working through a Bowers type analysis.

01-00:50:36

Meeker:

You may have just answered this and this will be a naïve question but what was the rationale for doing bibliographic records as opposed to simply catalogue records?

01-00:50:48

Hanff:

The catalogue record is intended to be a kind of a shorthand general description of a book sufficient to identify what the work is that has been catalogued. There's this bridge over from Bowers into Lubetzky. You are basically trying to create a sequence of organized things. You have a system called authority records. And so you look and you see that this author is such and such a name. You create an authority record that says, "We will use this form of the name for all the books." So in the present era the name of the author is Mark Twain, not Samuel L. Clemens. That's a change in the cataloguing principles that occurred in my lifetime, actually. So now the name most frequently used by the author becomes the name of record, regardless of whether it's a pseudonym or a real name. But in any event, that's one kind of thing. Then you would establish the title of the work. And one of the things Lubetzky was very strong on was understanding the distinction between a description of a book and a description of a work. And it's the work that the cataloguer is trying to establish an access to. And so our catalogue records pretty much do that. You don't care particularly which edition it is. You don't necessarily know which edition it is. You just know that Mark Twain wrote *Tom Sawyer* and that's what you will go for. Then the cataloguer can actually say, "Well, but we've got six copies and each one is different." Then they're beginning to encroach into the area of bibliographic analysis but it's much, much more shorthand. Bowers is interesting and problematic for some in that

he creates a formula, teaches you how to do a formula and that formula is a technical description of the physical structure of the elements of a book. And books, the traditional way of making them, are printed on a succession of sheets. Each sheet is then folded up a certain number of times to create four, eight, sixteen leaves, doubling the leaf number to make the number of pages in that section. And then those sections are accumulated together.

01-00:53:11

Meeker:

Impacting the ultimate size of the book, as well?

01-00:53:14

Hanff:

That's right. And so in Bowers' formulation, which is actually also used internationally, you end up identifying how many of these gatherings there are. In the earlier years they were signed. They usually had a letter. So their first gathering was letter A, second gathering was letter B. That was normal even in the United States until the late nineteenth century. We now sign our books with marks on the fold so that the binder is sure that the sequence of the gatherings being put together is the right order of them. But in the olden days they were letter and it was called signing. And so in the formulation or the formula you would end up saying, just as an example, "One through eight," then a little superscript four, meaning the first eight gatherings are signed one through eight sequentially and then there are four leaves for gathering. It's that kind of very technical description that he teaches you how to do.

01-00:54:15

Meeker:

So a bibliographic record is going to be primarily of use to printers of subsequent editions, booksellers who are trying to keep some sort of control of authentic editions and such?

01-00:54:33

Hanff:

That's correct. And also collectors.

01-00:54:35

Meeker:

Collectors.

01-00:54:36

Hanff:

Yeah. Collectors are keen on that. And collectors traditionally had put a lot of premium on priority. So there is a very long tradition of going after the earliest printing. I came up with a rationale of why I did it but the problem with all of that is that the earlier the printing the more expensive it's going to be to buy. I have a justification of wanting an early printing but some people just want it because it's the first one.

01-00:55:02

Meeker:

There's kind of a sense of authenticity and being an early adopter, if you will, of a first edition, right?

01-00:55:09

Hanff:

Yeah. In fact, I just bought four books the other day that just arrived that were printed for William Targ, who was a major New York editor and was the

primary editor for the Cleveland publishing house called World, although Targ was always based in New York in that era. And after he retired as an editor for major publishers he began putting out the Targ Editions because he was something of a collector nut. And so the four I bought included a book by—they're very small books but letterpress printed on handmade paper or very specialized paper. But the author of each text signed it. And I got one from Ray Bradbury and I got one from M.F.K. Fisher. They were minor books but they were not terribly expensive and they appealed to me because those are authors I like. So I said, "What are these like?" and I ordered some of them. And I just showed them to Steven Black, the head of acquisitions at Bancroft. And he said, "We don't have these. We'd better get them." I said, "I try not to collect in competition with the Bancroft but these are available. I found them on Abebooks.com online so I think you can get them."

01-00:56:26

Meeker:

Tell me about the development of the Oz bibliography. When did you decide that this was a project that you wanted to take on?

01-00:56:33

Hanff:

It was interesting. When I was in high school doing my senior honors project I had written to Ronald Baumann at Columbia and he sent me two publications about Baum that he had done because he'd been a Baum collector. And he introduced me to a number of people in the International Wizard of Oz club, including Justin Schiller, who had founded the club when he was thirteen in Brooklyn. And Justin's just a year older than I am. So I began writing to some of these people to learn more about the history of the Baum books. And Justin and I have been corresponding friends and we know each other personally, as well, for a long number of years since then. But the thing that we were all doing was collecting very seriously and we were learning what the history of the editions was. And we were all collecting and we were interested in priority of edition. That was something we all did and we all had the same goal. The best copy in physical condition, the earliest printing you can get your hands on. And we did that. Then, because Justin founded the club, he also had created a newsletter which he called *The Baum Bugle*. And we now publish this as an organization three times a year. It's really quite a sophisticated amateur journal and is one of the oldest, maybe the second oldest after the *Baker Street Irregulars*, which is the Sherlock Holmes newsletter that comes out of New York. And early on we were writing notes to each other about bibliographic variants that we were encountering and theorizing about what they signified and it helped us understand priority of edition. Eventually these began to be regularly done, mostly by Dick Martin, but there were a couple of other fellows in the club. Jim Haff was one of them. The Greene twins, who were a little younger than I am, but born the same year I was, and me. And we were sort of all corresponding and a whole series of these bibliographic descriptions came through. And then the idea came up that maybe we should do this as a book and distribute it more broadly than just membership magazine. And it was Douglas Greene, one of the twins, and I who decided to

do this as a project. We got ourselves a little bit in trouble because basically we were basing it on work that had already been published but instead of just editing it for book publication we started it from scratch and we redescribed everything from scratch. Dick Martin, who was the primary author of the original series, understood what we had done but others didn't. And when we copyrighted this in our own name they felt we were basically stealing the work of the others who had preceded us, even though Dick understood full well we had actually gone back to the original books and started from scratch to create very accurate descriptions. It took about three or four years before Doug and I got this far enough along to be ready to publish. Because he was in academic tenure track he needed that book. And I was the dawdler. I was slowly doing it in my spare time and when I felt like it. So he asked me to speed up the process. We got the text finished. It was very well proofread by our colleagues, who were contributors to the original magazine series. And I even set the type for the title page over in South Hall with Roger Levenson looking over my shoulder, using the Goudy typeface called California Old Style, which is a proprietary typeface of the university. So that's how the book came to be but it really does reflect an attempt to distill what had been discovered earlier and to amalgamate all the new discoveries into one continuous bibliographic description of forty books.

01-01:00:45

Meeker:

But your work on this began in high school?

01-01:00:46

Hanff:

My work on Baum began in high school and my work on collecting had started even in junior high school. But I didn't start writing the bibliographical material like this until I was actually in Berkeley.

01-01:00:59

Meeker:

And when was that first published then?

01-01:01:01

Hanff:

It came out in '76, the first edition, and then we revised and expanded it for a second edition in 1988.

01-01:01:11

Meeker:

All right. We'll get to that. As you're attending high school in the valley and recognizing that your math skills weren't really going to get you into a career as an engineer, how did you decide to attend Santa Barbara? When did you enroll? Tell me your path to college.

01-01:01:38

Hanff:

Well, in my senior year I was applying. I only remember applying to two places. No, I only applied to two places, Santa Barbara and Stanford. And I wasn't accepted at Stanford but I was accepted at Santa Barbara. I didn't choose UCLA partly because it was in my own backyard and partly because it was so large. And that was the same reason I didn't choose Berkeley. The other reason I didn't choose Berkeley is that I already knew I was going to be

an English major and the curriculum at both UCLA and Berkeley was old-fashioned and formal. One would have had a very different exposure to literature at either of those schools. And at Santa Barbara, which was young and small, there was a lot more flexibility so I could actually focus on modern nineteenth and twentieth century writers as a whole major, and I did it that way. So Santa Barbara was a better fit for me. And I was peculiar in one sense. Santa Barbara is very famous as a party school and it's a beach school. I loved the beach for a place to walk but I have no interest in surfing and I wasn't a party animal. So I was just there because it was a reasonably good education.

01-01:02:54

Meeker:

What year did Santa Barbara open? Do you know?

01-01:02:58

Hanff:

It was a state normal school earlier and it must have become the University of California I would think in the 1950s. I've looked recently and I don't remember the dates. But it was originally in the city of Santa Barbara and then a marine barracks in Goleta became available and they had moved the campus two or three or four years before I got there. Oh, this is just me. I looked at the place. Physically it's beautiful. I don't like the fact that they left the marine barracks square grid street pattern because it's a land piece that should have had streets that followed the contours of the land but that isn't what they did. There were some leftover barracks that were treated as dormitories. They were called *las casitas*, the little houses. And there were the new dormitories, Anacapa and Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa, which were very elegant and Charles Luckman designs. And I was so fussy about that that I said to my parents, "If I don't get into one of the new dorms, I'm not going." Because I feared I was going to be stuck in *las casitas*. I know that the students who were in *las casitas* benefited from that. It created a social culture of camping out, which was very different from those of us who were in the newer dorms. But I did get into Anacapa.

And the other thing I did that was weird is I decided I wasn't moving to Isla Vista. Everybody moved to Isla Vista as soon as their parents would let them. And I wasn't interested in that because I was more interested in a good comfortable place where I could work on my books. The food in our dining commons was astonishingly good and I didn't feel like all the hassle of the socializing of Isla Vista. So I just stayed. There were some side benefits for staying the four years and one of my good friends in Georgia, when I took him to look at the campus, I showed him my room. He said, "You had a view of Goleta Bay and Hope Ranch. Of course you stayed for four years. Never again in your life could you live so well." And that was true.

01-01:05:11

Meeker:

You stayed in the same room for four years?

01-01:05:14

Hanff: I stayed in the dorm for four years.

01-01:05:15

Meeker: But in the same room in the dorm?

01-01:05:17

Hanff: No. Actually, I was in that room only the last two years. Yeah. I had to work my way up to get it.

01-01:05:23

Meeker: Tell me about your education at Santa Barbara.

01-01:05:29

Hanff: It was a very interesting mixture of things. Yes, we had a basic curriculum that we all had to follow. But there were some interesting professors that I still remember the influence of. Garrett Hardin was a professor of biology there and I think if you look him up you'll find out that he was a brilliant biologist, but he was also very controversial. I remember aspects of the lectures that I listened to because he was deeply concerned about overpopulation and he was also persuaded that we're never going to be able to solve the problem of overpopulation, so that all of our efforts to help the underprivileged and the poorer nations were not productive and not sound. I remember that aspect of it.

I had a minor in history, which was just about as important to me as my English major. And I basically focused on two themes of history, intellectual and cultural. They were subdisciplines within that history department and the professors that I had were good. But the professor that meant the most to me was Marvin Mudrick, who had finished his PhD here at Berkeley. Jim Hart knew him slightly. Was a controversial figure. He was brilliant. I think he is probably the most intellectually brilliant person I was ever exposed to. He terrified me but he was just astonishing. So I ended up with five classes with him, two of them where I was just auditing the classes.

And as time went on my intellectual and cultural history classes and my English classes began to overlap in terms of my interests. And so for my senior thesis, which was a year-long process, I decided that I was going to write about the short fiction of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth. And for that I needed Mudrick to be my reader. And he wasn't my assigned reader. So I had to petition the school to let him become my reader. And this was terrifying to me because he was rigorous and extremely condescending of any fool that he encountered. And yet I needed to do this. And so I did it for him. And, as it turned out, he gave me an A+. But I also understand that, of all of the faculty there, he was the only one who would understand what I was doing, which was to delineate the Jewish sensibilities of those three authors and he loved what I ended up doing because, as I understood it—I have not reread this essay for a really long time and I don't

know whether I would be embarrassed by it now. But basically what I did was to identify themes. Bellow I considered a conservative, Roth Reform, and Bernard Malamud Orthodox in background. And Mudrick agreed with me. And he was himself Lithuanian Jew from Philadelphia. Just a brilliant, brilliant man.

And he formed, after I was there, a new college and it was the College of Creative Studies, I think it was called. And it's still there. But another friend of mine, who was another Oz collector, was a professor of medieval history, Warren Hollister. Told me years later, "Mudrick was a disaster. He nearly destroyed the institution." And it's because he was so iconoclastic that this was a program where you didn't get grades. It was sort of like the old Santa Cruz model. And for somebody in the traditionalist approach, like Warren Hollister, this was not a good thing. But the school is still there and I think it does very well and it has very, very fine minds coming out of it. So that was a Mudrick contribution.

01-01:09:29

Meeker:

Well, clearly the thesis you wrote dovetails with your interests, as you described earlier in our conversation. I'm curious why didn't you decide to write on Oz? Was that not considered literature, do you think, or—

01-01:09:46

Hanff:

There was no context at Santa Barbara where I think I could have figured out how to write about Oz. I sort of alluded to it before. When I entered that book collection contest I was fearful that I was basically exposing my interest in children's books to the world at large and this might be a disaster socially. It wasn't, as it turned out, but it might have been. I didn't know.

01-01:10:09

Meeker:

Well, I guess, what did your friends and fellow students think of your collection? I assume that you had some of this in your dorm room?

01-01:10:18

Hanff:

I had my collection in my dorm room. And, as it happened, my roommate for the last year and a half was a brilliant mathematician whose father was a nuclear physicist at the Livermore lab. And David Niday was his name, still a friend, was the first person I spent time with who was really, really bright who made me realize that people think in different ways. Minds don't all work the same way. I hadn't discovered that before because we said the words to each other. We sort of each understand each other and we don't necessarily probe, "What did you actually mean by what you said?" And the way this came about for him was interesting to me. I knew he was brilliant at math and I knew I wasn't. But he was also very keen on the Oz books and knew them before we were roommates. And he said, "Well, you know the map of the land of Oz. Green in the center for the emerald city. The Quadlings in the south prefer the color red. The Munchkins prefer the color blue in the east. The Winkies prefer the color yellow in the west. And the Gillikins in the north

prefer the color purple. Who are the orange people? And I thought for a moment, "What does he mean?" And then I realized the missing combined color of the primary colors is orange on that map.

01-01:11:39

Meeker:

Or gold.

01-01:11:40

Hanff:

There isn't any such thing. That that was the way his mind worked. He was constantly looking for patterns. I understood it once he said it but I have to admit I had never given any thought to that possibility at all, that there might be an orange country. And then another thing he described to me was how he did calculations. He said, "In my case, numbers are in a three-dimensional pattern, linear through space. And when I'm thinking about a problem I see the answer over there and I just have to work my way through to get to it, and that's how I do my mathematical calculations." And a special concept of numbers is not something I have but I believed what he said because he said it so clearly. I think he actually meant it.

And then another thing he did that I thought was different from me was he associated colors with the days of the week. I'm just making this up because I don't remember which colors he associated with which. But Tuesday is red. Thursday is brown. He would say things like that. So he had patterns in his mind that I simply hadn't tumbled to and I described that to a very close artist friend of mine in the Oz club who's quite a bit senior to me. And she said, "Yes. Wednesday is blue." So she had made similar associations. So that was helpful to me because I hadn't given a thought that people would organize their thinking in different ways.

01-01:13:11

Meeker:

Had you ever considered attending a PhD program in literature, to pursue your interests along those lines?

01-01:13:19

Hanff:

That was a question Mudrick asked. And already by the time I was a senior I knew I wanted to go to library school. Because when I went in I was terrified. I had to go into his office and find out if he had graded the paper and what the result was. And, as was not unusual, he was in his office with a beautiful French student. I felt like I was intruding. And he said, "Oh, Mr. Hanff, you're here to find out about your paper. It is the most brilliant senior thesis I have ever read. Are you going to publish it?" And that hadn't occurred to me and I didn't think of publishing it. And he said, "And what are you going to do? Are you going into the PhD program in English?" And I said, "Well, actually, I'm enrolling in library school." And he said, "Well, we need good librarians, too." And that was the end of it. I never really gave it thought.

01-01:14:10

Meeker:

And did you understand what the career trajectory would be for you upon enrolling in library school?

01-01:14:16

Hanff:

No. I literally didn't. In fact, I'm that funny, where I've always been blind. I don't understand why I am that way but I hadn't even thought of going to library school, even though I was working as a student employee in the university library at Santa Barbara all four years. I started in circulation for the general university library and then I moved into acquisition, where I was in bibliographic checking. So there may be a relationship with bibliographic checking and such, where I was looking to verify whether we did or didn't have a particular work. But it was only after I won the book collection contest that it suddenly occurred to me that maybe there was a career in librarianship that I could pursue. So I thought about that for a while and finally by my senior year I knew that that's what I wanted to try to do. And then what else could I say along those lines? I don't know that I have anything more along those lines. The career path itself always seemed like a coincidence or an accident to me but I suppose there's a continuity to it. So I've got Lubetzky, who's singling me out to nominate for this internship program. And then while I was in the internship program I had the opportunity to visit all the major operating departments of the Library of Congress. And the goal of this was, I think, basically to create middle managers who knew the right people to go to when there were problems to solve in that great bureaucracy. Then I had to take a position. So I worked in the fledgling information systems office as assistant to the director and I did that for a year and a half. But I still had this yearning to go to the Lilly Library for their training program in rare book librarianship. And it was a funded program so I applied for it and was accepted and I left to go there. And it was within that program, during the grand tour that was part of the experience, that I was at the Beinecke Library at Yale to spend a day with Herman W. "Fritz" Liebert. And it was at lunch that day that he said to me—"Peter,"—this is because we talked for a long time—"you need to write to Jim Hart at the Bancroft Library. He needs you there." And I wrote blindly. I knew Bancroft but I also knew Bancroft was collecting things that weren't a primary interest of mine. Doesn't collect children's books. And I knew that already but I did apply and it worked out pretty well.

01-01:16:40

Meeker:

Well, so we've got about another half-hour today. Why don't we go backward or go the back and then work our way up to that period of 1970. Can you actually describe for me what library school was like at UCLA? What the curriculum was, how many years it would—it's a master's program, correct?

01-01:17:04

Hanff:

It was a master's program squeezed into one year. And it had been on the semester system until I was there. That was the year that Berkeley caused all of the university campuses to go into quarters. Then Berkeley went back to

semesters later. So basically we had three semesters worth of Lubetzky in three quarters, which made it even harder because you're really covering a lot of territory. But basically you were exposed always to the principles and theory of the discipline. So the reference course, which lasted for three quarters, was to teach you the principles of reference work. And a principle of reference work is you're not after the answer, you're after the way to find the answer. That was a kind of a principle. That's not an easy principle to understand initially. But once you understand that that's the way it should be, then you're well-equipped to begin thinking you can guide your readers, your scholars to find the right places to look for the results that they're looking for. That was reference. We had the cataloguing thing which I've already described. We were exposed to fledgling thinking about information systems. And Robert Hayes, who was a distinguished professor and specialist in that field, was our professor in that. And he was somewhat mischievous. He was really bright. And I managed to get along well with him but it was very hard for humanities majors generally. He forced us to learn to do calculations in the binary system because that's the way computers worked. And he made fun of librarians who failed to understand the mathematical concepts—fortunately that one I worked on fairly well. But I had two classes with him and I gained a good sense of what we were going to be likely doing in order to automate bibliographic records for libraries as a background. What else did we have? We had classes on collection development. And Betty Rosenberg was the instructor for that. A remarkable person. Anybody who went to UCLA library school in that era, if you get together with them we all remember the same stellar figures. The two that we missed were Frances Clarke Sayers, who had been the children's literature librarian specialist and Lawrence Clark Powell. They had both retired. But otherwise we had these stellar figures. Betty Rosenberg, I just still remember she liked décolleté. She wore basically what I would call sundresses. She was much freckled. She apparently gardened in the nude. And she was very buxom and she smoked cigars.

01-01:20:00

Meeker:

Wow. [laughter]

01-01:20:02

Hanff:

She, too, provided an entree for me because in her class I wanted to do something with Oz. I did want to do something with Oz. And she provided me with access to the Library of the Motion Picture Academy and to MGM because she was very well connected in Los Angeles. So I did some work in that regard with Oz, it's true, but that was focused on the movie. It was like that. So basically all of the things that librarians should cover were dealt with on the basis of principles and fundamental concepts rather than practical application.

01-01:20:36

Meeker:

What are the fundamental concepts of acquisition?

01-01:20:40

Hanff:

Basically you identify what subject areas you want to build the collection to support and then to what level or degree you want to collect. So in the case of the University at Berkeley we did something early in my time here called the collection analysis project. I did this from Bancroft and I was just from Bancroft. But this was Sheila Dowd, who was the AUL for collections, the associate university librarian for collections, and other major selectors. And basically we went through the strengths of the holdings at Berkeley and identified which ones were actively being developed and expanded, which ones were static and no longer needed to be expanded because the discipline was no longer going to be supported at Berkeley. Things like that. So collection development basically involved learning the bibliographic tools that exist in the world of literature. And I don't mean literary literature. I mean scholarly work, as well. And we learned a certain amount about British bibliographic control, US bibliographic control, and the much weaker bibliographic control that's offered in the Latin American countries. And we learned all of that material. We learned the tools that one would use to do that and basically you came to understand a collection policy would help you identify the limits of what you were trying to develop and to what degree you were trying to develop it.

01-01:22:18

Meeker:

I don't know how many books are typically published every year but I'm sure it's got to be in the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, in the United States. So clearly there's going to be some that are purchased and some that are not. And maintaining kind of an intellectual control over what's out there or what is needed must be a major task. Is this sort of the core of what these principles are designed to adjudicate?

01-01:22:45

Hanff:

To some extent that's true. Of course, remember this is all before computers, which did transform accessibility. But there were monthly publications, weekly publications, annual publications, all of which would be used by selectors to see what's being published. And you would also look at publisher's catalogues. You would also, if you were doing retrospective collecting, look at booksellers' catalogues. You were constantly looking for things that existed and gauging whether they were sufficient to want to be added to the collection. Then you would have to do the bibliographic verification. Maybe it's already here. I had this experience at Bancroft because I used to assist Pat Howard a little bit with reading catalogues or I would be in bookstores and I would find things that might be of interest to us. And because Bancroft has been so thorough in collecting Western Americana, the possibility of finding something that we didn't already have is slim. And I said to Pat one day, "It's very frustrating to me because I find things that should be here but they already are." And she said, "Don't think of it that way. Think of it as saying you were right. It should be here and it is." It's a different way of thinking about it. And that was helpful to me because I was frustrated that I was always—or not always, because occasionally you would

find something that we didn't already have, like I did with Steven Black just yesterday by accident. But basically here we've tried pretty much to have a broad spectrum collection that is documenting California, Washington, Oregon, and Latin America as thoroughly as we're able to afford to do. And so we collect much less scholarly things than would be true in the main research library. They would be looking primarily for things that they would assess as having permanent scholarly value. We are just about as interested in ephemera, things that are not expected to be of scholarly value because a hundred years later they are of scholarly value.

01-01:24:55

Meeker:

I imagine at the master's program at UCLA, they were also instructing students who might become a librarian at a local public library how to come up with an acquisition program with much more limited resources.

01-01:25:14

Hanff:

There's that. And then the audience of readers for a public library is quite different from an academic library. I don't know how far we got in that. I don't remember that well because don't think we were making that much of a distinction between collecting. I do remember Betty Rosenberg giving us assignments. She was a mischievous person, too. I would say that that was true of all of the strong faculty at UCLA. They sort of knew the foibles of most of the students who were there and they pushed buttons. And so there was a brilliant fellow who was in the program with me at UCLA who collected philosophy. Wittgenstein was his thing. And I would say he's insane. I say that in a friendly way. But he was very deeply involved in a very esoteric kind of philosophy and extremely serious. And the idea of reading fiction was unacceptable to him. It was just not a human thing that anybody should do. She made him do his term paper on collecting cowboy books.

[Extraneous side conversation deleted]

01-01:27:07

Hanff:

You asked me about my father. I'm jumping backward.

01-01:27:08

Meeker:

Sure. Please do.

01-01:27:11

Hanff:

When I was doing a book that we will probably talk about later, if we get to it, which is *Cyclone on the Prairies*, I dedicated it to my father and to Jerry Cole. Jerry Cole was the Book Club of California person who proposed the project. Sadly both of the guys died before my book came out. But in the last year of his life I took my dad with me to the Seattle Public Library because there was an obscure Chicago monthly bookseller's magazine that they happened to have a set of. And I was looking for information about the production of the books from the publishers in Chicago that were doing Baum. And my father was happy to go with me and he sat opposite me in the periodicals room

reading aviation magazines. He was already ninety at this point. He had stopped all of his subscriptions. So for him it was being with me while I'm doing my Oz thing, which he was also fond of, doing his own thing, which was the aviation thing. I'm glad I had that opportunity to just take him with me to do that.

01-01:28:19

Meeker:

Thank you. So you graduated. I guess you attended the MLS school 1966-67, finished in May/June of '67.

01-01:28:32

Hanff:

I finished in August of '67. And moved immediately to the intern program at the Library of Congress.

01-01:28:39

Meeker:

Well, tell me about that. The year that, or actually, was it two years that you spent there? So you were in the special recruit program for a year and then you worked in the information system?

01-01:28:47

Hanff:

Actually, the recruitment program was a six-month internship and then at the end of an internship program one was expected to take a position. There was a rumor that if you didn't take a position you had to pay them back for the time that you were there. I don't think that was true but it was a strong expectation that you would take a position at the Library of Congress. And I was invited to join the motion pictures section. I had interned in it. It was one of my electives. I loved it. I loved the people. I loved the content. But I had a colleague in my intern program from North Carolina who was far more of a movie person than I was who lived in rural North Carolina and then ended up at Columbia Library School and went to three movies a day in all of the year-and-a-half that he was in New York City. And he got drafted and went to Vietnam and I could not take that job. That was his job. So I didn't take it. And then I was stuck because the job I really wanted other than that one was as a subject cataloguer. But to be a subject cataloguer at the Library of Congress required a second subject master's degree and I didn't have one.

And then out of the blue the information systems office reached out to me and asked me if I would come to be the assistant to the director. And that was actually very good for me in several ways. Paul Reimers was the fellow and he was the founding director of information systems there. It was just one year after the publication of the machine-readable cataloguing format called MARC as a book describing all the elements that would go into a catalogue record and how they would be coded for computer processing. And I found that I was serving as an intermediary between the librarians, who were the theoreticians about how to do the cataloguing, and the computer programmers, who were figuring out how to program something that would provide control and access. And I was able to do both of those things pretty well. In preparing for this oral history I happened to look through my own personnel files and

the letters of reference about me to Jim Hart were there. And I said, "It's forty years later. I think I can read them now." And Paul Reimers said, "If he'd stayed longer he would have become an outstanding programmer." Never was in my mind that I would do that.

But he knew what I had done and he commended me for deciding to follow the rare book path. So that was kind of an interesting thing. But the program for me was wonderful because I had a lot of time to do personal research projects that were related to what I was doing. That meant that I had access to the entire stacks of the Library of Congress and spent days just wandering around and examining, checking, looking, and verifying bibliographic details of the various things. I had a special side assignment. The catalogue department asked me to come back and help them sort out the multiple pseudonyms as L. Frank Baum as a project. And so I had the time to be able to do these things. It was good for me. But I learned a lot from looking through the Library of Congress because it had preservation problems of a sort that we don't have on the West Coast. They had a very strong preservation program that had started just before I got there. So I interned in that, as well, and brought that knowledge with me to Berkeley. We do need preservation. There's no doubt of that. But our climate is more benign than the Library of Congress, which heated with coal for decades and had stacks with exposure to sunlight for natural light for a long time. Had books that had never been used that were there from the copyright deposit. They looked pristine. You would take them off and they were brown and brittle and if you squeezed them they would crumble. So that was a problem, a physical problem. And that just seemed like a real problem to me until I got to the West Coast and said, "Oh, it's not a universal problem." It's true. Those things are not strong and robust here, either, but they don't deteriorate in that particular way. So the eastern libraries, the southern, and the northern have trouble just because of their climate.

01-01:32:52
Meeker:

Did you learn how to preserve those books that were in that kind of condition?

01-01:32:56
Hanff:

Their mechanism at the time was to microfilm them and destroyed the originals. That was the primary preservation thing for that kind of material. Individual preservation of individual leaves simply is not affordable when you're talking about thirty million books.

01-01:33:12
Meeker:

Right. At the time when you were working in the information systems office, can you give me a brief description of the state of library information systems at the Library of Congress at the time you were there?

01-01:33:27
Hanff:

Yes. There wasn't any. We had programmers who were figuring out how to manipulate the data. We had only mainframe computers. We did everything

with punch cards. And they were doing their programming in Fortran and COBOL. I remember that. I didn't learn the languages. They were assessing what the Library of Congress needed to do in order to have adequate catalogue bibliographic control over the content of the collection. The librarians there, and there were quite a few very bright theoretical librarians, were constantly analyzing the best way to code a particular aspect of a bibliographic record. I remember aspects of that but I wasn't involved in the nitty-gritty work as such.

01-01:34:19

Meeker:

What do you mean by code a bibliographic record? What were their questions they were asking?

01-01:34:24

Hanff:

Well, I can remember enough to tell you that a normal catalogue record—and remember the environment was the card catalogue still—

01-01:34:35

Meeker:

Right. So the catalogue record was the card catalogue sheet, right?

01-01:34:37

Hanff:

Yeah. That was it.

01-01:34:38

Meeker:

Or the card. Yeah.

01-01:34:39

Hanff:

Yeah. In reality behind the catalogue itself was the official catalogue and in the official catalogue, which was behind the wall, it was inside, it was for staff only, were all the authority records, as well, which are done on cards. And the authority records, to tell you why you have chosen Mark Twain as the author's name, with all your bibliographic citations showing that that is the preferred name in all these sources is all written down. So there was an actual research project for every entry that was created to justify that choice of the one and only form of the name that would be used. Then you would also indicate which cross-references were necessary. So if you're going to choose Mark Twain, then you do have to have one under Clemens saying "See". Or if you've decided, as happened in the L. Frank Baum project—Baum had seven pseudonyms and they knew he had pseudonyms but they had never known what they were. I knew them all. And so I created the ideal way of doing it, which would have been under Edith Van Dyne "See L. Frank Baum." And it would indicate this was a pseudonym of L. Frank Baum. They ended up not doing what I recommended. They said, "What you did is the correct thing to do but we have three dictionary catalogues to maintain here and we're talking about hundreds of catalogue cards. So we want to make a compromise. What do you think of it? We will do "See also" references." So if you're looking in Edith Van Dyne, "See also L. Frank Baum," and it would list all the other pseudonyms, as well. And I said, "That will work." It isn't perfect but I had to

learn that the card catalogue environment required a certain amount of reasonable compromise.

01-01:36:30

Meeker:

Then you go to the Lilly Library at Indiana University and this is a rare books library.

01-01:36:39

Hanff:

It was a rare books training program. I was in the tenth year of it, which was the last year it was funded by the Lilly Pharmaceutical Company, although we didn't know it was at the time. And basically we spent time every day with David A. Randall, who was the first Lilly librarian. He'd run the Scribner's rare book department in New York at Scribner's bookstore and it was an international bookstore. The London branch was managed by John Carter. Anyway, they managed this big international book business for a long time and then J. K. Lilly decided that he was going to turn over his personal library to Indiana University and he would build a building for it, which was faced in limestone, required by state law in Indiana for Indiana University buildings. It looks like a standalone mausoleum to me. Still does. And he also gave them David A. Randall as the first Lilly librarian, with a full tenure professorship. And so that was the setup. And that happened I think in 1960. So here I am getting there in 1969. So it was fairly well-established. And we spent time with Dave Randall, who was reminiscing primarily about life in the book world, collectors he had known, the best bargains he had ever handled and so forth. So you would listen to that every day. Once or twice a day, actually. And then his assistant Lilly librarian was Bill Cagle, who was a bibliographer of Joseph Conrad. And Bill Cagle took upon himself the opening of every book package that arrived every day because they only accepted books that were in Lilly condition, meaning perfect specimens. That was the way J.K. Lilly collected and that's the way they collected. And so it was very rarified in that regard. But I spent time in cataloguing. I spent time with the selectors. I spent time with the manuscript staff. I did a manuscripts collection. I catalogued a whole thing. I learned some lessons that way because—

01-01:39:04

Meeker:

Cataloguing or archiving?

01-01:39:07

Hanff:

We didn't even use the word archiving. I remember this very well. Elfrieda Lang, who had a PhD in Hoosier history, was the head of manuscripts cataloguing and she despised the term archive and archival and she didn't say archival. She said archevil [sic] because it was evil to her. And I got in trouble because I was looking at one of the theoretician's books about principles of archival cataloguing and she spotted it on the desk I was working at. And so she took my project away from me and redid it her way. She calendared. They all calendared, meaning that every document was put into strict chronological order without regard for where it sat in the original archive. And I had started to do that because that's what I was told to do and I realized I was losing the

relationships in the way the collector had organized things and those relationships were sometimes subtle. The two lesbians who lived together in the suburbs of London were filed together even though they were writing about different subjects. And so this was all being lost. So I did what I was supposed to do but I kept a meticulous record of the placement in the original order, of the original condition. And then I wrote her a memo recommending that we make an exception to calendaring and organize this on the basis of its original order and its provenance and I didn't hear back. She wrote back and said, "I don't understand what you're saying." So then I wrote a twelve-page diatribe and I never heard another word and finally I went to her and said, "You never gave me any feedback." "You did it wrong. I had to redo the whole thing and everything is now in strict chronological order." And I blew up. I didn't say anything to her. I marched into Dave Randall's office and yelled at him. And he listened carefully and then he instructed her, "You will put into the finding aide Peter's meticulous description of the original location of every document." And it's still there.

01-01:41:15

Meeker:

Well, this is interesting. You're really describing a distinction between archival—

01-01:41:22

Hanff:

An older way. Yeah, right.

01-01:41:24

Meeker:

—and library cataloguing. It's interesting that when you get to Lilly you inquisitively learn about the difference between manuscript collections and library book cataloguing.

01-01:41:42

Hanff:

I was learning. Right. Then I got to the Bancroft Library and discovered that we did finding aids. I don't think they had the concept of finding aids at Lilly yet. Maybe they did. I shouldn't be too negative about that. But I didn't understand the term until I got here. Well, we didn't call them finding aids here. We called them keys. Keys to collections. But we did pay attention to the provenance and the original arrangement of collections that came in organized. There were things that we did here that we wouldn't do now. The normal way of dealing with a voluminous collection at Bancroft was certainly to create a finding aid. But, at the same time, to organize the correspondence in two files. Outgoing letters by the person who formed the collection were arranged chronologically and the incoming letters were arranged alphabetically and then we would index the incoming letters so that in the finding aid you would say, "John Smith wrote a number of letters on these date spans," and you would assume then that the scholar would go back and forth between the incoming, where they've looked for a particular name they're interested in, and then look in the outgoing chronological file to see how it matches up. So that was an organizing principle that Bancroft was following when I first got here and then eventually even that stopped

happening. I don't really know the current archival community practice but as much as possible I think they do less fussing and organizing of the physical things to create a record that's as comprehensive as they can afford to do in a particular timeframe and allow people to make discoveries as they consult the collection. We don't do as much indexing as we used to do.

01-01:43:26

Meeker:

When you went to Lilly was this novel, was this interesting when you started to learn how one creates a key record for manuscript collections?

01-01:43:40

Hanff:

It was interesting to me. It's true that when I was in the Library of Congress, one of my electives was to go into the manuscripts division. And John Knowlton, another major theoretician in the world of archival processing, began the presentation to us librarians. He said, "All of you here today are librarians. There's one thing you need to understand as librarians. You don't know the first thing about archival processing." I remember those words. And he was right. The processing of archival material is a very different approach than cataloguing.

Interview 2: January 18, 2017

02-00:00:00

Meeker: Today is Wednesday, January 18, 2017. This is Martin Meeker interviewing Peter Hanff for The Bancroft Library university history oral history series. This is interview session number two, and we're here in the admin conference room at The Bancroft Library. The last time we met we wrapped up just on the verge of you accepting a job here at The Bancroft Library as—the title I believe, the original title was reference librarian.

02-00:00:35

Hanff: That's correct.

02-00:00:36

Meeker: Can you walk me through the process of learning about the job here, applying for it, or did somebody let you know that this job was available? Tell me about the process of getting the job and onboarding.

02-00:00:53

Hanff: It was an interesting dynamic to me. I had only had two other jobs before. I was a fellow at Indiana University's Lilly Library, and the assumption was that I was going to go into the rare book and manuscript library field. I went through the whole year's program, and one of the things at the end of it was that I would go on a grand tour of the eastern establishment with David A. Randall, who had been the head of the Scribner's rare book department in New York, and knew everybody in the field of private libraries that were based on private collections, and a lot of major private collectors that were still actively collecting. So I was looking forward to that. I had been fortunate in my two years at the Library of Congress to have visited some of these institutions on my own, because I was always doing work on antiquarian children's books through that time. It was assumed, as well, that I would have an opportunity to receive offers of positions or invitations for interviews.

I went off to this grand tour with Dave Randall, and the most significant part of it was being at New Haven, at Yale University, and their still relatively new Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and I spent a whole day with Herman W. Liebert, "Fritz" Liebert, who was the director of that. He took me to lunch at Mory's, and over this long, loquacious lunch he leaned over and said, "You need to write to Jim Hart at Berkeley. He needs you at The Bancroft Library." And though I knew about The Bancroft Library, it was not central to my area of collecting interest. Bancroft doesn't collect children's books generally. I went ahead and wrote a letter to James D. Hart, and the next thing I knew the phone rang at Lilly, and a man said to me, in his stentorian intonations, [imitating Hart] "Mr. Hanff, this is James D. Hart [pronounced *Hot*] calling from The Bancroft Library." Now, I knew Hart's work, [*The Oxford*] *Companion to American Literature*, but I hadn't expected an accent like that! And so I was sort of surprised, but he proposed that we

meet at the American Library Association conference in Detroit, which was coming up fairly soon, so we did meet there. So I had at least met Jim Hart out in the field, so to speak.

And when I left Lilly in, I think, late July, I had twelve interviews already lined up. It was a different market than we've seen in almost the entire time since then. So I did some of the interviews; I didn't do all of them, but I was on a very long cross-country journey. I went eastward from the Midwest, all the way up to Maine and then slowly across, and I was camping along the way for all those months. And it was finally only when I got to Yellowstone that I called my parents in Los Angeles, and my mother said that Professor Hart had called and said it was time for me to get to the interview in Berkeley. So I did a quick drive across Utah and Nevada into California and had a two-day interview at Berkeley.

02-00:04:15

Meeker:

On this road trip that you were doing around the country, was it part relaxation and part going to universities and interviewing at their rare books programs?

02-00:04:25

Hanff:

It was a combination of those things, yes.

02-00:04:28

Meeker:

What other universities did you interview with?

02-00:04:32

Hanff:

The first interview was at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, and we were in a tent. Our puppy was probably all of eight weeks old. It was a Miniature Schnauzer. I remember getting dressed at seven in the morning, in the tent, putting on a jacket and tie for the interview, and it was ninety-five degrees and humid. And the institution offered—Judy Baker was with me—a job, sight unseen. They really were desperate to get somebody to head special collections. And Judy said, “I don't care if *you* take the job, but I'm certainly not going to live in Illinois.” [laughing] So there were things like that that happened. But I also interviewed at the Philadelphia Free Library, for the rare book position there, that Ellen [K.] Shaffer had just retired from. I don't know how many of them I ended up doing. I think one or two in New York. I don't remember doing one in Washington, DC. And there were several of them that I really wasn't interested in any serious way. One of them was to be in Maine at the famous college up there, the name of which is escaping me at the Bowdoin It's one of the major colleges or universities in Maine, and I just had this childhood fear of the cold of winter, having lived only in Florida and Los Angeles, until I was living in Indiana.

02-00:05:55

Meeker:

Who were you traveling with?

02-00:05:57

Hanff:

It was my girlfriend from the Library of Congress, Judy Baker. We were married later, but we were together for quite a while before we got married. She had gone to Columbia University library school. Five of my fellow interns in the special recruitment program at the Library of Congress were from her class, although she went into cataloging immediately. Everybody assumed we would just hit it off, because we were both from Southern California, and it was true; we did hit it off! So she had gone off, when I left for Indiana University, for a tour around the world that was going to take her about a year, and I was at Bloomington. I managed to get vacation time during the winter break and went over to England, for my first visit, to spend some time with her. When I left that two weeks of being in Britain, I remember that she just fell apart at the airport, and within weeks she was living with me in Bloomington.

02-00:06:58

Meeker:

Can you remind me of the name of the director of the Beinecke that you mentioned?

02-00:07:01

Hanff:

Yes, his name was Herman W. Liebert. He was known as Fritz Liebert, and only after I got to Bancroft did I understand the relationship. He had been hired by Jim [James E.] Skipper, the university librarian of that era, to come and survey the situation with special collections at Berkeley. And he wrote a report which recommended that the very small Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, which had only been formed in 1954—and very reluctantly at that—had almost no staff, be merged into The Bancroft Library, because Bancroft had dedicated acquisitions staff, dedicated cataloging, and dedicated public services that could be used for other kinds of special collections. And so he was the one who'd made that recommendation, and there was a real reason that he was suggesting that I write to Hart.

02-00:07:52

Meeker:

But you didn't understand that connection at the time?

02-00:07:53

Hanff:

No, it was something I only learned later.

02-00:07:57

Meeker:

Well, walk me through that two-day interview that you did with Hart here at the Bancroft.

02-00:08:03

Hanff:

What led to it?

02-00:08:05

Meeker:

Well, no, describe the interview itself.

02-00:08:07

Hanff:

Yes, I remember vaguely. I met with virtually every major figure and unit of Bancroft, but the associate director, Robert Becker, wasn't there that day, so I had to come back for another day. So I think I had the first interviews on Friday, and the final interview on Monday, and then I went in to speak with Bill [William E.] Wenz, who was the head of personnel in the library, and he urged me to keep on looking for jobs.

02-00:08:35

Meeker:

Why?

02-00:08:36

Hanff:

I don't quite know what he was up to. But I had an impression that the job was mine if I wanted it, and that proved to be the case.

02-00:08:45

Meeker:

Interesting. So the job title was reference librarian, correct?

02-00:08:50

Hanff:

That's because that was the vacancy that had opened up.

02-00:08:51

Meeker:

But it really entailed—it was really a rare books position, correct?

02-00:08:55

Hanff:

It was that. And within short order, I would say that within six months the title was changed from reference librarian, to assistant to the director for matters relating to the Rare Book Collection. And then eventually I think the title shifted a little bit more, and it was clearer and clearer that what I was there for was to survey the needs of the department of rare books and special collections, assess how a merger would work, and to some extent work with the staff of The Bancroft Library. This was not a popular merger on the Bancroft side of things. We had always been a Western Americana collection, and from the perspective of that level of purity, the department of rare books and special collections was a mishmash of things from all over the world.

02-00:10:01

Meeker:

Can you describe for me who and why people lined up on different sides of that debate?

02-00:10:10

Hanff:

I would say that there was a very strong pride at The Bancroft Library in what it had accomplished as *the* most important Western Americana collection in the United States, or in the world. We long had dedicated acquisitions specialists, catalogers, and reference librarians all focused on that particular collection. The cataloging at Bancroft was fairly sophisticated, and it reflected a special orientation that was Western Americana. So rather than using the straightforward Library of Congress classification scheme, the Bancroft catalogers had expanded that scheme and pushed into the classes that represent history, all of the topical areas that otherwise would have gone into

classes like technology, railroading, political science, and they were all merged together to reflect the geographic focus of the discipline in question. So virtually everything ended up in the F860s and F870s, in terms of the classification number, whereas there would have been Ts and Hs and Es all over the place if the conventional Library of Congress call numbers had been used.

The Rare Book Collection, though, had been classified much more conventionally, in the way that the main library would have done. And even then there was a problem because the main library had never given any real cataloging support to the rare books department. Leslie Clarke, pretty much on her own, with graduate student assistance, created a card catalog for the collection because she needed to manage access to the material and she loved classification. It was a hobby of hers. And so she was quite happy to have graduate students assist her in assigning the right classification numbers to the books. But she did something else unusual—she recognized that a lot of her graduate students wouldn't be able to tell at a glance whether a book was a work of American authorship or English authorship, so she created a new class called PRS, PR stands, in the Library of Congress scheme, for British literature and PS American literature. PRS could be either one. And so what was going to be some kind of a problem of integrating that approach to the much larger catalog for The Bancroft Library—

But ultimately I did a statistical analysis and I said, "If we take into account that the collections are disparate in size, and going forward we will be using straightforward classification, it's not going to make a great deal of difference in this card catalog. The other thing that was good about it, in a way, was that the focus on Western Americana, and the greatly expanded E and F classes that Bancroft was using, largely ignored what was happening in the Rare Book Collection. So there wasn't going to be a lot of duplication of call numbers. The approaches were quite different. Ultimately, that was what we ended up realizing; we could go ahead and integrate the card catalog fairly well.

There were other—these are technical things that are related to how catalogs were managed in the card catalog era. The main library and The Bancroft Library approached their cataloging slightly differently. There was something in cataloging called the *authority record*, which establishes the name of the author, the form of a title if the book is reprinted many times under different titles. It's a kind of a formal analysis and an assessment, and it's done usually on cards, with some kind of documentation of what bibliographic sources were used to establish those headings. In The Bancroft Library, that was done on the main entry card, which is where—that was the main author card. In the Rare Book Collection, it was done primarily on the shelf list, which is the behind-the-scenes listing of all the books arranged by call number. That meant nothing at the time. It wasn't going to be a problem. But once we ended up, several years later, deciding we were going to do retrospective conversion of

the card catalog and convert it into digital data, it meant that we had to do a very careful engineering of how we were going to capture all the unique data. Because in the card catalog era—yes, you had unit cards that were placed in various locations, subject headings, extra entries for different authors and title entries, but you basically wanted to have a uniform way of doing this. And we needed to capture changes through time, and a lot of that was done on the authority card without bothering all the other cards that had been distributed into the catalog. So we had to come up with a scheme, which we did—and I think quite successfully—and have the OCLC group in Ohio, which were doing the conversion work for us, take some sources from the shelf list and other sources that we provided from the main entry. That's several years after what I'm talking about, but—

02-00:15:19

Meeker:

Well, do you want to cover that? But perhaps we're getting ahead of ourselves just a little bit.

02-00:15:21

Hanff:

Yeah.

02-00:15:23

Meeker:

I am curious about the two cataloging methods that you've mentioned: the one that was indigenous to The Bancroft Library and the one that was being done in the Rare Book Collection. You said that it was relatively easy to integrate the two card catalogs once the collections were united, but what about the integration of the two methods from that point forward?

02-00:15:45

Hanff:

Going forward, the Bancroft cataloging unit did all the cataloging, so they did it pretty much the way that they wanted it done, but we did bring in a rare book cataloger from the old Rare Book Collection. We had one cataloger named Ralph Hansen who came with it, and was very meticulous but extremely slow. It was frustrating to a lot of people that he cataloged so slowly, but that's the way it was.

02-00:16:12

Meeker:

The cataloging approach that you described at the Bancroft, where most everything was within history, as opposed to being in other—like Es and Fs and such—what was used for manuscript collections here, or what was the state of manuscript collections in the Bancroft?

02-00:16:31

Hanff:

The manuscript collections were handled completely differently, and that is typically the case anyway. But at Lilly Library I had discovered that their primary approach was a process called calendaring. A large collection would be looked at closely, and all of the documents are interfiled according to date of creation, rather than following the provenance structure as they found it in the catalog coming in. And it became a problem.

I don't know whether I have described this before, but I had an issue when I was at Lilly in the fellowship program. I processed a literary archive that had been assembled by a Jesuit named Brocard Sewell, for a literary journal that he published called the *Aylesford Review*. As I went through the work that he had assembled—it was a fairly small collection, maybe twelve boxes—I realized that the files reflected relationships among the people, and that was interesting to me to see. There were two women, who were obviously a lesbian couple—they were in one file, and he just dealt with them as a part of a team. That was a nice way of understanding how their literary output related to what they were corresponding about. If I broke up the file arrangement and put everything in chronological order, those relationships would become invisible. I wrote a sequence of memos to the head of manuscripts, and she just didn't believe a word of what I was saying. And so she ultimately told me, some weeks later, that she had found that I did it wrong—so she reintegrated it the right way, putting everything in chronological order. And I prevailed, in the sense that my meticulous notes were added to the finding aid, so that a future scholar at least would know how Brocard Sewell had understood the relationships that people he corresponded with.

So when I got to Bancroft, I discovered that we had a more sophisticated and more varied approach to processing manuscript collections. We paid much more attention to the provenance, so if a collection came to us well organized by whoever created it, we were likely to reflect that in keeping it much the way they had it, with one kind of exception that was still common at Bancroft then. Correspondence, which was still the focus of the research manuscript collections at Bancroft, as far as processing went, tended to be broken into two series. One series reflected the creator of the collection, and that was arranged with outgoing letters in chronological order. So that's a stepchild of the old calendaring approach. The incoming letters, however, were arranged alphabetically by the names of the writer. For a scholar, looking through, it was fairly easy to say, "Okay, I want Jack London's letters to Mark Twain, and I will then know that Jack London is writing to Mark Twain on such and such dates. Now, I will look at Mark Twain's chronological file for the same period, and I'll be able to match the two parts together." So that approach was still being used. It isn't used that way now, but it was at the time.

But the creation of finding aids was very important at Bancroft, and finding aids were fairly detailed inventories, very necessary if you were going to have the incoming and outgoing correspondence separated. You needed to know the names of the people that were reflected in the collection.

02-00:20:07

Meeker:

So more than just folder level, or deeper than folder level?

02-00:20:11

Hanff:

Right, right. And the finding aid would typically have a biographical sketch and some kind of history of how the collection came to be formed, how it got

to The Bancroft Library, and so forth. And we had a lot of finding aids, hundreds of them. And when we began this big venture some years later, of retrospective conversion, we first focused on the book collection. But then after we had five years of converting the book collection card catalog to machine-readable form, we got a similar grant and began the conversion of the manuscripts catalog.

The manuscript catalog consisted of a card catalog, but then there would be the finding aid. So the first thing we dealt with was the card catalog, then we had to figure out how to deal with the finding aid, and that became quite an innovative approach that we used, which has had international repercussions, which we can talk about another time.

02-00:21:04

Meeker:

The digitization of it?

02-00:21:06

Hanff:

Yes, how to do it and how to provide the access to it.

02-00:21:12

Meeker:

You know, I'm wondering if we can actually step back a little bit. I'd love your recollections of your impressions upon starting at Bancroft for the first time. I know that the physical space was redesigned and retrofitted shortly after you arrived, but can you describe the physical library itself upon your arrival?

02-00:21:36

Hanff:

Yes, actually in a way I'm fortunate. I came into the original Bancroft Library, in the building that we're in now, although we're now in the third design of the building. What I had noticed initially was that the condition of the books on the shelves was rather mediocre. Shabby, disordered, books were not flush to the shelves' front surface. At the Lilly Library there was a tradition of collecting only things that were in Lilly condition. Every book was the best of its kind, as a specimen, in the world. And it was so important to them that the associate director opened every book package that arrived to inspect the books for physical condition.

That was obviously not the way Bancroft was doing it. We were much more clearly a research library, heavily used, and our goal was providing access to the content, without so much of a concern for the physical condition, the bibliographic niceties of antiquarian books. Clearly, we had a lot of things that were rare or unique, but it was really much more of a working library. And I can remember being a little bit shocked, having just come from Lilly, to see how much more casual it looked at Bancroft.

The manuscript collection here, though, seemed to me better than what Lilly had been doing. And I'd been to the Library of Congress before Lilly, so I saw how the rare book collection was handled there, and I also had been in the

manuscripts division at the Library of Congress. Bancroft didn't have the staffing to maintain the shelves in quite the brilliant orderliness that I had been used to before I got here.

02-00:23:26

Meeker: Was the entire collection on site here?

02-00:23:29

Hanff: No, already by 1970, when I arrived, we were using the facility in Richmond, California. It was the old Ford assembly plant. It was called Inter-Campus Library Facility North, ICLFN, and it was quite spacious. I rather enjoyed going out there on occasion. It was only when we were eventually moving things out to move them to the new custom-built storage facility in Richmond that I was looking at it more closely. We went out after we'd moved the bulk of the collection, just to do a survey of the shelves, because whenever you move a library, invariably something is left on a shelf somewhere. It doesn't seem intuitive, but it has been the experience of all of us that things are left behind. So I wandered around the nearly empty space for Bancroft, and I was just looking at it as a physical place, and I said, "It's funny. The floor is made of asphalt, like paving asphalt." And then I noticed cracks and fissures, and I looked down at the cracks and fissures, and the bay was right under the pilings beneath my feet. I had never figured that out in my earlier visits, because it was full of books and you were looking at things you were there to retrieve. So we moved into a much better facility. [laughter]

02-00:24:50

Meeker: Can you describe the original Reading Room?

02-00:24:53

Hanff: Yes. The reading room looked like 1950. The furniture was rectilinear; it was bleached oak with gray linoleum inlays for the writing surfaces on the tops of tables. There were several standing card catalogs; quite a large space of the room was devoted to card catalogs. And then, in addition to the space for the readers in the center of the room there were what were called study carrels, private desks along the perimeter where long-time scholars who had special relationships with Bancroft had their work going on. That was an interesting thing to me; I hadn't seen anything like that at Lilly, and at the Library of Congress there wouldn't have been an arrangement like that. There are too many readers at the Library of Congress to provide individual study carrels of that sort.

02-00:25:41

Meeker: Where was the reading room at that point in time?

02-00:25:44

Hanff: The Bancroft Library sits in what is called the Library Annex of the Doe Library. The reading room was approached by entering the building from the east doors, from near the Campanile. You would come in through the central corridor and immediately turn left to go into the reading room. The doors were

also blonde oak, and the walls were painted dark turquoise. There were things on display. The Codex Fernández Leal, which is a major manuscript document from early Mexico, was on display in a big mahogany case inside glass. I believe the bust of Hubert Howe Bancroft stood on a plinth someplace in the room. It was an inviting space. It was very comfortable. We have a few photographs of the old room.

02-00:26:34

Meeker:

Can you tell me a little bit about the registration process at that point in time? What sort of security measures were there?

02-00:26:39

Hanff:

The security measures were definitely lighter than things we've experienced in more recent years. I am pretty confident that we simply had a little slip that people filled out, and we checked a driver's license or something comparable to that. I can remember one thing about staffing that was interesting. We had public service hours when I first got to Bancroft—and this went on for some years—of being open eight to five, Monday through Friday. And remember eight to five meant eight to five, so we had to be here earlier than eight. And we had evening hours Monday through Thursday, from seven to ten. We had Saturday hours from nine to five, and Sunday hours from one to five. There were five of us who were called reference librarians, and we did that staffing. We had lighter staffing for the evening hours and the weekends, where we could actually operate the library with one librarian and one student assistant. It's very different from the way it is now.

02-00:27:59

Meeker:

Was the Reading Room open to the public in the same way that it is now?

02-00:28:08

Hanff:

No. Undergraduates weren't permitted to use Bancroft. That was something that I noticed when I first got here. It was not unusual for undergraduates not to have access to rare book and special collections libraries of that era. When I was in high school, I mentioned in the previous interview, I was invited to go to UCLA [Library] Special Collections for a day with the director of rare books, and he spent a whole Saturday with me showing me rare books, uncataloged books. It was a wonderful treat. Then when I went to graduate school at UCLA five years later, I discovered that library school students—I was one of those—and undergraduates weren't permitted to use special collections without special petition from a faculty member, and I got to Bancroft and it was the same.

So I went to Jim Hart and said, "You know, I really think that undergraduates would benefit from having access to us." And his advice was wise. "Why don't you campaign with the younger reference librarians," because the senior ones were not about to change the way they had always done it. So I did do that, and I think we were able to open up in 1972, two years after I got here.

And so from that point on we had undergraduate access, which is now normal, but it wasn't so normal then.

02-00:29:28

Meeker:

What about members of the general public?

02-00:29:30

Hanff:

The general public could come in, as long as they were adults beyond high school—and in a way that bothered me too. Why should the public have better access than an undergraduate student? There were little anomalies of that sort that you could sit there and look at, and I suspect that it required somebody coming in from the outside, fairly fresh, to say, “Why are we doing it this way?” Because the other answer is, “Because we’ve always done it that way,” and that’s not unusual in any environment.

02-00:29:58

Meeker:

Well, you’re correct in pointing out that a lot of special collections libraries are rather exclusive. The Huntington Library is still difficult to get into.

02-00:30:07

Hanff:

It is, and the Morgan Library in New York. But they’re private libraries, and we have the idea that we’re a public institution.

02-00:30:18

Meeker:

Is that the source of the impetus for opening it up much more broadly?

02-00:30:21

Hanff:

No, I don’t think so. I think really the impetus was a growing awareness that undergraduates benefit from exploring a lot of options. And certainly, once we opened up to undergraduate use we had an embarrassment, because the demand was far greater than we could fill, in our reading room. And so we actually had a meeting with faculty advisors and said, “We’re going to have to start putting waiting lists in place, because we can’t handle more than thirty readers at a time.” I don’t think any other special collections library in the United States *ever* has thirty readers at a time, but Bancroft does. And the faculty advice was let it be first come, first served. Don’t give the faculty a special privilege. And so we did it that way. And for quite a number of years we had a waiting list that we had to maintain practically every day of the week. But as time passed, and as things became accessible in other ways, digitally and through the computers, things evened out and we don’t seem to have the pressure that would lead us to having a waiting list anymore.

02-00:31:31

Meeker:

Can you tell me about the organizational structure when you arrived? You mentioned the five reference librarians; obviously, Jim Hart’s the director.

02-00:31:41

Hanff:

Yeah, the structure as I understood it—and it might be that I never fully understood it—I never saw an organization chart. But there was the director, and then there was the associate director. The head of public service was John

Barr Tompkins, and he was one of six reference people. Then there was an acquisitions unit that was staffed with Patricia Howard and Gerda Maskaleris, who reverted to her maiden name later, Gerda Kornfeld. Then there was a catalog division that was headed by Elizabeth [G.] Todd—Betty Todd—and the assistant head of cataloging was Soledad Fernández, whom we called Soley. And then there would have been two or three library assistants and maybe one or two younger librarians, also doing cataloging. Then there was a manuscripts division, and that was staffed by Estelle Rebec and Marie Byrne, with a full-time library assistant of high classification named Mary Ellen Jones. Then there was the university archives, which was often just one person, Jim [James R.K.] Kantor.

02-00:32:55

Meeker:

We'll talk about how this maps onto the more contemporary arrangement later, but as far as the different tasks that each of these offices and individuals were undertaking, was it more or less public services, processing, and curatorial at that point in time?

02-00:33:26

Hanff:

At one level you could define it that way. Public service was always a thing of its own, and the cataloging unit was pretty much on its own. But remember, it was not cataloging manuscripts—that was done by the manuscripts division. We didn't have curators yet. We had a head of acquisitions who did all of the selecting for the printed collections, with the assistance of Gerda Kornfeld, and then the manuscripts were acquired through the advice of the two leaders of the manuscripts division. The director was always understood to be the final arbiter in a decision to acquire, and I would say that the manuscripts were pretty much purchased by Jim Hart on advice from Estelle and Marie, whereas Pat Howard and Gerda Kornfeld did the acquisition of book collections pretty much on their own.

02-00:34:18

Meeker:

Were both books and manuscripts typically acquired through purchase?

02-00:34:22

Hanff:

Yes. Well, purchase and gift. A library like Bancroft is extraordinarily dependent on giving and gifts, and we didn't have much money. This is a factoid that we should acknowledge.

02-00:34:36

Meeker:

Right.

02-00:34:38

Hanff:

When Jim Hart arrived—and he told me this in his last year, because he did a little assessment of what he'd accomplished—there was an endowment of \$125,000 for the Bancroft Library. And in his last year it had grown to \$8 million, in twenty years, so he did accomplish something that he had hoped to be able to accomplish by becoming the director.

02-00:35:06

Meeker:

Can you describe the endowments? My understanding is that now, most of the endowments are fairly explicitly earmarked for acquisitions of rare books and manuscripts related to specific topics.

02-00:35:30

Hanff:

I don't know. I think that might be an oversimplified perception.

02-00:35:29

Meeker:

Okay, all right.

02-00:35:30

Hanff:

The endowments certainly focused, initially, on collection opportunities, but they tended to be somewhat general. The largest endowment we have, for collections, is the Harvey Endowment, Peter and Rosell Harvey, and it is for the support of acquisitions, definitely acquisitions, of books and manuscripts, for California, Oregon, and Washington. It's restricted in that way, but it's also still the central core of what we collect, so for us it's an extremely helpful endowment. But Jim Hart took funds for a lot of different reasons. His brother-in-law was Joseph [M.] Bransten, of MJB Coffee, and set up the Bransten Endowment for the purchase of materials on coffee and tea and spice and chocolate. And we used all of these funds in that way. But some funds have just come in that are more general than that, and we now have some endowments which we can turn toward support of staff and salary. We also need to remember that in the earliest years there was no way, within the University of California, a public institution, to endow staff positions. It wasn't permitted.

02-00:36:52

Meeker:

I didn't know that. Can you tell me about that?

02-00:36:54

Hanff:

Staff was assumed to be the responsibility of the state. So that's the reason that when you were looking for funds, the state didn't have much obligation to acquire rare book and manuscript collections, but it did have to provide the staff. And so the focus was to get an endowment that would help us build the collections. The state funding was always very small for that.

02-00:37:16

Meeker:

So basically, all of the staff positions would have been what we call now 19900 positions?

02-00:37:23

Hanff:

That's what we would have called them, 19900 positions. It's not that way now, but it was then.

02-00:37:26

Meeker:

That's for sure. Would that also be true for the Oral History Center or Regional Oral History Office?

02-00:37:34

Hanff:

No. The Oral History Center—Regional Oral History Office, as it was then—was staffed, I think, with one and one-half state funding, one and one-half positions state-funded: a secretary, I think, and Willa [K.] Baum. Then all of the other activity was supported by direct request for funding from various organizations, endowments, various sources. It wasn't a well-endowed operation. It was always scrambling to find money to support individual oral histories.

02-00:38:08

Meeker:

When you arrived, what was your introduction to the Regional Oral History Office and the work that they did? How was the relevance of that work related to rare books and manuscripts?

02-00:38:24

Hanff:

I wasn't formally introduced. I certainly knew Willa Baum, probably from the very beginning, just because we were a small library and we all knew each other. But we had always had the view at Bancroft that the oral histories are collected with individuals who have made a contribution to some aspect of California cultural history, and often enough, the same individuals had archival records or even book collections that might come as a result of their interfacing with oral history. And we treated the oral histories here as if they were manuscripts, which I don't think is normal. I think if you went to UCLA you would find that they treat their oral history transcripts, the book version, as books, but we still treat them as manuscripts, even now. And even if we catalog deposits from UCLA, because we have a reciprocal deposit arrangement, we catalog them as if they were manuscripts up here. It's just a different approach, but it reflects the way the Hubert Howe Bancroft enterprise went. He was collecting oral histories as an adjunct to his collecting of books and manuscripts. In his day, of course, they were done longhand, so he did call them the *dictations*, and they were oral histories written by hand. And so I think it makes some sense to think of them as an aspect of the collection that was on the manuscript side of the equation.

02-00:39:54

Meeker:

You were talking about collecting, and the use of endowments for collections. What were the main collecting interests of the library at that point in time, in the early 1970s?

02-00:40:08

Hanff:

The Bancroft collection focus has remained pretty consistent as long as I've been aware of it and its history. We collect the Pacific Slope, as Bancroft focused on it, from Panama to Alaska; the Pacific shore to the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. And I always like to say that was his vision of California, which he did understand as something new and different from what had happened before anywhere else in the world—and he collected voraciously. He wasn't a scholar-collector, he was just interested in everything relating to the geographic region. It's true he did end up using it to

do the thirty-nine volumes of the Works of H.H. Bancroft, but he had nine professional historians working with him to create those texts, and he was basically creating a chronological history of the geographic regions that his collection covered. We continue to build to that strength, and that's the technical term or the philosophical term, *build to strength*, that's a pretty normal thing in special collections libraries. It means that you are constantly watching for new and enriching things within the geographic area that you already have.

We expanded a little bit, and I can talk about some of the kinds of expansions that have occurred over time. One of the things that I think alarmed the Bancroft traditionalists, the Western American group, was that they already understood that private support was hard to come by and somewhat limited. There was an organization founded in 1946 called the Friends of The Bancroft Library, which did raise money, sometimes for oral history, but more often for books and manuscript purchases. The staff feared that bringing in the great breadth of the rare book and special collections department would dilute that focus. I think the reality was quite different from that. I think that by expanding the scope of interest we greatly expanded the entire pool of support for Bancroft, and I don't think anybody could have predicted that it would work that way. I don't think any intellectual analysis had suggested it. Possibly Fritz Liebert's thoughts were along those lines; I don't know. But it did expand the quantity of support, and many people continue supporting both, who are identified as Friends of The Bancroft Library.

02-00:42:36

Meeker:

So when you're talking about supporting both [that] would be the rare books as well as the manuscript collections?

02-00:42:42

Hanff:

Right. That is, both the traditional Western America collection, and the broader scope of the Rare Books collection.

02-00:42:43

Meeker:

When you talk about the geographic area that is typically covered within the collection policy for manuscripts, what about the chronological period of time?

02-00:42:57

Hanff:

I think we say we go back to the earliest recorded time, and we are constantly acquiring things. Of course, for California the recorded period doesn't go much before the nineteenth century, because there were not a lot of people here yet, and the people who were here were not primarily creating documents that could be collected and preserved, so you have a certain chronological limitation there. But when you move into Mexico, you can go right back to the sixteenth century, if not sooner, and there was printing in Mexico from an early date. We have some specimens from the original printing in California, which was done in Monterey by Agustín Zamorano, who had to use types that

were intended for English language. He ended up with a printing press and types that had been brought in from the Sandwich Islands, from the missionaries there. But he printed the early California documents that way, tracts and other publications, making do. He didn't have a lot of accent marks.

02-00:44:04

Meeker:

What about contemporary materials?

02-00:44:08

Hanff:

We continue, pretty much, to collect both retrospective and contemporary output, and it can be manuscript or it can be printed material. What we have learned, because we've been doing it for such a long time, is that Bancroft himself was doing what scholarly university libraries would not have been doing. He was collecting all kinds of ephemera—popular literature, advertising, magazines, newspapers, in great quantity, without regard for scholarly value. And now, of course, they all have scholarly value, so we continue to collect more eclectically and broadly than most research libraries do.

02-00:44:49

Meeker:

You know, from the time that you arrived till today, what has been the process by which contemporary/late second half of the twentieth century materials are collected? Are they now being prioritized? How is that dealt with? Simply because you can look to the nineteenth century, and The Bancroft Library could head in the direction of completism to the best possible—you find collections that you don't have. If you have the means, you would collect those, if they're relevant to the Bancroft collections. But going into the twentieth century, and particularly the late twentieth century, that kind of ethos would be simply impossible to do, so—

02-00:45:41

Hanff:

Well, yes and no.

02-00:45:40

Meeker:

Okay.

02-00:45:41

Hanff:

When you limit it to such a small geographic region, you have a little bit more control over being able to be fairly complete, and so we try to acquire monographs, pamphlets, and other printed material pretty broadly. And indeed, we have tended to rely on the state funding, which as I said before is somewhat limited. It's a relatively small amount. It doesn't go anywhere near supporting the million and a half to \$2 million we spend, a year, on collections. I think we get about \$200,000 a year from state funding traditionally. So what we used that for was contemporary imprint collecting. And so for that we would set up approval plans with some of the major vendors in Mexico and in North America, to steer to us all of the output that's coming out in the area.

Certainly, there are certain things we don't collect. We tend not to collect children's literature, as such. Once in a while a child's book that has some kind of historic significance, because the author is writing about an area that we haven't collected, will end up in the collection. But that has not been a particularly strong way of collecting. We don't collect newspapers any longer; we expect the main library to do that. But when I got here we had responsibility for all western newspapers through 1905. And the 1905 date was sort of an artifice. It was the year we purchased The Bancroft Library, and with The Bancroft Library came bound newspapers from all over the Far West, so we continued having the responsibility for those until sometime probably in the 1980s. I said to various and sundry, and I think we all had the same idea—most people are using newspapers on microfilm these days. (Even we had microfilmed almost everything.) And to them it doesn't matter whether it's 1905 and before or post-1905. Maybe all the microfilm could be in one place. So indeed, all of our microfilmed newspapers are accessible down in the newspaper room of the main library. We still have some newspapers in hard copy, and those we would probably just keep as rare books.

02-00:48:04

Meeker:

Let's dive in a bit to the rare books integration and you becoming assistant to the director, with specialization in the rare books collection. You had set up for me some trepidation that the old-timers at the Bancroft had about integrating rare books into a collection that was exclusively Western Americana. Were you ever called upon to sell the idea to your colleagues that this is the right thing to do?

02-00:48:45

Hanff:

I don't think I was called on to do that. I think it was a mandate that we had with the appointment of Hart. Jim Skipper was obviously pushing it, and he also provided expanded space in the annex so that there was room to bring in the Rare Book Collection. My role then was to figure out how we would place the books on the shelves. And as I said, most of the rare book collections would have ended up being in call numbers other than where Bancroft had things.

But I did get myself into trouble, which is interesting. It was an adventure. [laughing] I proposed that we integrate the two collections completely and close the stacks. That's something I haven't mentioned before, but carrel holders and professors and certain select graduate students had what was called stack access at Bancroft.

02-00:49:43

Meeker:

[laughing] Oh, really?

02-00:49:45

Hanff:

And it wasn't completely 100 percent, although I don't know that they realized that. We had divided our collection into two parts: the regular call

numbers and those that had a subtended little X which meant they were in the vault. The vault was not accessible, and it was a good-sized part of the stacks. Another designation of that sort could be a small M, which stood for manuscript, but it was added to the front of a Library of Congress call number, but it really was primarily thesis documents, things that had been typewritten and bound. And so we had these categories. Those were always in the vault and not accessible. So in my naïveté I said, “Why don’t we integrate everything and close the stacks.” And Jim Hart said, quietly, “I think you will want to consult with faculty about that.”

[laughing] So I set up a meeting, and the faculty came in—and so did Elisabeth [K.] Gudde, who was the widow of a long-connected Bancroft faculty-oriented person. She had been the person who was building the Western Americana book collections before Pat Howard did it. And I sat there and watched two of the faculty members from the history department turn purple and froth at the mouth with outrage, and the words they said surprised me. I didn’t know academics had such remarkable vocabularies. And I realized I had to figure out a slightly different approach. They were not about to give up their privilege, as they put it. So I went ahead and finished that analysis that I told you about, realized that all the Rare Book Collection had always been in closed stacks. It was not going to be opened up, and it would be easy enough to go ahead and integrate the Bancroft vault collection, the X and M collection, with the Rare Book Collection. And then the things that didn’t have M and X that were in the F850s and F860s, F870s, and the E class could be divided, X and non-X, and I did it that way and it worked!

One of the professors who was so angry was Gunther Barth, who was a major American historian. He was here a long time, and he was the last professor who still had a study carrel, and we were losing the carrels. This is after several remodeling efforts, but we were losing the carrels because our staff was expanding and we needed the desk space. And finally, he got the letter from the head of public service that he had to give up his carrel, and he came to my office. He was a very tall, distinguished man, and he said, [imitating a German accent], “Peter, what am I going to do?” And I said, “Gunther, I’ve been thinking about that for a while, and I think you are so central to what we do at The Bancroft Library, I’m going to declare you a member of the staff and give you a desk in the manuscripts division. [laughter] And he had that for about two or three years, and then he died. And now we have an endowment from his widow, the Gunther Barth Endowment, to support student use. It isn’t restricted to the University of California, but they have to be registered students someplace, working in areas that were of interest to Gunther Barth in Californiana. So it worked out, but it started off on a rocky footing.

02-00:53:07
Meeker:

Well, it’s an interesting lesson that you learn, at this university in particular, about the special role that the faculty has. Can you tell me a little bit more

about that role and how it impacted the work down here at The Bancroft Library—say in the Hart years, and then we'll talk about your years.

02-00:53:28

Hanff:

Well, some of this, I have to say, is secondary or hearsay, but I think it's probably generally valid. The History Department had always thought of The Bancroft Library, the Western Americana library, as its own domain, almost as if it were a departmental library. And Jim Hart had been associated with Bancroft from his arrival in Berkeley in the 1930s, because a lot of his own research and publishing had to do with the West, western literature. He found, at a certain point, that Bancroft didn't collect fiction, and it seemed wrong to him because western fiction is a very strong and important part of the cultural history of the West, so he and another professor bought a sizable quantity of western fiction and donated it to Bancroft. And there it was—what could anybody do? It had been given, so it was put into its own little peculiar F855 classification, which meant that it was apart, in a way, from everything else. It wasn't integrated into the general array of things, but we weren't using PR and PS anyway, so it was easy enough to just leave it down on the third floor, which was our third tier, a lower level down by the manuscripts division, so it was out of sight and out of mind.

Well, that had happened some years before Jim Hart became director, so when he became director, it was the first time that somebody other than a history professor was running The Bancroft Library, and I don't know what kind of reaction there was, but I think there was unhappiness, maybe even on the Bancroft side. I do know that the reason there was a vacancy, that I became the rare books person to fill or the reference person to fill, was because that particular person would not work for Jim Hart. I don't know what that was about, but a sudden decision was made and that person resigned. So there was suddenly a vacancy, unexpectedly, in the ranks.

The faculty had carrels, some of them. And they were always dealt with deferentially I think. It was interesting though, there were always these cultural dynamics. George P. Hammond, who was already the emeritus director of Bancroft, was from an earlier generation than Jim Hart, and was always identified, to his face, as *Dr. Hammond* and Jim Hart was *Mr. Hart*. The *doctor* versus the *mister* was already a thing that one could sense when I got here. Some people could call Jim Hart *Jim*, and some people didn't. Another kind of hierarchical thing that I experienced is that John Barr Tompkins was the head of reference and had been since the forties, so here I am coming in in 1970 and there's this fellow left over from the forties still running the Bancroft Library reading room. And older members of the staff always called him *Barr*, but the younger librarians, and I was one of the younger librarians, always called him *JB*. I noticed little things like that. It didn't faze me one way or the other. He answered to either.

02-00:56:42

Meeker:

Did the faculty play a role in acquisitions, in the development of the collection?

02-00:56:55

Hanff:

I think by the time Hart got here they had almost no role in that regard, in the Bancroft collection. The Rare Book Collection had been handled differently, and Leslie Clarke, who was the—she wasn't called head of special collections, she was called assistant head of special collections, really felt deferential to faculty. There *had* been a role of faculty for selecting for the Main Library, and she really didn't feel comfortable making the collection decision without a faculty recommendation, and that wasn't the Bancroft way, because we were collecting so extensively, *all* of the contemporary output of the West, there was no real way that faculty could have much role in that.

I don't know what happened in terms of consultation for manuscript collections, but once Hart was here—Hart had a lot of confidence in his own judgment, so I don't think there was a lot of consulting going on. But I can't say it was exclusively without consultation, and even—again, I had this strange experience. We had a request for access to manuscript documents of D.H. Lawrence. We have a very nice, small manuscript collection of D.H. Lawrence, that was purchased by the main library probably in the early 1960s, but maybe in the late 1950s, and it was for the main library. It wasn't for Bancroft, because we wouldn't have collected literature, so it was part of the rare book literary manuscript collection.

02-00:58:23

Meeker:

And that also would have been outside the collection area of the Bancroft anyway.

02-00:58:27

Hanff:

Also. So that collection was here, and in the earlier years faculty did have a closer relationship. That collection probably was steered to us, to some extent, by Mark Schorer, a distinguished professor of English literature and a colleague of Jim Hart's. Schorer somehow arranged that he would have exclusive access to the use of those manuscripts, for life. And we won't do that now. I went through a process with Jim Hart. We had this importuning from a graduate student at some eastern university, and Jim said, "Why don't you call Mark Schorer up and ask him if he'll give permission." Again, I was confronted by a vocabulary of four-letter words and great rage, and so Mark Schorer said, "Why should I do that? I have exclusive use of them." And I thought it was a terrible situation, and Jim Hart did too. He said, "We won't ever do that again." And so we don't provide exclusive access to collections anymore.

02-00:59:31

Meeker:

Actually, speaking of faculty, finish the story about the open stacks. When did that end?

02-00:59:38

Hanff:

That worked out quite nicely. Once we were going to integrate the physical collections, we were also moving into a new reading room. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill was the architect to design our new space, and it just gave us an opportunity to create a new environment all at once, and undergraduates, from the moment we moved into the new space, had access.

02-01:00:02

Meeker:

But faculty no longer had access to the stacks, as well?

02-01:00:05

Hanff:

No, they still did, that little bit of collection that was left over that wasn't locked up as part of the vault, they still had access to. It was just an interesting compromise. It worked out fine, because mostly what they would have wanted to have access to was Western Americana, and that's what they still had access to.

02-01:00:22

Meeker:

When did that access end?

02-01:00:26

Hanff:

Probably not until—oh, let's see, let me think about that. I guess as long as we had carrel holders, and as I said, Gunther Barth was the very last one, there was still that kind of stack access. But by that time, there might have been one or two people who knew that they had stack access. It just wasn't something they demanded anymore.

02-01:00:49

Meeker:

So the first big remodel happened—let's see—

02-01:00:56

Hanff:

You might have a better sense of dates than I do. It would have happened—I think we probably moved into the new space in '72.

02-01:01:07

Meeker:

Right. So I do have under '72 to '74, the period of time that you're assistant director, the remodeled space. And so, can you tell me a bit about the planning, what was hoped for with the remodel, what were the problems with the previous space and how was the remodel going to solve those?

02-01:01:27

Hanff:

The problems with the previous space included rather mediocre shelving arrangements, very makeshift sequestering of collections that should have been behind solid walls. We basically put up a heavy gauge wire mesh between areas within the stacks to wall things off. The security was minimal, in terms of the structure. The goal of integrating the two collections and greatly expanding the stack space meant that we also had some more additional staff to bring in. I think we must have brought in five bodies from the rare book and manuscript collection, plus the Mark Twain Papers, which might have had a staff of five as well, and they sat adjacent to the department

of rare books and special collections, so all these things had to come into the new space.

Part of what Hart had negotiated with Skipper was a new building, of a sort, and he was given a couple of options by—I think it was Mike Heyman, as chancellor. He could take over South Hall. He could take over California Hall. And to do either of those things, he was going to have to raise multiple millions of dollars for reconstruction, and he didn't have enough sense of support in the community to provide that larger amount of money at that point, so it seemed to him wiser to go ahead and use the annex, because the space could be made available to us here, and it was. So we were moving into newer quarters. We also anticipated newer quantities of readers, and having a reading room that was really designed for multiple formats of material would be better. See, before my time, Jim Kantor, for instance, doesn't quite remember how it was when I got here, because he remembered when there was a separate reading room for manuscripts on the lower floor. He just mentioned that to me a couple of weeks ago. And I said, "I never actually experienced that, Jim." He said, "You didn't? Oh, I suppose we had already shut that down by the time you got here." So yes, that was true. We didn't do it that way by the time I got here. So we developed a very handsome new reading room.

There were peculiarities of the original design from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and I don't know whether this is typical, but what I found is that you have this powerhouse, internationally renowned architectural firm giving you a design. Jim Skipper and Jim Hart were in awe of this organization, and the staff at Bancroft were up in arms, to some extent, because in the design of the new reading room, they assumed that the public, to the main library, would come in through the east door of the annex, which was the door into Bancroft, walk into our reading room to go to the main library, and it didn't make a lot of sense for a rare book and special collections library. But Skidmore, Owings & Merrill had proposed it. So I listened to the murmurs of the staff, and then I went to the meeting with Jim Skipper and Jim Hart and the architects, and quietly I turned to Jim Hart, but I was also speaking to Jim Skipper, who had come to us from Harvard, "Jim, have you ever seen a rare book reading room that wasn't set up as a cul-de-sac?" And Skipper heard me, took his magic marker and went *slash!*, diagonally across that design, and that ended that particular approach to the reading room. So in a funny little innocent way, I was able to steer it in a different direction.

So we had a reading room that worked in many different ways, quite well. The big shortcoming of it was that the service desks were in the center of the room, which gave us really good proximity to all of the readers, but it also meant that anything that was said at the desks, on either side, those things were said right on top of the readers, so it was a noisy reading room. In fact, from the moment I got here, I was aware that Bancroft was the noisiest reading room I've ever experienced anywhere, and it still is.

02-01:05:49

Meeker: Well, it was busy too, right?

02-01:05:51

Hanff: It's also a busy reading room. That's true.

02-01:05:52

Meeker: And this was the reading room that was built that was in the northeast corner of the first floor of the building.

02-01:05:57

Hanff: It was. You had asked me to describe the original Bancroft Library, and I described only the reading room. You went into the entrance to the building, you turned left into the reading room, and there you saw this turquoise-walled space with these blond oak tables. If you turned to the right, you went into a corridor, and there were offices lining the corridor on the right side, and it was a ninety-degree bend at the end of the corridor, and you followed that corridor and went into the main library. It was not access to the main library, which is the thing that the architects were trying to preserve, because there had always been access to the main library from the east doors. And Hart's office was in the northeast corner of the building, and the staff offices, like acquisitions, were on the left side of the corridor behind solid walls. You got access to those spaces in another way. So all of the working operations were pretty much sequestered behind walls, and then all these offices along the outer perimeter. That outer perimeter and corridor were reincorporated into a big space to create the new reading room in that quadrant of the building.

02-01:07:09

Meeker: That's interesting. When the redesign was done, opened in 1972 or '74, in that period of time, there was no longer direct access from the annex to the Doe Library, correct?

02-01:07:25

Hanff: That's correct, yeah, and that was reversed with the current remodeling.

02-01:07:30

Meeker: Right. How did the new reading room impact public services?

02-01:07:40

Hanff: I think it put more burden on us to have more staff support. Other things were happening as well. It's interesting. I am aware that because I was brought in as a reference librarian, one of five reference librarians working with John Barr Tompkins, but being taken away from that for a different role through time, that I was the first person who reflected an erosion of what had been dedicated public service at Bancroft. And then, some years later, we hired a new assistant head of public service, and I wasn't involved in that recruitment, but the person we hired was hired in part because he had a master's degree in Latin American studies, which is a major component of content for The Bancroft Library, and in effect, he was a half-time curator of Latin Americana. At a later time there was another adjustment, and so basically, a

lot of the curatorial work that we see now out of specialists really came out of the staff that had formerly been only reference.

02-01:08:53

Meeker:

You haven't described the increase of square footage of the Bancroft, how much the Bancroft had taken over the annex, because it was, from what I understand, just a small portion of the square footage of the annex.

02-01:09:08

Hanff:

Right. In order to give you an answer to that, I'd have to actually look at some documentation. The third level, tier three, was unchanged. It was always, pretty much, manuscripts and books. Then the fourth level was the reading room and the stacks, and those stacks remained right where they were, it's just that the reading room shifted over to the northeast corner, and we put administrative offices where the old reading room had been. So Jim Hart's office was now right next to the university librarian's office. It's hard to describe this without moving my hands. [laughing] But we gained additional footage on level five. We put in our very first seminar room, we put in a printing press room, we had staff offices in an open gang office for the public service staff. Before that, the public service staff worked in the stacks. We had little tiny desks scattered in the stacks, and now we had a space that was quite a bit more spacious, but with no windows. And there were carrel rooms adjacent to it, one of which was never used for carrels because we just needed more space. That became the place where we put framed art. There was a lot of makeshift approach to adjusting the building, in that regard, because the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill design really was primarily focused on the new reading room and the new administrative offices.

02-01:10:37

Meeker:

When you moved into the new offices, did it seem like it worked at that point in time?

02-01:10:44

Hanff:

It did. Yeah, it did.

02-01:10:47

Meeker:

Let's talk about the coordinator of technical services position that you took on in '74, unless there's more that we should cover about the assistant-to-the-director role that you had done for rare books.

02-01:11:04

Hanff:

I think after the merger, and some retirements, Jim Hart decided that it was going to be easier for him to manage the operation if he created two positions that he called coordinator. Irene Moran had been the head of public service after John Barr Tompkins stepped down from that. He didn't retire immediately, but he became curator of pictorial collections for a while. And Jim conceived of dividing Bancroft pretty much fifty-fifty. I would take over the coordination of technical services, which in this iteration was the acquisitions staff and the cataloging staff. And I think that meant that I had

about fifteen FTE, and Irene Moran was in charge of public service and special materials. So the manuscripts division, which probably had about five people, reported to her. It was just a way of creating some assistance to Jim Hart so he wasn't having to micromanage every detail of every operation.

There was a structure there, inherent in the way it was set up originally, so that you had format collections doing their own technical processing, to some extent. So once we had a curator of pictures, which was a position that Hart created, that person was responsible for whatever cataloguing we were able to achieve for pictorial control and access. The manuscripts division continued to do all of the processing of the manuscript collections, and the catalogers did the printed materials collections. Acquisitions did the ordering work for all of the collections, but primarily the selection for the book collections. And that structure was there for a while. Then Jim Hart died, in 1990. And there had already been some consideration in the main library of taking Bancroft's technical services away from it and merging it into the general library's technical services operation. It's an idea that I have always resisted vigorously, and thus far, I guess you could say, I've been successful for more than forty years. I think that the kinds of work we do in our technical services is sufficiently different from mainstream technical services that it's always worth our having our own special approach.

But we did set up an outside review of the operations, and we brought in specialists from the main library, our own specialists from here, and people from the Huntington Library, and maybe somebody from UCLA, to look things over. We came up with a new recommendation, which was to merge all of the technical services together into a mega-unit, and that meant that the processing of manuscripts, and the processing of books, and the processing of pictorial collections would all be done by a centrally managed staff of technical services people. And the public services and the curators who now existed, people who were collections specialists mostly for subject specialties—with the exception of Jack Von Euw, who is responsible for pictorial collections, so that's still a format-based curatorship. But mostly, the curators deal with large subject areas. So that was a kind of a shift of thinking, and we actually implemented that in the interim between Hart's death and the appointment of Charles Faulhaber, and I think it has worked pretty well.

02-01:14:51

Meeker:

Can you give me a little more information on why technical services should remain within The Bancroft Library? How was it that the work that was being done here was different enough from what was happening in the library overall to justify this separate operation?

02-01:15:09

Hanff:

For special collections cataloging, we have always augmented whatever the base record we could find might be, so we really are focused on the history of the book in a way that general libraries don't need to be. So we would always

have kept track of provenance, who owned this book before we had it. We would identify bibliographic detail at a finer level, a closer level than would be true of a normal Library of Congress catalog record. We would perhaps provide a collation of the physical structure of the individual printed segments of a book. Of course, the manuscript things require all kinds of analysis to create the finding aid. That's not work that general technical services people are equipped to do normally.

02-01:15:58

Meeker:

And not to mention manuscript processing.

02-01:16:00

Hanff:

Right.

02-01:16:01

Meeker:

Which after Hart's death became integrated into technical services.

02-01:16:05

Hanff:

Yes, but with specialists doing the work. It's just that the management of it was centralized, and David de Lorenzo—oh, actually Jack Von Euw was the first head of that mega technical services unit. And then after Charles was here, Jack learned that Charles was thinking of hiring a new curator of pictorial collections, and Jack—I think Jack might talk about this at some point in the future—Jack didn't like the direction that the thinking was going, and he said, "You know, I am a trained curator of pictorial collections." And Charles had forgotten that or maybe he didn't know it, and so Jack became the curator of picture collections, and I think it was a very fortuitous adjustment.

02-01:16:50

Meeker:

Interesting. You know, during the Hart years, what was the typical professional educational background of the people working within The Bancroft Library? Were these mostly people with degrees in library science or did they have graduate degrees in history and English? Where were they coming from?

02-01:17:17

Hanff:

Most of the people in the library were indeed librarians. And the way librarians were educated, until the 1990s I would think, varied a little bit from school to school, but basically they were master's degree professional schools rather than academic schools. It wasn't so much true at UCLA. The library school at UCLA was in the graduate division, and in order to be admitted to library school you had to be able to be admitted to the graduate division. I know because I had to go on probation to get in. But I don't think it was always—I don't think it was that way at every library school, but the training for librarians in those days was fairly thought out.

The curriculum was pretty standardized throughout North America. You were basically trained to understand the philosophy of reference, the philosophy of cataloging, the philosophy of classification, and the philosophy of other kinds

of specialties that would provide access and control and management and services in a library. So most of the people in the field were not with another subject degree. It depended on where you were. I think the Huntington Library, they probably did require PhDs, or at least a second subject master's degree. And the Library of Congress required that only in some areas. If you wanted to do work in classification, subject cataloging it was called, at the Library of Congress, you did have to have a second master's degree, but otherwise, anybody with a librarian master's degree could work in any position at the Library of Congress.

So that was the way it was at the time, and even now, we don't have very many PhDs at Bancroft. You are one, and there are several in the Oral History Center, but I don't think—and of course Elaine Tennant is one, but I don't think I have another PhD—oh, maybe—

02-01:19:17
Meeker:

Marjorie Bryer.

02-01:19:19
Hanff:

Marjorie Bryer has a PhD?

02-01:19:21
Meeker:

Yeah, yeah.

02-01:19:21
Hanff:

I didn't know that.

02-01:19:22
Meeker:

Yeah, in history, from Minnesota, I believe.

02-01:19:24
Hanff:

Oh, okay, that's good to know. Is it Minnesota or Wisconsin?

02-01:19:27
Meeker:

I think it's Minnesota.

02-01:19:29
Hanff:

Okay. And then I'm thinking José Adrián Barragán Álvarez, also has a PhD, but that's new, relatively new.

02-01:19:41
Meeker:

So as this new coordinator of technical services position is created, in 1974, Irene Moran is your—

02-01:19:52
Hanff:

Counterpart.

02-01:19:53
Meeker:

—counterpart in public services and in manuscripts. Did Hart still have a deputy or assistant director?

02-01:20:00

Hanff:

No, no, there wasn't—how did this work? The coordinators replaced the assistant director. There had been *an* assistant director, and that was Bob Becker, and then when he was no longer going to be in that role, that's when the two coordinator positions were created.

02-01:20:17

Meeker:

You know, I'm wondering—I'm sure his roles changed and evolved over the years, but how would you describe the job description of the director of The Bancroft Library during Hart's years? What did it include, and what did it not include?

02-01:20:35

Hanff:

It included authority for all acquisition, and basically all management decisions relating to personnel, and all fundraising, all development, all public outreach. Hart did those things extremely well. He came from a very good situation in his San Francisco Bay Area upbringing and was extremely well-connected socially, so he moved in that circle of people who are largely donors to the community and was comfortable with it, so that was a role that was new with him.

With George Hammond my impression—I knew George Hammond slightly, but he didn't intrude in the management of Bancroft, and he stayed into his nineties in an office next to mine. You could say hello to him and talk to him, but I very seldom had occasion to go in and ask him a question about history of the library, because he simply wasn't there to intrude. He was doing his own research. If you asked a question he certainly answered it.

But Hart was well acquainted with the Friends of the Bancroft Library. The Friends of the Bancroft Library was formed in 1946, and Hart was almost certainly part of that group when they were doing the formation of it, and he knew all of the people and all of the players, so that worked very well for him. And he also knew people interested in rare books and special collections beyond the Western Americana, so he really could reach out and draw people toward us in a very constructive, healthy way.

02-01:22:13

Meeker:

Was he teaching at the same time?

02-01:22:16

Hanff:

That's a good question. I think that he probably was just at the point of retiring from teaching. Let's think of his—he was born in 1911, and he became the director of Bancroft Library in 1969, or the beginning of 1970, so he was very close to being at an age of retirement. He also had had the role of assistant chancellor at a certain point in his career, and he was very used to that level of interconnection with the campus, so Heyman was, in effect, Jim's boss. It wasn't the university librarian, it was Mike Heyman.

02-01:22:58

Meeker:

Well, I guess what I'm getting at is I'd love for your candid evaluation of the role of the director as a faculty member, particularly vis-à-vis the amount of time an active faculty member is able to devote to this position as well.

02-01:23:18

Hanff:

I think Bancroft Library benefits from having a full-time director. I think Hart figured that out. I think Charles Faulhaber figured that out. I think Elaine knows it, and she's a little bit younger than they were, so she's still teaching, but I think she's spending much more than half of her time as the director of Bancroft Library. It just seems to require much more time.

And then with Hart, and with Charles, the outreach and the fundraising were crucial things—and they have been for Elaine as well. Each of them approached it in a slightly different way. For Hart, it was the milieu he had grown up in and he knew all the people. With Charles, he had some very, very strong support from Mike Heyman and from Mac Laetsch and from Robert Middlekauff, and so he found a little coterie of people who were well connected in their own way, and suddenly he was given the mandate to come up with mega-millions to remodel the Bancroft Library for the seismic retrofit, so we've seen a variety of approaches to the fundraising for Bancroft over time.

But I think the thing that I have noticed that's very helpful is that a strong faculty member, within the Berkeley environment, becomes extremely helpful when there *are* questions of policy or philosophy of collecting or philosophies of service, because a main library, a Doe Library or a general library has a very different mandate than a special collections library such as Bancroft, and having a director who is faculty-oriented, focusing really on the higher levels of academic research, is a benefit to us because we're not always fully understood, I think, by the more general library operations.

02-01:25:08

Meeker:

Can you give me some examples, or an example of why you think that's true?

02-01:25:13

Hanff:

About which?

02-01:25:14

Meeker:

What you just said about the unique role that a faculty member would play in a leadership position here in relation to collections, that would be particularly relevant to a higher-level research agenda, if that's what I heard you saying correctly.

02-01:25:34

Hanff:

The words you say sound consistent with what I think. Let me think if I can come up with—they're almost hypothetical things because a lot of this was invisible. But let's just take the D.H. Lawrence question. In that case, I don't know what Mark Schorer's role actually was. I can tell you that the person

who negotiated the purchase was Dorothy Keller, who was the assistant university librarian working with Donald Coney, and I can tell from reading through the archive that she did all of the high-end acquisition for the main library. In that case, I think that Coney was viewed as faculty and she was his right hand—and she was a very strong negotiator—so she was quite capable of doing that. At Bancroft we had a different situation. We had Hammond as the director, from the Department of History, and Coney had not liked special collections. He thought they were places of special privilege and not worth having, apparently. This is why I said I could go talk to Hammond.

Lawrence Clark Powell, who had studied at Berkeley, was hired at UCLA to become the first major university librarian, to help build the collections, and then Bob [Robert G.] Vosper succeeded him and they worked closely together to create a major research library in a very short number of decades, so they had an approach which was almost anti-Berkeley. Powell had been at Berkeley; he saw what Berkeley didn't do so well. He thought he could do it better, and I think in some ways he was successful in that. They really built the UCLA research library very, very quickly. The thing that came up was an article, because Lawrence Clark Powell was a voracious writer, and he just wrote and wrote, and I was reading this essay by him. He's the one who'd let me into library school and I knew him slightly socially, and I was interested. He said, "At some point Berkeley is going to have to atone for what happened with the Thomas W. Streeter collection." And I said to Jim Hart, "What is that?" "Ask George Hammond." And I did.

What I was told—this is, again, not verified in any independent way. Hammond was at the American History Association conference and so was Coney. Coney, for whatever reason, was talking to the crowd and he had a book in his hand and he threw it at the wall and said, "I won't have it in my library at Berkeley a book I can't do that to." And Thomas W. Streeter, who was the major collector of Americana at the time was in the audience, and he changed his will, which had left his collection to Bancroft, and decided it would be sold at auction instead. He left a bequest to Bancroft of \$50,000, which would have bought a lot of material, and Coney sequestered the money so we couldn't spend it. And so there is a case where you've got a tension between the university librarian and a faculty director, which didn't work out so well.

But when you had somebody like Jim Hart, who was so effective at negotiating at very high academic and administration levels, you had a kind of a buffer, a protector. And that was true with Charles and it was true of Elaine. Otherwise, especially at Berkeley, there's a sense, in the library community, that there has been a long friction between faculty and the library. I've heard it said—I've not overtly experienced it except in little edgy ways that I mentioned. That business of my encounter with Mark Schorer was, I guess, a case of that sort. On the other hand, this collection of Hungarian books, that we have in this room, came in from George Starr, who is a professor of the

English Department and a major book collector and deeply devoted to us. So you have different kinds of faculty interactions that way, but the politics at Berkeley for library versus faculty are a little different. UCLA is a little bit more integrated in that regard. So I think for Bancroft it has been particularly helpful to have a stellar faculty director running Bancroft.

02-01:30:01

Meeker:

You had mentioned Powell's different approach—what was his approach at UCLA and how did it differ from the approach at Berkeley?

02-01:30:12

Hanff:

Well, his different approach there was partly fortuitous. He had Robert Vosper, who was a brilliant librarian. And they had the chancellor, who was extremely well connected with the Ahmanson Foundation and became its director—and was keen on books as well. So the three of them together worked closely and found the money and resources to build up that collection really, really rapidly. They did it very publicly. They were very good about promoting what they were up to and recording all of the great successes. It was almost like Hollywood! [laughing] And they were very good at that. But then when Larry Powell set up the library school down there—again, he had come to the library school at Berkeley—he decided that he wanted his to be an academic library school, so he picked, out of the nation, the most outstanding specialists to become his faculty. I think I mentioned Seymour Lubetzky, the primary North American theoretician of cataloging principles. Larry Powell did the same thing with children's literature, he did the same thing with reference training. It was interesting to see, that faculty. They were amazing individuals, strong personalities, and very, very intelligent and articulate. So it was just a different approach. At Berkeley, things were still based on earlier traditions of librarianship, that were probably a little bit quieter, a little bit less academically rigorous and demanding.

02-01:31:49

Meeker:

I want to go to some points on your CV that you covered in your description of your role as coordinator of technical services. You describe that role as liaison to the general library, to the manager's group, to the cabinet, to the department heads, to technical services, collection development, et cetera. What did it mean to be liaison with these different groups from your home location in the Bancroft?

02-01:32:26

Hanff:

You're asking that question in an interesting way. I guess what it really meant is that I was present for all of the significant discussions that were going on, and my voice was listened to, and I was hearing what the issues were. And that had not been a role the Bancroft had had before. I alluded to the challenge that Hammond was having with Donald Coney, the tension between The Bancroft Library as a bastion of the History Department, and Coney's own prejudice against special collections anyway. It was his—he didn't allow a rare book department until 1954, and it was faculty pressure on *him* that

finally formed that department. But suddenly, with the new university librarians expecting a little bit more from Bancroft, and I being relatively new and not hidebound by a longstanding role within Bancroft, I was in a position to move around a bit and participate in lots of deliberative meetings and discussions, and know people, and it worked for me. Maybe it's my personality, I don't know. But I enjoyed that aspect of the interaction with the main library, and participated in things on their side where they were focusing on how we do collection development at Berkeley in general, and how Bancroft is part of this larger approach to building strong research collections, things like that. I was pretty good about that.

02-01:33:56

Meeker:

Did you develop a pretty clear sense of what it meant to represent Bancroft Library's best interests at these kinds of gatherings?

02-01:34:07

Hanff:

I think the best thing to say is that one doesn't try to represent Bancroft's best interests, one tries to be there to say Bancroft is part of this interest and we're of a larger whole. That is a very hard thing, it's true all through the world of special collections, especially if they're in large institutions, because of the way we get our funding for buying rare books and manuscripts, which are expensive things. There's a sense that we have enormous privilege, and we do. We're very fortunate in the way that works. If, on the other hand, we start forgetting that we are part of the whole ourselves, we've isolated ourselves from being part of the main. And then, at the same time, if you can make clear to the people who are working in the other places, outside of Bancroft, how your collection integrates with what they're doing too, it does help create a better sense of the whole. But it has been un-uniform over the years that I've been here.

Sheila [T.] Dowd was, in my mind, the outstanding associate university librarian for collections that we have had in all my time here. Chuck [Charles D.] Eckman, more recently, was also very fine in that way. And of course I say that in part because in both cases they did understand that the resources of The Bancroft Library were a crucial part of the great strengths of the Berkeley library, and other librarians don't seem to focus on the collections in quite that way, and so our peculiar needs and goals and aspirations don't always seem to be mainstream to them.

02-01:35:42

Meeker:

Would you define that role, the associate university librarian for collections? What kind of work is within their purview?

02-01:35:50

Hanff:

Sheila Dowd was responsible for all of the library selectors. They all reported to her. She had to have an overview of the entire breadth of the huge research collections at Berkeley. She needed to know what area is weak because it's been neglected for a while. She had to work with individual selectors to add

strength to things that needed to be strengthened, and I think that she had a remarkable knowledge of the whole of the collection.

02-01:36:21

Meeker:

And so would that have been the UL, or the administrative role that you would have engaged with most, the library administrator who you would have engaged with most?

02-01:36:33

Hanff:

I certainly spent a lot of time with her. We were on two projects together that were coordinated through the Association of Research Libraries, and the bigger of those, the more complex, was called the Collection Analysis Project. We basically surveyed the way Berkeley builds its collections, or was building its collections in that era, and this was done through a very well-coordinated program out of the Association of Research Libraries, with a group of ARL staff members who were specialists in group management. I don't know what else to call it. We did other things—management studies was another thing they specialized in and Berkeley library went through a training program on that which I was also a part of.

02-01:37:22

Meeker:

Was it like McKinsey or something, like a consulting agency that you would work with?

02-01:37:25

Hanff:

It was like that, only they were workshops that went on for months sometimes. Some of them were really just long week encounter groups, in effect, trying to—because there was an overt approach being fostered at that point, both at ARL and at Berkeley, that we wanted the library to be managed collegially rather than hierarchically, which had been the earlier model, and that required a considerable amount of new thinking and discussion and adjustment of expectation and assignment, and I was there doing that kind of thing.

Jim Hart, of course, had come in in the hierarchical tradition, but he was tolerant of this sort of thing, partly because I don't think he thought it mattered that much. [laughing] I know that this happened very early. After Skipper left, we had a new university librarian for a time [1972-1978] named Richard [M.] Dougherty, and I think I gave you a set of dates. I have no dates connected to these. I remember personalities and situations better than that. But Dougherty came in, and Dougherty was already a very dynamic university librarian on the rise, and he was very active in the American Library Association and thought very highly of it, and he thought it was a remarkably good way of training librarians to understand values that were national in scope, if not international. One day Hart came to me, very upset. Dougherty had appointed me as the local arrangements chairman for the rare book and manuscripts conference that would take place the next summer.

02-01:39:14

Meeker: Appointed you? Yeah.

02-01:39:16

Hanff: He formally appointed me, and I didn't know it and Hart didn't like it. Nobody in Bancroft belonged to professional organizations at that point; it wasn't done.

02-01:39:27

Meeker: Why not?

02-01:39:28

Hanff: We knew better than anybody else how to run Bancroft Library. It was an attitude, the Bancroft Way. We called it that: The Bancroft Way.

And I had this obligation. I had this assignment, and Hart was basically commiserating with me on the one point, at the same time that I knew he was quite ticked off. So I had this remarkable opportunity, and the Association of College and Research Libraries was funded and managed in a different way at that point, and so I was flown to Chicago three times to plan this San Francisco meeting, and I was put up in a very good hotel. I wasn't used to traveling this way. This is not the Berkeley way—not the Bancroft way either. And the people I was working with were really, really bright leaders. Beverly [P.] Lynch, who was the executive secretary, then called, of the Association of College and Research Libraries, and she had Hendrik Edelman working as the program chairman for that conference, that would be in 1975. And it was fun for me to begin working with really, really bright, articulate, thinking librarians. Because one of the things in libraries—there's so much routine that you can get stultified. And so I found this very rewarding.

We had a great conference, and I just continued being active in that organization. Eventually, I became the chair of the rare book and manuscript section for the time that that took, so I actually did a little bit of political work. It was such a shock at Bancroft that—Hart always tolerated it. Once it started, I continued to do it, but I know that early on, because I was away a fair amount of time going to professional meetings, Irene Moran took me aside and said, “You know, it's really hard on the rest of us when you're gone so much. I know you're doing it for professional advancement.” I said, “Actually, I'm doing it not just for professional advancement, because I think it's worth doing.” And she started doing it too, and she was very good at it. And so there was a shift of attitude and expectation, and we've been very active in the Society of American Archivists, the California Society of Archivists, and the American Library Association ever since. And some of the work we've done has actually had national repercussions, if not international, because we're now much more involved with developing the thinking about how we go about our work.

02-01:42:00

Meeker:

You had mentioned, in passing, a desire to move toward a more collegial, less hierarchical arrangement in the library overall. When did that happen?

02-01:42:10

Hanff:

I guess that happened in the late seventies.

02-01:42:14

Meeker:

The late seventies?

02-01:42:15

Hanff:

Hart was here. Maybe it was a little later—it might have been the eighties.

02-01:42:25

Meeker:

What was driving that?

02-01:42:28

Hanff:

I suppose it was a reflection of major industrial changes of how to do management more effectively. I don't know. And I know from recent periods of time that there are new cycles in management theory, and so I suppose to some extent it's related to management theory. I just happened to get caught up in the collegial management end of that.

02-01:42:51

Meeker:

Were any substantive changes achieved during this period of time to get you in that direction?

02-01:42:59

Hanff:

Well a side effect of it was indeed the reorganization of Bancroft Library between 1990 and 1995. That was a major adjustment, and so we did away with an old structure that we'd had that was hierarchical, but in little silos, and we began integrating it this way, so I guess you could say that was a collegial approach.

Interview 3: February 15, 2017

03-00:00:16

Meeker:

Today is February 15, 2017. This is Martin Meeker interviewing Peter Hanff for The Bancroft Library oral history. We are here in the offices of The Bancroft Library. This is interview session number three. We have covered a great deal of ground in the first couple of sessions, and we will continue today discussing the history of The Bancroft Library and your role in the administration of Bancroft Library. I want to start out today talking about the development portion, endowments, and the Friends Council. Given that we have a Friends Council luncheon tomorrow, I figured it would be appropriate to talk a bit about the history of the Friends Council and their role in supporting the work that The Bancroft Library does. I think that we've touched on it a little bit, but maybe you could provide a thumbnail history, from your understanding, of the role of the Friends Council at The Bancroft Library—why don't we just start there?

03-00:01:31

Hanff:

All right. A lot of this is just my impressions from things I heard, because initially the staff had almost nothing to do with the Friends, except to know who they were when we had annual meetings, or if some of them had a study carrel in Bancroft, we might know it for that reason. But the group was formed in 1946, as I understand it, by George P. Hammond, who was then director of The Bancroft Library and a professor from the Berkeley History Department. There were several interested parties who came together to help form it. One of them was Michael Harrison, who had been with the National Park Service and was a major collector of Californiana and Western Americana, up near Sacramento. Then, I believe that Henry Raup Wagner was one of the founding members, but this is something we would want to verify. There was somebody named Major O. Cort Majors, I think, or maybe it was just O. Cort Majors. I don't know who that was; I never met him, but he was apparently also a founder.

Whether the organization was incorporated at the very beginning, I'm not sure. Again, that might be something worth checking, but they believed that this library needed significant support from the private sector. Certainly, there was very little money for developing special collections resources at Berkeley. And I think the first major campaign they did was not really until 1962-'63, but we'll get to that in a minute, because what they *did* start doing was produce a newsletter starting in 1950 to mark the movement of The Bancroft Library into the new Library Annex Building. I think the move might actually have happened in 1949. The building was certainly completed in '49. I've looked at some of the old issues of *Bancroftiana*, as you have, and there's interesting information there about what was happening and what it signified to the Western American collection that Bancroft represented then.

The big campaign I alluded to was the effort to purchase from Robert [B.] Honeyman, [Jr.] a very sizable collection of original drawings, paintings, lithographs, other kinds of prints. And that was all focused, I believe, on California. We could construe it as art, but it was really thought of as documentary image, and it was a very large purchase for the small organization. I believe there was assistance for that from—the support of the chancellor and possibly the regents as well, so the collection seems to have been acquired in 1963, judging from its call number anyway. It became a core piece of The Bancroft Library. It fitted in very well with things that were already in Bancroft, because a library like ours invariably ends up with things coming in with manuscript collections or other gifts, so there were undoubtedly a number of drawings and paintings, probably in the collection. More likely, there were even more photographs at that point. The Honeyman Collection, so far as I know, didn't really include photographs, but the collection came in and then became a focal point for future support of the library.

03-00:05:01

Meeker:

So tell me more about the Friends Council and how it grows into its role of supporting acquisitions in particular.

03-00:05:12

Hanff:

The Friends group initially was primarily a Western Americana boosting group. They seemed to have always had a function as advisory to the director of The Bancroft Library, and I suppose technically that's still much the way it is. The group has grown in size, in my memory. I don't really know too much about what it was like when Jim Hart was directing, but with his death in 1990 I then became interim director, then briefly acting director, so I suddenly had a role because the rules of the university require that the director serve as an ex-officio member of the Council of the Friends, the ruling body of the Friends of The Bancroft Library.

03-00:05:56

Meeker:

So you, until you were acting director, you didn't have much interaction with the Friends?

03-00:06:02

Hanff:

None at all, literally.

03-00:06:03

Meeker:

It's interesting, and I don't know if you have anything to comment on about this, but one goes back and looks at the members of the council, those who are listed in the *Bancroftiana* newsletter, and these are some pretty important names—Bechtel and Heller and Gerstley, and other first families of the West Coast, and San Francisco in particular. Do you have any sense about how it was that those types of people were brought in to the inner circle of The Bancroft Library, and the role that they might have played, as far as you have heard, perhaps even secondhand?

03-00:06:48

Hanff:

The primary role of several of the people you mentioned—I know the Gerstley family, but I don't know what role Gerstley had with the council. The Hellers—particularly Elinor [R.] Heller—were big supporters of Bancroft and not only donated funds but also donated gifts in kind, which were very important gifts to Bancroft, on an ongoing basis. Another major figure in the background—I believe she was on the Council of the Friends—was Helen Weber [Kennedy], who was the daughter of the Weber family that owned the ranchlands that formed Stockton, and she was a very close friend, socially as well, of George Hammond. So far as I know, I never actually met her. The first of the family that I got to know was her daughter, Helen Kennedy Cahill, so Helen Weber was Helen Weber Kennedy. And Peggy Cahill was married to an entrepreneurial developer, John Cahill, a construction figure, very prominent in Northern California. She's the one that became the matriarch among the family that survived her mother, and she was the one I came to know socially over a period of years. A wonderful, generous individual who made sure that the papers of the family were donated to The Bancroft Library, and from time to time new increments of family records would come to us. As recently as her recent death, I was in the apartment that she had in San Rafael helping her daughter go through the last of the papers, and found additional things that came into The Bancroft Library, so that's a multi-generational family connection that has been very delightful to observe.

03-00:08:42

Meeker:

Did it seem to you that a lot of people who are stalwart members of the Friends Council, before your time as acting director, or since that time, had a long personal familial engagement with the kind of materials that are held in The Bancroft Library?

03-00:09:00

Hanff:

Certainly several of them did. I did get to know Kenneth [K.] Bechtel, and I think that's the Bechtel you were referring to.

03-00:09:05

Meeker:

I think so.

03-00:09:07

Hanff:

Because he was a social connection of Jim Hart's and was quite a significant collector of rare books, modern fine printing. And I was the person who went over to his offices, which is where he kept the rare books, and looked through things and selected items that should come back to The Bancroft Library.

03-00:09:29

Meeker:

Well, you know, we are jumping around on the timeline, but why don't you tell me about once you became acting director, the role that—how you engaged with the Friends Council and how you learned about the work that they did.

03-00:09:50

Hanff:

The person who was the chair of the Council of the Friends when Jim Hart died was Jack Rosston, who was, if you know—I think you probably were involved with his interviews—just a remarkable supporter of Berkeley in a large-scale way and Bancroft Library in particular, and he was the chair of the Friends of The Bancroft Library. Something that interested me in my work with him was that he sought *my* permission to solicit gifts from each of the council members. It hadn't been done before. Many organizations that have support groups expect their council members to be significant donors upfront, and this was the first effort of its kind—and it was fine with me if he wanted to try to do that. He phrased it very professionally, so that if they weren't interested in donating directly, they might perhaps find friends or others who would support them at the same level that they might otherwise have given themselves. So he did all of that, and he sought my opinion about it, which was an interesting thing to experience.

We also had, in the background—and whether he was ever actually on the council I don't know, but now I'm going to block a name—hold on a second—Willis [S.] Slusser. Bill Slusser was a name I knew quite well, because Jim Hart talked about him frequently. Almost certainly, I had met him a time or two, because he was in the library fairly often. But he was very generous, and while I was the acting director he suddenly sent me a gift of \$100,000. I realized that he was waiting to see what I was going to do with it. So I decided to set it up as a director's discretionary fund, and when I told him I had done that, he beamed with delight. There had not really been, for Jim Hart, a fund like that, and I was brand new in the role and felt I needed some money at my discretion to be able to do things. In fact, I was very frugal, so the money probably stayed largely intact during the time that I was filling in as interim and then acting director. But I was learning a little bit about donor relations through that, where not really quite focused on the council, but Bill Slusser was almost certainly at some point on the council with Jim Hart.

03-00:12:11

Meeker:

Was this sent over as an endowment or just as an account?

03-00:12:13

Hanff:

It was an outright gift. It was not an endowment.

03-00:12:17

Meeker:

Can you describe for me the roles that the Friends Council were expected to play? You had mentioned that Rosston had asked permission from you in order to ask for gifts from the council, thereby implementing a give-or-get arrangement. But prior to that, what was the motivation, do you suppose, for someone to be on the Friends Council?

03-00:12:52

Hanff:

A large amount of it was social. I think everybody on the council in the earlier years, everybody was deeply devoted to California history. Many of them

represented old California families as well, and that was the focus—which is I think why, with the merger of the Rare Book Collection, there was some concern that it might dilute the sharp focus on Western Americana. But the folks also had always known Jim Hart. During his long years as a professor of English he was associated with The Bancroft Library, and so socially he knew a lot of the Friends anyway, and I think he probably served on the Council of the Friends. Something I've never actually learned is whether Hart was on the council himself before he was director, but I just assume that he probably was from time to time.

03-00:13:47

Meeker:

So there wasn't necessarily an expectation, in the early years, that council membership would have the requirement that council members make regular donations to the library?

03-00:13:59

Hanff:

Seemingly, that was the way it was, otherwise Jack Rosston wouldn't have felt the need to ask permission to try it. He admitted that it was a new approach.

03-00:14:10

Meeker:

You've mentioned to me before that one of the things that Hart accomplished was actually getting several endowments set up during the course of his tenure.

03-00:14:18

Hanff:

Right, his own words to me—

03-00:14:20

Meeker:

Can you describe for me the—?

03-00:14:22

Hanff:

Yeah, his own words to me, quite late in his life when he was quite ill—it was an assessment that he had done. He actually pulled the paperwork together and he showed me bottom-line numbers. I didn't see the actual gifts listed as such. But he said that when he started, the endowment was \$125,000, and now that it was toward the end of his time it was \$8 million, which was a very substantial accomplishment of his twenty years in office.

03-00:14:49

Meeker:

You know, was your relationship with him such that he was interested in passing down his knowledge in how he, for instance, managed to increase the endowments of the library so substantially, with the idea that you—or that there would be some continuity in this knowledge at the Bancroft?

03-00:15:11

Hanff:

I don't have the feeling that he was planning it that way. I know his last words to me were, "I don't know what your role will be in Bancroft after I'm gone, but I think it will be an important one." That was as far as he defined it. It really—as long as he was here, all development and direction came from him,

and he worked pretty close to his vest with all of that. So that I would—I got a letter, probably a year after he died from Jane and Marshall Steel, the Steel Company, Marshall Steel was a major dry-cleaning chain in the East Bay, and it basically was a letter that said, “Dear Sir or Madam, is anyone left at The Bancroft Library?” And then it went on to provide a history of their giving to Jim Hart in all of the years that he’d been associated with them, and their first gift was a gift of \$25 from the Marshall Steel Foundation, and it was named for Marshall Steel’s father, so it was the Marshall Steel, Sr. Foundation. Jim Hart’s gracious response, thanking them for their generosity and explaining that support of that sort allowed The Bancroft Library to develop collections and programs for which there wasn’t state money, meant something to them, and as they could, as the years passed, they increased their giving.

At the time they were writing to me, their most recent gift, which was about eighteen months earlier, was the largest they had given; a check for \$100,000. Then they went on to talk about the arrangement or agreement they had with Hart that their gifts would not be subject to gift taxes by the university. And that had worked—for quite a few years we could get waivers for those gifts under certain circumstances, but it’s not something, anything I knew about at all. And so I’m learning it from the donor, and I had to do some quick thinking, because I could see, once I investigated the gift, that that gift had indeed been taxed by the campus in the way that it was taxing all large gifts, and that Hart had not been able to stop it and probably was not well enough to try at the time. And so rather than answer that detail, I simply looked to see what we had been doing with Marshall Steel gifts and could give them a report, very similar to those that Jim Hart did, because basically every year he wrote them a list of things that we had acquired or had supported with their money, and there was so much of it that I was able to give a very positive report.

And then, it seemed to me it would be judicious to meet them, so since I ran a meeting at Asilomar every summer, and they lived in Pebble Beach right next door, I proposed that we get together. The first two or three years after I had started corresponding with them they were summering every year in Oregon at their ranch, but there was a year when they invited me to come to lunch when I was at Asilomar. And the lunch was lovely; I was meeting them for the first time. And at the end of lunch Jane Steel pulled out a handwritten list of twenty-six questions to hand to me, and I said to myself, “Oh, I guess I’m working for my lunch.” I looked at them, and they were questions about how the university manages gifts, what kinds of return it gets on them, and how it handles distributions, and things of that sort. Some of these things I knew, but some of them I didn’t know. They were technical, and so I was honest and I told them—“I can answer questions three, four, seven, and nine, but I’m going to have to get some help from the Development Office to answer the more technical questions,” and that was fine with them.

I came back to campus with the list, called Brad [B. Bradley] Barber up. Brad Barber actually is on the Council of the Friends as you and I are speaking, but was then an officer of the campus Development Office. As I recall the conversation he said, “Well, not all of this information is usually divulged, however, I can tell, with these donors and the way the questions are written, that I’m going to have to give you a full answer,” and he did do that. It was written down, and I forwarded that to them and heard nothing for a couple of months. And then a letter came back, “We were very grateful for the full information you provided. We took it to court with us and used it to help us sue the San Francisco Foundation to dissolve the Marshall Steel Foundation, which they had been managing, from our perspective, very badly. And we are now distributing the assets to the five beneficiaries, so you will shortly have a check for \$2 million. And that was my first seven-figure gift. [laughter]

03-00:20:10

Meeker:

Interesting. I assume that that’s not a typical story of how major gifts came in during your tenure.

03-00:20:18

Hanff:

[laughing] Not in my experience, because that was quite an unusual approach. It is true though, that at that same interval of time I had another opportunity. I was working with Jean Stone—I have these two JS’s in my life at that point—Jean Stone was the widow of Irving Stone, and while I had seen the Stones working at Bancroft in earlier years—they researched four different books at Bancroft—I hadn’t actually gotten to know her. But she was a rather demanding patron, and in earlier years she and her husband had been given a special desk within the Manuscripts Division so that they didn’t have to request material in the way that regular readers do. But at this point, Bonnie Hardwick was the head of the Manuscripts Division, and she set them up in the reading room like anybody else. And so they had to request the material, and I got to know them over the counter, so to speak.

But I listened closely enough to Jean to feel that this is a person who is full of stories that were quite interesting to me. And by this point Irving had died, so she was doing a project for the Alumni Association, a revision of a book that they had done together years before that was called, *Let There Be Light*, [*There Was Light: Autobiography of a University*], which I believe is an anthology of essays by prominent UC Berkeley alumni, which of course Irving Stone was one of as well. And so she was doing an updated version of that, and I listened carefully to the stories, because she wanted us to understand what her life with Irving was like and what the mechanisms they had developed were for producing those remarkable historical novels that were so incredibly popular, from *Lust for Life*, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*—onward and onward.

So as I was getting to know her that way, I was approached by somebody in University Relations saying that she has capacity—do you want to ask her for

a gift for the Bancroft? And I knew independently that she was thought of as a very challenging donor. She had a short fuse and would cancel gifts. That was the reputation. And it had happened repeatedly at UCLA, and that's how I happened to know, because I had friends at UCLA who talked about it. So I said, "I have no problem asking. I don't have any hope that I will be more successful than the people at UCLA." But in fact, I was able to maintain a relationship—it had ups and downs.

There was one real crisis that occurred, when she wrote me a very, very angry letter. She had received a letter from the chancellor, Chang-Lin Tien, that she interpreted to suggest that I had clearly revealed to him things that she had told me in confidence. Since I had never talked to him at all, I didn't know what that was about, so I called with some concern to his office, and within forty-five minutes they brought me the only two communications he had ever sent to her, and I read them and realized that whoever had drafted his thank you for a second installment of her pledge, had written it in such a way that it sounded like he was thanking her for a commitment to a new gift, and I knew then that I had to call her up. So I telephoned her and explained to her that it was an awkwardness of writing, and cleared up the misunderstanding with her. So the gift was not canceled; it was resumed and we continued that relationship. She actually agreed to give us a million dollars, and part of the money would be used to create our very first high-end seminar room, which still exists in the new remodeled Bancroft. It was good enough to survive the remodeling, and the rest of it was an endowment that I was able to define quite generally. It supports biography and history programs at The Bancroft Library, so it can be used both for acquisitions and for support of staff.

03-00:24:28
Meeker:

Considering the Stone donation, considering the Marshall Steel donation—these are individual cases. Through the course of working with these individual donors, did you develop what might be termed a philosophy of development or a general approach that you would use in furthering the development goals of The Bancroft Library?

03-00:24:56
Hanff:

In a way I did. It was more by osmosis and observation. I certainly knew what Jim Hart's style was like, so that was definitely strongly influential on me.

03-00:25:06
Meeker:

Can you describe that style?

03-00:25:07
Hanff:

Yes. He was extremely gregarious. He loved talking to people to learn about them and to learn what they were interested in. He loved presenting to them things at Bancroft that coincided with their interests. It's a very natural way of doing development for this kind of an operation, and it was very genteel and very social. It wasn't an organized ask, in the sense that a development office might normally do. Definitely, when I went to Jean Stone I was there with

Dan Mote, who was the vice chancellor for University Relations, and we went together as a team, which was a good—I wouldn't have had the nerve, I think, to approach her about giving us a million dollars in that way. But we had written up our proposal, and she took it, set it aside and read it later, and then agreed that this met her expectations and she was able to do it. So that was a kind of formal University Relations approach. But Jim Hart's approach seemed to me to be much more social than that, and people would ask, "What can we do to help?" And then he would identify what it might be and created a mesh of interest in that way. So that influenced my thinking about it.

The other thing I noticed is that at the time Jim died, it seemed to me, at least, that the Development Office style at Berkeley was extremely hierarchical, and in his own way Jim Hart was hierarchical. He did all the development himself. It wasn't shared; it wasn't delegated. Yes, he would ask a specialist on the staff to talk with somebody—I certainly went out into the field for him on several quests I had mentioned earlier, going to see Ken Bechtel's collection.

One of my very earliest assignments after I got here was to go visit Martin Mitau, who was a major collector in Woodside who had been very active in the Bay Area bibliophilic circles, and so I went down. Some of this, I think, is because Hart knew what I was like and picked people that I would socialize readily with. The Mitau thing was very poignant. I didn't have any preparation. I didn't know him from the Book Club of California, because by the time I was there he had been ill for quite a while, and apparently in earlier years he was a very rotund, heavy man, and when I met him he was a very slender, thin little man. The very first thing he did when I got to their big house was to ask me to come back to his bedroom, and he actually walked us into the bathroom and shut the door so he could talk to me privately, so that his wife Marjorie would not hear. And he wanted to explain to me that he had terminal stomach cancer and there was nothing to be done about it. So my role was to help with his wife and him, to just be there, to be pleasant, have lunch with them, and then to go through his library and flag books that Bancroft would like. And I think I only saw him twice before he died, so that was an unusual role, but it was a role that I think Jim Hart suspected I could handle comfortably, and it seemed to work.

03-00:28:21
Meeker:

But then as far as this relating to the development of your own approach to development work for the Bancroft.

03-00:28:28
Hanff:

Right. That certainly reinforced the idea that you want to be honest and you want to understand the people you're talking with, what their interests are, and then perhaps relate those interests to things that are of value to The Bancroft Library.

03-00:28:46

Meeker:

It's interesting, because development work has become its own profession. It has become almost a science now. There are multiple software tools that are used, there's a theory about development, and there's a history about how it has changed and how development officers are expected to respond more directly to donor ideas for how the money should be spent, and so forth. Did you plug into any of that? Or was it more in response to situations that presented themselves?

03-00:29:32

Hanff:

I was never given much training. I have attended a few seminars that were put together by University Relations, and I have friends at other campuses of UC and at other institutions who are more formally identified as development officers. One, in particular I attended in San Diego, I wasn't expecting to be there at all. I was meeting a friend from Brown University who handled the directorship of John Hay Library there, which is comparable to The Bancroft Library, so he and I were planning to do a trip into Tijuana as tourists. So I went down, intentionally arriving at the hotel in La Jolla at two in the afternoon, to avoid seeing the crowd. But in fact, they had a delayed meeting and they didn't break for lunch until I arrived. So everybody—and I knew a lot of the people, so I instantly got swept into the event with them and had to go to lunch with them. I guess maybe this will reveal a little bit about the way I do my development work at least. I was there with this crowd of people, some of them were young and green, just learning how to do development through this organization, but others were seasoned development specialists, or librarians who did development just as an ancillary part of their responsibility.

We were in a very elegant, large tenth-story condominium in La Jolla, which apparently only has one ten-story condominium building. That was the only one that was ever allowed to be built, and the hostess was there as the wife of a specialist in Texas, an oil man, whose real charity was Texas A&M, but she was interested in UC San Diego, and she was a Californian. The thing that amazed me was that the young ones, in particular, were overawed by the opulence of this large condo. It was lovely. It was a ten-story condo overlooking the Pacific Ocean, so of course it's very handsome. It was also clearly professionally decorated, and I understood that they used it two weeks out of the year. So it was a nice experience to be exposed to it, and she told them that the only thing that they had to do to pay for their lunch was to listen to her philosophy of development, and I sat there through that and had lunch with them.

But then that part was over and they were having a meeting, so I excused myself and I walked around with her, and she, at my request, showed me all the features of this large condo, which was actually two adjacent apartments that had been merged together. And I said I would be interested in looking at the apartment. And then because I was with her I said, "Was it really

challenging to accomplish this merger of two physical apartments?” And she said, “Oh, it was hell,” and then she explained that the building had been built with moderate income expectations, and suddenly she and her husband were creating a super-luxury apartment, which was going to have an impact on taxes for the rest of the people in the building. And so they made it very difficult for them. They had to install an external service elevator, outside of the building, to carry things up to the tenth story, the top floor, and they could only work between eight and five. And so it was a project that took a lot longer and a lot more investment. And that’s the kind of thing—that actually was a development opportunity, not for us, but it actually was helpful to San Diego, as it turned out. [laughing] But it was the kind of thing that is easy for me to do, relatively. I’m so interested in learning how people think about things and what their values are, that it works.

So back to Bancroft—I was developing a real experience in understanding that you didn’t have to be the director of Bancroft Library to have an impact on potential gifts. And certainly, I was having an influence and in some ways I was the acting director, but I really never thought of myself as the director, and I found that there are enough of us within Bancroft—you’re one of them—who’s sufficiently specialized in an area of the operation, that if you have the right audience, and they happen to be donor types, you have a great deal of influence on them.

And in those days, during that interim period, I was approached—in fact, this is an oral history-related thing. I’ve probably told you it before, that we did an oral history with Rhoda Goldman, who was one of the Haas family and married to Richard Goldman, for whom we had done a full-dress formal oral history. She was included in something called a series on the grant builders of San Francisco, if I remember the title right. We could check that, to be more accurate. And it was a very short interview. It was funded at a very modest amount and there wasn’t a lot of time to develop good questions and extend the interview out, and she wasn’t pleased with the result and complained in a letter. I had to respond to the letter, but it had a little bit of extra weight because she also sent a carbon to the chancellor, so I really had to deal with it in a more hurried way than I might have done.

So I didn’t know what to do about it, except to talk to the interviewer and to Willa Baum, who was the head of the oral history program at the time. And then I read the interview very carefully, and from ideas I got from reading the interview and Rhoda Goldman’s own letter, I wrote her a letter to make a counterproposal, which would have resulted in a full-dress oral history. Whatever I said piqued her curiosity enough so that she wanted to meet me, and so she set up an expectation that we would meet. But then, because of the hierarchy of the way development was handled in the office on campus, I had to get permission to talk to her. Fortunately, the person I spoke with was excited that I had the opportunity and said, “You’re going to love her. She’s wonderful to talk with and this is a great opportunity for you.” So it ended up

being a very cordial meeting, with a certain amount of tension behind it. Sadly, she didn't survive very long. She agreed that they would do an oral history with us, full dress, that her children would pay for it as their fiftieth wedding anniversary present, and she died two weeks later. So it was a year later that I finally managed to talk with Richard Goldman, at his invitation. And again, I had to get permission to do it, and then he decided to fund a memorial oral history [*Rhoda Goldman: A Retrospective Memoir*]. Have we already done this one before?

03-00:36:34

Meeker: I don't think so.

03-00:36:35

Hanff: I know I've talked to you about it before.

03-00:36:36

Meeker: Yeah, we've talked about it I think at the pre-interview. I'm curious about what you keep referring to as the hierarchical nature of development work at the university. Can you define that for me?

03-00:36:48

Hanff: At the time, the way I understood it when I became the acting director, that it was somebody at the top who was the only person who did the ask, and the only person who really dealt with the donors. In order to talk to a donor you had to get clearance from the Development Office to do it. Certainly, that was true with the Haases and the Goldmans. It became more relaxed, just about that time, and it was understood better, I think, in the campus Development Office and certainly within Bancroft, that each one of us is a specialist in a particular area and might be just the right person to talk to just the right donor. Yes, it's coordinated through a central process and still, in the olden days, it was only the heads of things that did the discussions with donors. That certainly was the Hart style. It was Hart who talked to the Haases and the Hellers, and so forth.

03-00:37:47

Meeker: I know that in previous conversations you had mentioned to me that the Library Development Office is a younger operation than the Friends Council. Were you aware of the Library Development Office coming online? What was the relationship between the Friends Council and the Library Development Office?

03-00:38:12

Hanff: Yes, I'm certainly aware of it, because Jim Hart was concerned. We had been the only operation on the campus, for a library, that was doing development, in the sense that the Friends of The Bancroft Library could be construed as a development adjunct to The Bancroft Library. Hart maintained considerable confidentiality of our donor list, because they were people primarily of his own social circle that he knew individually, and we didn't share information. And that remained true through his life, and largely beyond that, when I was

doing it, because I basically followed the Hart model. It was the way it was. Plus, it was pretty much pre-computer, so there wasn't a lot of database sharing that you could do.

The first development person I remember, and I'm not sure if she was actually the first one in the position, was Mary Jane Perna, who worked with Joe [Joseph A.] Rosenthal. She's a brilliant writer—she actually bloomed and blossomed into a very good development person, and after she left the library I think she was with the College of Letters and Science. Again, we could verify what her career track was, but she remained very friendly to Bancroft and she steered certain gifts to us, gifts in kind, essentially. But she managed a development program in the main library about which I knew very little. I didn't have any strong interaction with it except socially.

However, when Jack Rosston left the Council of the Friends as its chair, he then became a very active member of the Library Associates and was very visible there. And I think with that kind of movement of somebody from the Friends into the trustees of the library at large, we created a kind of a social network that evolved. It wasn't a formal arrangement.

And then eventually, once Charles Faulhaber was the director, we had gone through a systemwide review of adjunct development programs. Now, this is just my particular opinion and that's perhaps something that we will not end up putting into the final product. But there was a very strong figure in the Council of the Friends while Jim Hart was living, who was Jim [James E.] O'Brien. He was a powerful attorney in San Francisco, so successful in his negotiations that when Gaddafi decided to nationalize the oil wells of Libya that were run by Chevron, he got Gaddafi to pay for them. And at some point there was a movement, I'm told—this is something I don't know formally—to absorb the Friends of The Bancroft Library into the university development program. And Jim O'Brien indicated to the regents that he would sue them, because the Friends of the Bancroft Library was set up as an independent corporation and as a 501(c)(3). And if Jim O'Brien said that, one paid attention, and so when the systemwide review of the support groups happened, they grandfathered in two pre-existing organizations that were 501(c)(3) ranked corporations. One of them is the International House and the other is the Friends of The Bancroft Library. So in a real way, the Friends might operate more autonomously than they actually do.

But when Jack Rosston retired from the council, his successor was also an attorney, Tom [Thomas B.] Worth, and it seemed more judicious to accommodate the general purpose of the review that had happened, which was to make sure that the support groups were staying well within the bounds of both university regulation and the IRS regulations. And so what might have been kept as a separate entity that was really independent coordinates quite well, I think, with UC.

03-00:42:27

Meeker:

The Friends of The Bancroft then remains a 501(c)(3), independent?

03-00:42:31

Hanff:

It does. It is a corporation, and it is a 501(c)(3) corporation.

03-00:42:37

Meeker:

With the express purpose of supporting the work of The Bancroft Library?

03-00:42:40

Hanff:

Yes. You might ask what does it mean, and that's why I said it's grayer than you might think, because the Friends have basically cooperated very well with the larger purpose of the university, and the goal of the university reorganization of the development units was largely to get rid of some problems that had emerged in the medical schools, where compensation to senior faculty was being done privately, which was violating an IRS regulation, I think. So that was, I think, the reason for the general review. But as I said, both the Friends of The Bancroft Library and the I-House were allowed to remain independent.

03-00:43:31

Meeker:

When you started doing work more closely with the Friends of The Bancroft, did you get a sense that the University Librarian's Office had a good deal of interest in the work of the Friends of The Bancroft? Did you ever get a sense that, like the university, it maybe wanted to take over the Friends of The Bancroft? Was the university library wanting to bring that group closer into the fold of the library in general?

03-00:43:56

Hanff:

No, I would say that from Joe Rosenthal onward, the Friends were just left alone. And Bancroft has largely been left alone most of the time. There have been various points where one felt the library administration at large had no interest in The Bancroft Library, but it wasn't as if they were trying to take over The Bancroft Library or make it work in a way different from the way it had done. It varies though. For instance, there have been at least three times when our technical services operation seemed to be threatened with being merged into the technical services operations of the main library. There might be some economies, in terms of just basic staffing levels, but we've always prevailed in pointing out that the work we do, for the kinds of collections we have, is not comparable to the general work of a library technical services operation.

03-00:44:56

Meeker:

In thinking about engaging with potential major donors to The Bancroft Library, whether they're members of the Friends Council or not, have most of these been asks as a result of long-established relationships? Or have there been other examples that are more entrepreneurial, in the sense that an individual or a foundation or something has been identified as a potential source of support because of some affinity heretofore unrecognized?

03-00:45:35

Hanff:

I would say from my experience, we've been a bit weak on the research side. That is where the professional development operation that you were alluding to earlier strikes me as being something that could be of help to us more than it might have been so far. And that is the major tools that now exist for understanding both private donors and foundation sources, and even corporate donors. But that isn't something that we ever were involved in very directly.

This is, again, related to development but not exactly my development experience—but when Charles Faulhaber had been here for just a short number of years, the Office of the President had suddenly informed him that one of the major capital projects, someplace in the UC system, had failed for some reason. They weren't going to be able to give it the priority they thought it was going to have, so they were going to turn to The Bancroft Library as the next operation to have this kind of seismic retrofitting done. He was given a certain number of days to determine what his capacity to do this campaign might be. And yes, he probably could have said no, this is too soon for me to do this, but it didn't seem judicious to say no to the president, because it would have put us way down low in the priorities. So he took the other approach and said let's see what we can do, and yes, we will try to do this.

Because we've had so little professional development experience at Bancroft itself, we identified a professional development organization in Chicago to come out and help us survey the capacity that we had with the donor community we could identify. And they did this with all of the best connections we could provide, and I'm pretty confident the Library Development Office assisted with this process. And they came back and said, "We estimate that in the next two years you could raise \$7 million," but we needed much more than that. As it turned out, at that point we had remarkably strong support, in addition to Charles Faulhaber himself, from the former vice chancellor for development, Mac Laetsch and also Ira Michael Heyman, who had been the chancellor. And they just basically came forward to support Charles in this enterprise, and they raised about \$36 million in that timeframe, which was matched by a comparable amount from state funding for the seismic retrofit. So that was a new kind of exposure to us. We had a professional consultant brought in, learned about what they could determine from the donor base we knew, and then it turned out we were better known than we understood.

03-00:48:33

Meeker:

Interesting. You know, the other side, of course, of development is the budget of the library. At what point in your work here were you brought into budgeting and an understanding about what it takes to actually run this institution?

03-00:48:51

Hanff:

We were all involved as middle managers, to some extent, in budgeting for the annual budget. But in all of the time that Hart was here the budget of the

library operation was essentially understood to be state funding, with the possibility of getting grants for special projects. And the first significant grants we got were for the conversion of the card catalog. I think we touched on that a little bit before. Maybe we have not yet?

03-00:49:20

Meeker:

No, we need to get into that.

03-00:49:21

Hanff:

All right. But that was an opportunity to get a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. We worked very closely with Sue [Susan (Rhee)] Rosenblatt, who was the deputy university librarian, and also in charge of technical services in the main library. The retrospective conversion was basically a technical services type of function. Jim Hart bought into the idea of doing it as well, and we all worked together to write the grant proposal, but Sue Rosenblatt had been specially trained to do grant proposals of the sort, and we succeeded and we got a sizable and generous support for a five-year conversion project. Then we continued with a need to do this and we turned our attention to the manuscript collections, which also had a card catalog but different kinds of bibliographic records, and we got another two years' worth of funding from the Department of Education for that. Basically it took seven years to convert our card file catalogs into digital form, so that was a kind of experience where we had funding that helped support staff to do a project, plus we had funding in those same grants to hire a company, OCLC, to do the actual keying work for us.

The next thing we did along those lines, again with outside funding, was to develop a mechanism for converting the finding aids, which are the detailed inventories for the larger archival and pictorial collections, where you can't catalog down to the item level, so what you do instead is create a finding aid which provides access to content of the collection, indicates how the collection is organized, and sometimes has indexes that allow people to get down to the actual content that they're striving for. So all of these things were being done with considerable support through outside grants.

03-00:51:21

Meeker:

Outside of the outside grants, you had said that it was state funding that was supporting—

03-00:51:25

Hanff:

Staff only.

03-00:51:27

Meeker:

Staff only, okay.

03-00:51:28

Hanff:

Yeah, it was staff only. All of these additional projects needed to be supported with additional staffing in order to make them work, and so that was where the grant money was particularly crucial.

03-00:51:41

Meeker:

Well, I believe that the card catalog conversion was 1986 to '91, or was that the manuscript—or was that the second?

03-00:51:48

Hanff:

No, that was the card catalog and the book collection.

03-00:51:49

Meeker:

That was the card catalog. So say about that time, 1986, mid-eighties, do you recall what the rough FTE was here at the Bancroft?

03-00:52:05

Hanff:

It wouldn't surprise me if it was about eighty, but it's probably about that now. In one sense—I know we think that we're short-staffed now, and we are in several areas, but the number probably remains about the same, it's just that it's deployed in a different way from time to time.

03-00:52:30

Meeker:

But of those eighty, 100 percent would have been supported by state funding do you think?

03-00:52:34

Hanff:

At that time, that would have been the case, and that's what has shifted. However, the other understanding that we had, all through those years, is that the University of California did not permit endowment money to pay for salaries, and so an example of how that was understood to work is that it was reasonably inexpensive to create an endowment that was named. So Charlotte and Norman Strouse, who were major donors to Bancroft, created an endowment to support the director of The Bancroft Library, and it's called the James D. Hart Directorship, but it doesn't pay salary, it provides support for the position. And yes, for shorter-term things like temporary assignments you could have some salary expense being paid, but it isn't supporting a career employee. And as a result, those endowments were relatively inexpensive to fund.

03-00:53:33

Meeker:

So I guess what I'm trying to do is to triangulate here, which is the changing nature of the budget, and then how that relates to the changing nature of need to raise funding for The Bancroft Library for its operations, whether it's staff salaries and benefits, or acquisition of collections, underwriting other kinds of costs, technology, and so forth, associated with running a library. The picture that you're painting for me is that say at the dawn of the 1980s, during Hart's period as director, the state was paying for all staff salaries, and it was donations, as well as the emerging group of endowments that Hart was assembling, that was paying for the acquisition of collections in large part.

03-00:54:40

Hanff:

That's correct.

03-00:54:42

Meeker:

And so what you had was an institution that was supported by the state and by private donations, but those were supporting different features of the library itself.

03-00:54:59

Hanff:

Right. I think in Hart's time, the gifts in endowment were primarily aimed at acquisitions. Certainly, that was the nature of the Honeyman campaign for the Friends of The Bancroft Library. It was to come up with the money to buy the collection. The Steels were giving so generously and so unrestrictedly that yes, you could use it for collections, but you might also say I want to do a cataloging project, and that money could be used for that. That certainly informed me when I was working with Jean Stone, so I defined it quite generally. As I said earlier, it was to support the Bancroft programs in history and biography. Those were the things that the Stones were interested in and that's what Bancroft is about by and large, so with that very general description, I then had some endowment money that could be used for a project to catalog something, which would definitely be paying for somebody's salary, at least on a short-term basis.

The shifting since—oh, I don't know how long ago, but during Charles Faulhaber's directorship we began to see that a lot of the state-funded positions were unlikely ever to be restored to us, and at the same time, our endowment base was getting larger and larger. And as I'm speaking to you now, for the very first time we've had a meeting with the university librarian that reveals to us that the current expectation is that we will be moving forward in supporting long-term salaries out of endowment. We haven't begun to do it yet, but it seems that that's right on the horizon for us, and that will be a very different kind of environment than I've been exposed to in the previous years.

03-00:56:47

Meeker:

You had referred to a loss of state funding for staff positions. When did that happen?

03-00:56:52

Hanff:

It's been happening as long as I've been here, I think. I guess I could think about it in terms of timeframes, but I think we've had three major budget crises in the time that I've been here at Bancroft, and two of them in particular, and they're more recent in my memory, but they're probably within the last twelve years, were so egregious that we actually were having to do planning for the potentiality of having to do layoffs, which we have never had to do in the history of the Berkeley university library. We've never done a layoff, and we don't want to do a layoff if we can avoid it. But the funding from the state was so limited that it became clear that we might have to do something more draconian. As it turned out, the attrition that's just natural in the normal turnover took care of the need to downsize staffing, and we just couldn't replace the staff that had retired.

03-00:57:53

Meeker:

Could you describe for me those three budget crises, as you recall?

03-00:58:00

Hanff:

How to describe them. They were done—

03-00:58:02

Meeker:

Or put them out chronologically for me and give a sense of—

03-00:58:06

Hanff:

I'd have to actually do some secondary reading to tell you the timeframe of them. I don't think any of them happened when Hart was living. I don't remember for sure. I know that right at the time he died, which was in 1990, we were in the process of going through a review of the organization of the library as a whole, and Bancroft was not immune from that. And it was looking at staffing levels and what we might do to make sure the main work got done, but maybe with a different configuration of staff. So probably beginning in 1990, and then twice since then, we've had these periods when we had to review staffing levels.

Now, just because this is related to your own situation, one of those reviews revealed to us that our classifications of positions for The Bancroft Library, which include the oral history editors and the Mark Twain editors, within the UC definitions editors are editors, and when you began to look at the layoff priorities, it began to be clear there was no discrimination between one and the other, and yet you and I know, that oral historians, who have the classification editor, don't have the capacity to edit the texts of Mark Twain any more than the Mark Twain people could do the oral histories, so this was a very alarming possibility at that point. We made some adjustments in how those positions were classified and defined to avoid that possibility, but there was a moment when that was a very scary possibility.

03-00:59:49

Meeker:

Do you recall if these budget crises were in the context of national financial crises or recessions?

03-00:59:59

Hanff:

They were—well, I always would say that if Bancroft's in recession, the nation is in recession. They were always related to periods of great national recession.

03-01:00:14

Meeker:

Have these periods, these three periods or just the general history of seeking funding for running The Bancroft Library, have you seen them inspire innovation in the development process or in the budgeting process to allow the Bancroft to continue to fulfill its mission?

03-01:00:39

Hanff:

I wouldn't have thought it was analyzed in that particular way. The focus, at least on the Bancroft end of it, has been sustaining the primary activities that

we want to be able to continue doing. But I can give you examples of shift. When I arrived at Bancroft a reference librarian, and I was one, a reference librarian was expected to help cover a reference desk that was open eight to five, Monday through Friday; [evening hours of] seven to nine Monday through Thursday; Saturday nine to five; Sunday one to five. Those were the hours of being open. The staffing was lower than is currently the requirement, so on the weekends and the nights, one librarian and one student assistant could do the reading room, but later that wasn't a possibility. But with the first of the budget crises, we eliminated the Sunday hours, then we eliminated the evening hours. And then I think as recently as 2005, we finally eliminated the Saturday hours. So those are accretions that have occurred through generally diminishing staffing support from the state budget.

Now, parallel to all that, and in a way keeping us going in other ways, we were able, following the retrospective conversion grants, to continue writing grants to do projects that were primarily in technical services to tackle the cataloging and processing of manuscript collections, and to some extent book catalog arrears through all those years. So frequently enough, we would augment staff to do a project, but those were always term projects. You would probably expect them to last three to five years. And so in a way, it softened the blow that would otherwise have been more evident, if we had only been able to have state-funded employees.

03-01:02:46
Meeker:

Right. So when the Bancroft moves from largely state-funded employees to contract-, grant-, donation-funded positions that are typically a term position, not indefinite, are we looking at a direct evolution, so that the state used to fund a technical services processing archivist and now that position is going to be funded through a grant for a two- or three-year period of time? Or did the state used to fund a different kind of position that has been either absorbed or sunsetted, and now the grants are funding a different kind of position? I'm curious what the history of the positions are in relation to the different kinds of funding that is supporting those positions. Does that make sense?

03-01:03:51
Hanff:

In a way it does make sense. The answer is a little complicated, but the question was a little complicated.

03-01:03:56
Meeker:

Right.

03-01:03:59
Hanff:

The grants have to be managed by somebody, and the person who manages a project pretty much needs to be here as part of the permanent staff. It's the question of what is permanent staff that is going to be shifting, but as long as you've got somebody like David de Lorenzo, who just retired from us as the associate director for the technical services and a skilled manager for all of the technical services areas, we were able to provide oversight and continuity of

management quite well. However, he began losing some of his career archival managers. The funding diminished or they—well, actually what happened is they left, then we couldn't replace them. That was the real way it worked.

You can't, so far as we can tell, you can't successfully manage a whole group of grants if you only have temporary employees who are funded by those specific grants. You lose a certain kind of management continuity and an overarching philosophy of operation, that really does need to come from the longer-term people. So what we're just beginning to explore, as I said, is the possibility that some of our permanent positions in the future will be supported by income from endowment or the—we can perhaps redefine things to say your annual balance of money beyond state funding is sufficient to pay for two or three people who are actually career employees. That's a thing that we've been very cautious about, because it's a new approach to doing the budgeting and finance for the library.

When Mike Rancer was the head of the Library Business Services office he had a kind of a rule of thumb, because in those days, and it's probably still true, certain kinds of temporary employees become career employees if they have been employed for as long as three years, and he basically required that for that potentiality you had to have at least three years of funding in place, benefits and salary, in order to make that kind of an appointment. These things I'm not so much dealing with now. Those were pretty much dealt with by David de Lorenzo, and so I didn't have to worry about the technical details, and that hasn't been something I've been managing.

03-01:06:22

Meeker:

So the way that you're describing it to me, it sounds like more or less the same positions that had been funded by state funds, say in the seventies and eighties, now are being filled, to the extent that they are being filled at all, by individuals who are on grant funds, in large part.

03-01:06:44

Hanff:

I don't think that's quite what I was trying to say. We've just hired a new senior processing archivist, and that's a career position. And that person will be managing a lot of people who are in here on grants for two- or three-year periods of time. So the grant people will come in and they will leave, but we need a certain cadre of permanent people, and not all of those permanent positions are filled at the present time.

03-01:07:12

Meeker:

Historically, were the processing archivists, the people who are now on temporary grant-funded positions, historically were those funded by the state?

03-01:07:25

Hanff:

Yes. I'd have to sit down though, with paper, and figure out who was which. But when I got here—and we can go back to the beginning—there were three full-time people managing the manuscripts operation, and they were all state-

funded people. One was a library assistant V, which is a high level paraprofessional, and the other two were librarians in that classification, and those were permanent positions. We then had certain additional money that was used for a staff member who was a support person, who handled support for the whole unit, and then we would have student employees who've always been on what we call soft money. That was sort of the way we've operated, and that would have been true, as well, in the catalog division. There would have been four full time catalogers, and then in the acquisitions division there were two full-time librarians for acquisitions, and then a full-time person handling serials and so forth, so there were all these full-time positions, and all those full-time positions were originally state-funded positions.

03-01:08:37
Meeker:

But to the extent that those positions still exist, a large number of them are now on soft money?

03-01:08:43
Hanff:

A certain portion of them are. I think the ratio might be—we'd have to check—but I wouldn't be surprised if at least 40 percent of the continuity is now supported by soft money.

03-01:08:55
Meeker:

That's good. Thank you. It's complex, but I think it's important to get a sense of both the evolution of the job categories—the work that needs to be done here at The Bancroft Library, as one question, and then obviously, how The Bancroft Library is funded is another question. But then how do those two narratives interrelate to one another?

03-01:09:21
Hanff:

Right.

03-01:09:23
Meeker:

So I think that—hopefully that explains it.

03-01:09:24
Hanff:

Yeah, well, if that helps, that's good.

03-01:09:30
Meeker:

Can you tell me about—I believe that you, in your pre-acting-director role, as coordinator of technical services, you played a role on the NRLF Building Committee?

03-01:09:45
Hanff:

I did do that, but it's a long time ago.

03-01:09:48
Meeker:

[laughing] Okay.

03-01:09:50

Hanff:

What I think I was doing was making sure that the areas there that were set aside for special collections storage met the expectations that we had of what that entailed. The reality is the Northern Regional Library Facility is a very high-tech building, and it maintains high security at its perimeter, and it also maintains high security on its interior, so that a relatively smaller number of the NRLF staff are permitted to go into the areas that are reserved for special collections storage. The Bancroft is not the only library that has things in special collections storage. The Davis campus has things there. Probably UC San Francisco does. To some extent, at least in the past, Santa Cruz did. But the requirements that we had were listened to, and I think that if it met Bancroft's sense of what should be done, it worked for the other campuses.

03-01:10:51

Meeker:

When did that facility open, roughly?

03-01:10:56

Hanff:

I don't know the year. I'm trying to think. I can tell you about the earlier facility, and even describe it, but the actual year that NRLF opened, I can't tell you.

03-01:11:09

Meeker:

So Bancroft materials were held off-site in an earlier facility?

03-01:11:13

Hanff:

Yes.

03-01:11:13

Meeker:

And then moved to the NRLF?

03-01:11:16

Hanff:

That's right.

03-01:11:16

Meeker:

Okay. Is there anything else you want to say about the NRLF?

03-01:11:23

Hanff:

There are some things I can say. Let me talk about the Intercampus Library Facility North. ICLFN. That was actually the place I was driven on my very first day with John Barr Tompkins here at The Bancroft Library. He wanted me to see our warehouse. It was the old Ford Assembly Plant, right next to the bay, in Richmond. It is on Harbour Way, and we stored there for a long time, and we had our own staff driving to get things there. I think we went once a week. We had a graduate student employee, who was the designated driver, and went and fetched and brought back. Whether that person had a student assistant helping, I can't remember. But the idea that we would do it that way intrigues me, because I don't think campus or university liability insurance would allow it any longer. But it was a different era. And so we would do our weekly run, of taking things back and bringing things in.

When that facility was to be dismantled, or at least abandoned by moving things into NRLF, I went out to take a look at it one last time, and there was a reason for this. It's very easy, when you're moving out of a large library complex to leave things behind that you didn't notice, because you're dealing with so much volume you might just miss something sitting on a back shelf someplace, so I just went out to do one last sweep. And I was kind of intrigued in the building, now it was all empty and I could just look at it as a building and not a place with a lot of Bancroft books and manuscripts—and didn't find anything left behind, so I hope that we didn't leave anything behind. But as I was looking at its floor, I noticed that it was paved in asphalt, like a street or a parking lot, which I hadn't noticed ever before. And then I was looking at it more closely and I saw it was filled with fissures, and I looked through the fissures, and there was the bay right underneath the pilings, and I had no idea, in all those years that I'd been in it—I was only there occasionally—that it was really sitting right on top of the bay. That was a very big surprise to me! [laughter]

But the newer facility, NRLF, which has had three big construction projects in its history, and we're about to try to do a fourth one, was state of the art. In fact, it was much better than anything we had on campus. It was temperature and humidity controlled, following the standards established by the Library of Congress, 50 percent relative humidity, sixty degrees Fahrenheit. This is the storage area. It has staffing areas that are warmer than that, and there is a reading room there as well, that's not used for Bancroft material, but it is there and can be used by people who want to go out to request things out of storage directly there. And the things that are stored for special collections are on a floor higher—it's the top floor, it's therefore way less susceptible to ground-swelling flood. I suppose it's under the roof, so you could say there's a possibility of something coming down from above. But in fact, it's a very tightly secured building, very well staffed, well locked up at night, alarmed, and the access to the special collections areas is very secure.

03-01:14:53

Meeker:

I guess an important moment of transformation, and you and you had alluded to it a little bit when you talked about the retrofit that happened during Charles's term as director, but is the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. Were you here that day?

03-01:15:15

Hanff:

I was here that day. It was a Tuesday, and it was about five fifteen. Bancroft closed at five, and I was the reference librarian on duty that afternoon. I didn't realize we were having an earthquake, but one of our long-time library assistants, Franz Enciso, yelled out, "Peter, there's an earthquake!" And he ran to get under a doorway, and I looked, and I felt nothing, because I was standing and walking behind the reference desk. So I walked deliberately toward a doorway, to get under the doorway, and I saw that the two student employees who were still there were under a doorway. And by the time I got

to the doorway it stopped, and all I could say is I could hear it. I could hear the ceiling rattling, and my words were, “Damn! I didn’t feel that enough! I didn’t feel it at all.” But what I noticed was that it was a long earthquake. It seemed like seconds long, and then almost immediately the automated system to cause evacuation of the building, the public address system, came on and said, “We’ve experienced an earthquake. Everybody must leave the building.”

Well, Bancroft was shut for the evening, and so I had to just do the last locking up that I needed to do. So I walked over to see what Sue Rosenblatt was doing, because she was the deputy university librarian and she was the last senior employee, other than me, in the building. And we consulted with each other and were about to leave, knowing already by this time that the main Doe Library stacks had been declared extremely poor for earthquake survival. And the reason for that is they were made of cast iron with marble and glass flooring. But in fact—I think the top level, level nine of that stack, might have had nine thousand books pop to the floor. In Bancroft, the following day when we reopened, I think we found two manuscript boxes that had been sitting on the end of a cantilevered folio shelf had fallen to the floor. That was the extent of the effect on Bancroft. And I had no idea at the end of the earthquake—I had a tenant who usually waited for me on the bench across from the Bancroft, and it was so long later that I was able to get out of the building, he had walked up the hill to my house. We never lost power in Berkeley the way they did in parts of San Francisco and farther south, so he was able to turn on a small television and was listening to the news, so it was only when I got home that I realized that there had been significant damage on the Bay Bridge, and that there was the collapse of the freeway in Oakland. I had no idea, from what I had experienced, that the damage had been so severe.

03-01:18:07

Meeker:

So there were not books flying all over the place in the Bancroft?

03-01:18:11

Hanff:

No, it was a rumble for us, a rumble and a tremble, but I didn’t even feel the tremble, so I really didn’t understand that it was such a big earthquake. However, it was big enough that the cast iron stacks, that had already been declared very poor, were a target for fix, and so almost immediately we began the long-term planning that resulted in the large underground Gardner Stacks that we have now.

03-01:18:37

Meeker:

Right, but there were also similar stacks in The Bancroft Library itself, correct?

03-01:18:45

Hanff:

No, they were different. I think they might also have been declared poor, but not very poor. But our structure was a very different structure. We had nine tiers, yes. The ninth tier was a solid tier floor that was locked into the superstructure of the building. Where we had vulnerability were the odd-

number tiers, which were three, five, and seven. One is on grade, so it was stable. Three, five, and seven were supported by the steel shelving supports on the even-numbered floors below, and so that was thought probably vertically stable, but horizontally not stable, because those steel-reinforced concrete slab floors could begin vibrating sideways and slice through the superstructure, which would have caused a compromise to the whole building, so it was a different kind of a danger, but it wasn't as urgent as the cast iron stacks.

03-01:19:45

Meeker:

Well, the cast iron stacks, of course, I believe closed pretty immediately, right, after that?

03-01:19:52

Hanff:

No, they were left open. They had to be left open, I'm pretty sure, till we finished the underground addition. I don't recall that they ever closed the stacks until they moved out. I wonder if that—we could verify that, but I don't recall that we abandoned those stacks.

03-01:20:10

Meeker:

You're right, they were open, because I remember doing research in them during that period of time.

03-01:20:14

Hanff:

Oh, all right. Good.

03-01:20:17

Meeker:

So there. Did the retrofit of Doe/Moffitt and the building of the underground library, the Gardner Stacks, impact your work here at the Bancroft at all?

03-01:20:31

Hanff:

Not in any appreciable way. The first time the Bancroft was affected by any construction was way earlier, which is when we had the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill design and put in the new reading room on the north side, and that did affect us. But for that, we still stayed open, we just moved our reading room operations down to the first floor of the annex, to a specially constructed reading room.

03-01:21:02

Meeker:

Given that we did just talk about the earthquake and you foregrounded a little bit of the campaign to retrofit the Bancroft Library, why don't you walk me through that story and provide that account, and then we'll finish up there today.

03-01:21:20

Hanff:

Which thing?

03-01:21:24

Meeker:

Beginning with the '89 earthquake and then what was the process by which we actually get to this newly rebuilt Bancroft Library when it opens in, was it 2008 or 2006?

03-01:21:39

Hanff:

All right. The planning for the Gardner Stacks must have taken at least two years, and I was on some of the committees for that. Actually, that planning had started before—I'm trying to think—Hart died in '90. I'm pretty sure we had already begun planning the underground addition before the earthquake, because Hart was on the original planning committee and then became too ill to continue. Elaine Tennant, our present director, was on one of those committees. I think she was on the Faculty Advisory Committee, and I was pretty much on the Staff Advisory Committee, then I was on the faculty one as well because Hart was gone. Basically, we went through a very elaborate process to identify what we needed. We talked about putting in compact shelving. We had hoped, initially, that not only would the Gardner Stacks area, as it's now called—it wasn't called that then—be built, but there would be a comparable structure built underneath the street heading toward the esplanade by the Campanile, and that would have been used for storage at Bancroft. That had been—it was on the original design, but the reality for what the state could support, in that timeframe, was a lower level.

I remember—this is just something that happened that I had some influence on, subtly. There was a campus figure who was the chief lobbyist at the state legislature. Actually, I think she was a systemwide advisor. I can't remember her name right now. It was a German name. She came to make a report to us that the total proposal was well beyond anything the state had a realistic capacity of supporting, so she urged us to reduce our expectations. That caused considerable dismay. She was basically rather rudely vilified, not to her face but in the subsequent discussions. In order to figure out what was realistic, it seemed to me we needed her information, so I suggested that we invite her to our next meeting and have her tell us what would work, with the knowledge that she had of the legislature, and the reaction was initially very strong and emotional, "Why would we invite the enemy to our meeting?" And I said, "Because she's the only one who can give us the information that we actually must have if we're going to succeed." And when we did it that way, she came back. She just bought right into what we were trying to do and she really did become a constructive member of the group to help us understand how to couch this in ways that this legislature could support. So that was an experience, just by intuition more than anything else, that was a positive outcome.

03-01:24:44

Meeker:

Was that kind of experience used then in the process of retrofitting the Bancroft itself?

03-01:24:50

Hanff:

It was, to a certain—as far as we could get away with it. We had two architectural firms working together as a team for the Bancroft project. The name of the larger of the group was Ratcliff, but Noll & Tam were part of the group. I think they were more focused on interior finishes and design, although I never quite understood how they divided up their shared

responsibility. What was interesting to me was to learn one day that [Janet] Tam, of the Noll & Tam group, is Ratcliff's wife. And I only found out because I was sitting in a room and she was on her cell phone making a dinner engagement with Kit Ratcliff and suddenly realized if I didn't know the relationship, it might have sounded strange. [laughing] And so she paused to explain it to me, so then I realized that they were quite capable of working hand in glove.

03-01:25:46

Meeker:

Right, right. You know, so you'd mentioned all this was going on with the old main stacks and the building of the new Gardner Stacks. This was also happening about the time that you were acting director?

03-01:26:02

Hanff:

It began, yeah, I was acting director during the development of the plan for the underground stacks.

03-01:26:09

Meeker:

So were you aware that there was a problem with The Bancroft Library stacks and that a retrofit was eventually needed?

03-01:26:17

Hanff:

Yes, yes, we knew that, because we knew what the rating for The Bancroft Library was. And we knew—it was called knifing, because the plates of concrete, steel-reinforced, sliding horizontally during a bad earthquake would knife through the superstructure and compromise it and cause the whole thing to collapse. So yes, we knew about it, but I think it was called fair, rather than poor. I think that was the rating.

03-01:26:43

Meeker:

What were the plans at that point in time to remedy the problem?

03-01:26:49

Hanff:

Things that were considered would have included putting in shear walls and other kinds of reinforcement, but it was clear that whatever you did along those lines was going to reduce storage capacity of the building, and then as the designs evolved, it seemed clearer and clearer that what we would be better doing would be to completely build a new building within the old shell, and that's what we ended up doing.

03-01:27:19

Meeker:

And had those plans already been made before the university came to Charles and said that there was this money available?

03-01:27:25

Hanff:

Oh no, no, no. This all came after, so the whole planning only happened—because you had to pay for the planning, and that was a sizable chunk of money. So the campaign to raise the money was happening simultaneously with the development of the design, but the design didn't start until we had the charge to go forward with it.

03-01:27:46

Meeker: What role did you play in that campaign?

03-01:27:50

Hanff: The campaign itself, I probably had no role at all in the fundraising.

03-01:27:55

Meeker: Okay.

03-01:27:56

Hanff: I would say that's true. My role was really in the design of the building.

03-01:27:59

Meeker: Well, tell me about that then.

03-01:28:04

Hanff: We had had the prior experience of the Gardner Stacks, and I had had some experience at the Library of Congress, a little bit at the Lilly Library, and what you want in a special collections library structure. We set up committees to meet. We had a library architect who was on staff, and an assistant to him. They were part of the staff of the library as a whole, but we also had the architects representing the two companies, Noll & Tam, and Ratcliff, and they in turn hired specialist consultants on security, temperature and humidity control, environmental conditions.

We went into the plan having learned already from the previous remodeling that one of the challenges is working with architectural firms that are really more focused on design than function, and that was certainly true with the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill project. In fact, it struck me at the time that both Jim Skipper and Jim Hart were overly in awe of these people, who had designed the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale. But I worried about that because the staff, during the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill era had no say whatsoever in the input to the design, and I remembered how bitter senior staff were about that. So I was really pleased at how open to suggestion and dialog the new architects were, and we had very intense dialogs—when you've got eighty people in a library like Bancroft you're not going to have only one or two opinions. There were quite a few. We were primarily looking at stack storage, environmental conditions, a reading room that would work better than the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill reading room had worked, and so forth.

We went on, with quite a bit of strong input and good feedback from the architects, when suddenly we were cut off from that access by Fred Yasaki, who was the library architect. I think he was worrying about time and costs, and he just said enough already, and that was the end of that. So the designs went forward. Yes, we saw certain features in review, but we no longer were able to have a direct voice in influencing how they were doing the design. So eight years later, now, we are going to be doing an audit of what works and what doesn't work, and we know certain things that from the very outset were

disappointments to us. We had asked for the new reading room to be much quieter than the old reading room, and unfortunately, there is no barrier between the staff and the readers, and so all conversation is intrusive on the readers.

03-01:31:04

Meeker:

I'm curious about these early conversations when staff were brought into making suggestions for the new library. Are there some suggestions that it's very clear that originated from staff conversations that in fact were realized? Can you walk me through what some of those might have been?

03-01:31:22

Hanff:

Well, an example would be a sound barrier between staff and reader. We don't have one. Different libraries have dealt with that differently, and I'm speaking of libraries that I've looked at in the past. The Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library has just been restructured in some way. I have not seen it, so I don't know whether the configuration of the reading room in relation to the service desk has changed. It may be the same as it was, but in that library, the service desk was in a large space outside of the reading room, and after you had had your conversation with the staff, the reference librarian, whatever, you went through a glass door and you were now in a very quiet reading room. That's the same way it is at the University of Virginia, which is a brand new rare book reading room. That is, I think, what we had sort of expected was going to be the situation.

On the other hand, there were some service requirements that we had because we're very busy. We're still the busiest special collections library in North America, and we didn't want doors that would impede the movement of book trucks, and so these were things that might have been resolvable if the conversation had continued, but it didn't continue, and so now, if you go into the reading room, you've got the service desk—the circulation desk we call it—right in the middle of the reading room on top of the nearest readers. You've got the reference librarian sitting at a different location, farther from the reading room, but no barrier between where that is and the reading room, and so anybody who has a loud voice, and I'm one of them, having conversation—and some of our readers have even louder voices—can become a distraction to readers in the reading room. And that isn't really a design that was what we were expecting. It just happened. It came that way.

03-01:33:20

Meeker:

Are there any design suggestions that did, in fact, make it to fruition?

03-01:33:28

Hanff:

Yes, I think so. We have a lot of computer stations in the reference room. The reference room is all new to us. We never really had a reference room. Before we had an alcove and a corner of the old reading room. Now we have a real reference room. What we mean by that is the reference collection room, and it seems to be about the size we thought we needed for the reference books that

support the primary users of the library. We also have a very good registration desk in that space, and there's even a good table where people can sit with reference books, so they don't even actually have to go into Bancroft Library unless they're going to use things that are paged from the collections. That, I think worked quite well. The gallery is a spectacular new space. We had a small gallery before—this is at least four times larger than that. The shortcoming of it is that it's so large that we have to have a professional installer, and thus far we've always done this through contract with a private installer. We don't have state funding—or any funding—for a staff installer. So the gallery is great, but it has some cost to it that we didn't previously have to incur.

03-01:34:44
Meeker:

One of the things that has happened, from my understanding, is that when the library was redesigned and reopened, a substantial amount of material that used to be stored on site now has to be stored off-site? Is that correct?

03-01:35:00
Hanff:

I don't know that that's actually correct. We always stored about half the collection off-site. Even in my earliest years there was a substantial storage off-site. We probably have slightly more than half the collection in remote storage now, and maybe it was a little lower than that before. What I do know is that the way the final design came through, where we had hoped for twenty-five years' growth space, we got five. And so yes, there was less space. Part of that, though, is because there was something called value engineering that was imposed on the project because the campus was not willing to let us spend more than our allotted amounts, and they went through and they trimmed back various things.

One thing that Fred Yasaki proposed trimming back was two of the elevators, and I had had so much trouble with managing Bancroft before, and the elevator problem that we had in the old building, that I prevailed and we have two really quite high quality pairs of elevators, one for the public, one an internal only, for the use of the staff and getting into the stacks, and that is one thing that really worked very well. And I can take some credit for it, not all of it, because obviously the technical aspect of the elevators I had nothing to do with.

But we lost storage capacity, because remember, we lost tiers three, five, and seven. Some of those were primarily used for staffing, internal to the stacks, but they were still floors that could store things. So we put in compact shelving, but a significant quantity of the compact shelving wasn't allowed because of the value engineering. We put the tracks in, so that eventually the compactors can be put in, and that's not terribly intrusive. It's still a nuisance, because you have to move things off shelves to get ready to move them onto the new shelves, but we've actually made one step forward. We were able to get one block of the compactors put in, in Charles's time, and it was a fluke.

There was a peculiarity—I think that’s the polite term for it—in the way some of the temporary shelving on our first floor, which has shelving twelve feet high, worked. They were braced, but they were not bolted to the ceiling, and they were only attached at the floor, and when the movers were putting things on the upper shelves, they noticed that the whole range of shelving in that particular row would start shaking, about fourteen inches at its maximum, and the result of that was—we can laugh now. It wasn’t funny at the time. “Well, it’s not life-threatening.” is what four different seismologists said, but I finally said, maybe tongue in cheek—“I’m not interested in the lives; I’m interested in preserving the collections.” [laughter]

We had a summit meeting finally after oh, several years of this—three, I think, with the campus seismologist, campus space planning, and the people who do infrastructure—and Bancrofters and the shelving company. I finally said to the head of the shelving company, who had worked with us closely—he cared, he did care—he has to care! That’s his business, to have happy clients. I finally said, “Tim, the proposal you’ve made for this fix is going to be very expensive. You are going to pay to remove the entire collection from the first floor of the stacks, put it into storage, drill into the ceiling concrete to bolt the shelves in, pay for a massive clean-up of all concrete dust from the whole volume of space, and then pay to have everything brought back. What would it cost, as a differential, to put in the compactors now, which won’t require any of that concrete dust and all of that moving?” And the answer was \$25,000. So we paid \$25,000, and they ate \$350,000 worth of moving, because obviously the compactors, in that quantity, were going to cost \$450,000 or something.

So that worked out pretty well. So yes, we made one headway in getting the compactors in, and we could still make more headway if we put in more compactors, and that will probably become a plan either now, with Elaine, or a little later with the next director, whichever happens first.

03-01:39:46

Meeker:

You know, along those lines, you had mentioned the building study that’s happening right now and will be submitted. What kinds of things are you seeing coming out of that building study, and as a result of those recommendations what do you think needs to happen next with the building in addition to the compact shelving?

03-01:40:04

Hanff:

Well, we’re going to be reviewing the temperature and humidity controls. We’re going to be reviewing the whole security system that we operate with, we’re going to look at the service points where we know we have challenges. We knew, almost as soon as we opened, that our security desk was almost non-functional. It wasn’t designed for what is actually happening there. Part of that is no one’s fault—no one quite knew what the security system was going to involve in terms of the monitors and the screens for all the cameras

that we use. The space that we ended up with behind the little security desk can barely accommodate the two people who are staffing it at the same time, and they have no ready way of examining materials coming in and going out of the library, which is really part of what they should be doing. And so there will likely be a recommendation to fix that. The reality is the architects have already done the design. They did it as soon as the thing opened. They *knew* there was a problem, and though they weren't in a position to give us a new security desk, they, I think sketched out what they think would probably fix the problem. So that one might happen, and then it's going to cost money.

The security system involves a lot of sophisticated equipment. There are motion detectors, there are perimeter detectors for intrusion, and so forth, and also, we staff our security, the way we do it at the present time, primarily with student assistants, and it will be interesting to have the professional security specialist who's coming in advise us on that kind of thing. So it's possible there will be some adjustments in the technologies that are affecting the security, and maybe even the way we staff security.

The HVAC problem is a challenge. The thing that's puzzling to me is that we've got enormous skyscrapers in New York City which have very sophisticated HVAC systems, and they don't break down all the time the way ours seems to do. So this will be something that we're going to be listening to very closely. Then, we've had some leaks from the top. It may not be that the roof membrane itself is leaking, but it's not capable of handling certain kinds of situations that have occurred when the HVAC was overspilling its own trays, so I don't know. These are things that are going to have to be explored.

03-01:42:46

Meeker:

Do you have an overall evaluation of the building as it is now?

03-01:42:51

Hanff:

An evaluation of which?

03-01:42:53

Meeker:

Of the building. Do you think that the building is meeting the needs?

03-01:42:56

Hanff:

I actually am pretty positive about the building. I know that these things that I've just alluded to, that don't seem to work the way you would want them to, still strike me as fixable and relatively minor. What is really a transformation in the building is that where we had very little space for the staff of The Bancroft Library in the past, we have a fairly generous amount of space now. It is true that the people who work on the fifth floor work on what was originally the attic and there are no windows. There is one skylight, but we basically provided staffing space around the perimeter of the building in a way that we just simply didn't have before. When I was working in the building after the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill operation, and was still a reference librarian, for the first time there was a space set aside for reference librarians

to have desks. Before that we had little spaces within the stacks, and suddenly we had not a whole floor, but half of a floor just for the reference staff to have our own individual workstations. That was a change. But now most of us, you included, have a room with a window.

03-01:44:15

Meeker:

Well, why don't we stop there for today.

03-01:44:15

Hanff:

Okay.

Interview 4: June 20, 2017

04-00:00:00

Meeker:

Today is Tuesday, June 20, 2017. This is Martin Meeker interviewing Peter Hanff for The Bancroft Library. We are here in The Bancroft Library, and this is interview session number four. So let's get started. It has been a few months, I think, since our last session. We did some review and regrouping to set the agenda for what I anticipate will be two more sessions including this one. And the first thing I'd like to ask you about is in a broad sweep with some specific examples, the evolution of security in The Bancroft Library. I know that when we were speaking off-camera, you had told me an interesting story around an antiquarian bookseller, and how a theft involving this gentleman inspired, according to my interpretation, a rethinking of security in not only The Bancroft Library, but in special collections libraries more broadly. So I'm wondering if you would start perhaps with that story and lead us to how it helped inspire more thoughtful responses to security.

04-00:01:39

Hanff:

Yes. Security was always a concern of rare book and manuscript libraries, but the way security was handled was largely very modest. There was a concern, I think for many decades, that to admit a theft, or the possibility of theft, might be deleterious to future donors, so things were kept pretty much under wraps. If you discovered that something was missing, you might do nothing much more than confirm internally that it was missing. Sometime in the late seventies/early eighties, there were some very significant thefts of library resources around the country. Some actually well-organized individuals had figured out ways of ingratiating themselves into rare book library precincts and then pilfering things. Bancroft was not directly affected at that point, as far as we knew.

But I got a telephone call at a certain point from Warren Howell, the owner of John Howell Books, one of the major American antiquarian book firms. Warren was an international figure in the movement of rare books in special collections and manuscript documents. And he called me to say that he had been offered books by someone, and I will name the name—Michael Kunashko—and he was looking through the books, which were primarily eighteen-century printed volumes, and noticed some marks of ownership that looked like they belonged to Berkeley. And he called me up about this, and I happened to have a Colophon Club meeting at my house that weekend, and I mentioned this. Someone in the group, Sarkis Schmavonian, an antiquarian bookseller here in Berkeley spread the word, and I got a call from John Wong from Moe's, who handled the rare book department there—he too was dealing with Michael Kunashko and was expecting a delivery of books in payment on Monday, of \$1700, and he called me to alert me to this. Warren Howell already had books on consignment from this Kunashko person, so I called UC police, and they staked out Moe's bookstore and apprehended the fellow.

[They] eventually got a search warrant and took me with them, as an expert witness, to his apartment in the Berkeley Hills, where I saw such things as tea bags, which are used for antiquing modern paper or unstained paper. He had miniature xerographic copies on eighteenth-century paper that he had taken out of books that he was stealing from the main library. This is where all the books had come from, the Doe Library at Berkeley. I saw a laboratory set up for disguising marks of ownership and eradicating them.

Between the two booksellers, I think we certainly had a felony-level theft. Unfortunately, the district attorney received information about the two different parts separately, and didn't merge them together, and only accused the fellow of a misdemeanor. The result of that was that eventually, after the fellow had gone to court, he was brought to the library so that I could quiz him about the mechanisms he used for doing this—and there were big gaps in security in the main library, so it led to a number of things all at once. This is about '82-'83.

Warren Howell was sensitive to theft because he had been involved in a big international scandal through Chicago, buying books that were being stolen out of the private research library, the Crerar Library, and handling them as remarkable treasures—and he reported himself to the FBI and was helping with an investigation. But in the Midwest he was viewed as a scoundrel, because he should have known better. On the West Coast, particularly in the Bay Area where we had great admiration for Warren Howell, we felt that he had been duped, admittedly because he was an extremely arrogant bookseller who knew better than anyone else, and so he seems to have easily been duped in the circumstance.

So there were things going on—I was already active in the rare book and manuscript section's security committee, and we were trying to develop standards that were new and more rigorous. We recommended more secure registration of every scholar using the library. Bancroft had already registered readers, so far as I can recall, from the moment I was here. But this was a little bit more rigorous. We were double-checking two kinds of identification, to be sure that the people seemed to be who they said they were, and so forth. And then we promulgated, through the Association of College and Research Libraries, security guidelines. Among these were marking with a special ink that the Library of Congress had designed, that was not really readily eradicable—not that Bancroft ever ended up using it, but we had samples of it. And we began bookplating more seriously. For a while, we did what a lot of rare book libraries did—we would tip along one edge, a bookplate, to show that we were the owners. From that point on, we mounted the bookplates completely. It makes them harder to remove, and it makes them a little bit more secure with in the books they are affixed to.

04-00:07:06
Meeker:

And you mount them where in the book?

04-00:07:09

Hanff:

Usually on the front pastedown endpaper, but once in a while, if that's heavily decorated or something, we might go to the first free leaf that has a blank on it. We also receive books that have bookplates in them, so we try now at least, not to cover those bookplates up with our own, but to just have them standing there side by side, because they serve as provenance for the history of that particular book.

So we had a conference, in 1983, in Oberlin, at Oberlin College, that was put together by a fellow named William Moffett, who was the college librarian there. Later he became the director of the Huntington Library in San Marino. But he set up this conference with federal funding, and it was called the Oberlin Conference on Library Theft. Posters were all over campus announcing it, and by the end of the weekend all of the posters had been stolen. [laughter] But we had a very good conference, and Warren, very concerned about his reputation in the antiquarian book trade, asked me to carry with me a briefcase filled with depositions he had given for the FBI, related to the theft out of Chicago. And I wasn't very keen on this. I was perfectly willing to make the information available, but it made me edgy and nervous, and I was aware that one of the trustees of the Crerar Library was a major specialist in antiquarian maps, named Ken Nebenzahl, based in Chicago. During the conference, on the open floor, Ken Nebenzahl began talking at a microphone, describing in general terms mechanisms of library theft. And it was very clear to me that he was describing the Crerar theft. Terry Belanger, who was the head of the Rare Book School then, at Columbia University, being somewhat brash, said, "Tell us about the Crerar Library theft." And Ken Nebenzahl said instantly, "I am a trustee of the Crerar Library, and counsel has advised me not to discuss that case," and sat down. So we never did hear the full story that he was trying to tell us. But fortunately, no one ever asked me if I had depositions from Warren Howell to share, but I never shared them.

04-00:09:22

Meeker:

What was the purpose to bring those depositions? Why did Howell want you to bring them?

04-00:09:26

Hanff:

He felt that people in Chicago—he was on trial, and it was at a big federal trial, did not believe that he could have been duped. And he basically detailed, in the depositions, the steps through which the perpetration of the fraud had occurred, and so he basically wanted to defend himself by making available his sworn depositions. But since no one ever asked, they were never shown.

04-00:09:54

Meeker:

He thought that you might serve as his proxy at this particular gathering?

04-00:09:58

Hanff:

Right. I don't think I needed to defend him, I simply needed to make the information available if anyone asked for it, but no one did. I do know that he had expected his business to be taken over by some of his senior employees, and he had to change his mind about that arrangement, because the trial was not going well in Chicago, and he feared that his staff might be saddled with millions of dollars of liability. It was a very large theft. After he died—because he was ill already by this time, but he did die, and the trial wasn't going well at all, because it continued in Chicago. And when it appeared that there wasn't going to be a lot of antiquarian bookselling defense of him, his widow decided to settle the case, and did, so that was the end of that case.

04-00:10:48

Meeker:

I'm curious, back to this point at Berkeley when there were thefts out of the main library. There were no thefts out of The Bancroft Library?

04-00:10:59

Hanff:

Not at that point, but almost at the same time we did have a small theft in Bancroft, that I apprehended myself. In those days, the way we divided up the work in the reading room was that there was a reference librarian on one side of the desk, and a circulation person on the other. But we moved back and forth; we all did both things. And I happened to be on the circulation side of the desk one day when I called a reader, who responded and took the things that he wanted to use, but he was unusually obsequious and in my face—too friendly. It was just not a normal kind of transaction, [it was] a very oily kind of transaction. And eventually, I noticed that he wasn't sitting where he'd been. Normally, in a rare book library—or any library probably—people pick a seat and that becomes their orientation of the room, and they just stay there—and they'll stay there day after day if the seat's available, week after week. And he had moved out of my sightlines, and I noticed that. And then, at the end of the day I looked around to see where he was, and he wasn't in the room. But the books he had been using in the room were in a big pile at a far corner of the large central desk, so he had dropped those off without anybody noticing. And I was just suspicious [enough] that I began going through the things very carefully against our circulation records—and there was something missing.

So I called Bill Roberts, who was at the time probably the university archivist. Anyway, he came out of his office and he helped me go through everything together, because when the room was as busy as it was, it was sometimes possible that something didn't get discharged. But I certainly didn't have something, and there was a card for it. And so within forty-five minutes I had called the university police, and they came immediately, and this was probably on a Friday evening, actually. I showed them how the person had registered, that his identification had been checked, but an additional suspicion was that he registered under the name René Cohen, but we thought his name was Cotter, because the strokes of C-O-T-T-E-R [spells] are virtually the same as the strokes for C-O-H-E-N. And so I was aware that he

was using a different name orally, even though he had written it down probably correctly in the first place. And the cops were thoughtful, took it seriously, and then they said, “He is registered as staying at a motel on University Avenue. Would you be willing to call him up and suggest to him that there was a possibility he had taken things by accident?” And I tried that and it worked, and he brought them back on Monday. And then he offered me a very rare book, to calm everything down. I declined the book, but I now knew what he was doing, so I called UCLA, because he was a specialist in Leonardo Da Vinci, and he had been using very high-end facsimiles that we had, and what he was doing was sliding images out of a portfolio into a very large sketchbook that he was using to make very good copies of the illustrations. And so he was interleaving his sketchbook, and that’s what I had said, “Perhaps you, by accident, managed to get some of those interleaved into your sketchbook.” So we got them back, and I called UCLA and warned them, and they knew him, as a regular figure in their library.

04-00:14:22
Meeker:

It sounds to me, the kinds of crimes you’re describing are fairly well-thought out, not what might be described as crimes of opportunity that on the moment somebody just decides that they want something and walk off with it. Is that accurate?

04-00:14:39
Hanff:

Often. There was a major theft—actually a major series of thefts that had led to the Oberlin Conference. Right at the moment I’m not remembering the name of the thief [note: James R. Shinn], but he’s written up in the annals of law, and he went from state to state to state, pilfering, and he got apprehended at Oberlin, which is how they were able to have their library theft conference right there. But that was very organized, and so there were some organized thieves. Certainly Michael Kunaschko was very well organized, in a small way, in doing what he was doing. He was primarily taking eighteenth century European plate books that had costume in illustrations, and then he could resell those things. So that was a kind of theft. The René Cohen matter was a little different, in that he was really a Leonardo Da Vinci scholar, and he believed—I think had convinced himself—that he had more reason to have possession of these things than any library possibly could. So it was all rationalized, but in that case at least we got back what we knew he had used.

04-00:15:48
Meeker:

You know, I think just from a broader public perspective—I’m just thinking popular culture—when you’re thinking heists, yes, banks, but museums come to mind, attempts to steal great works of art. Is one of the reasons for not talking about these kinds of things just highlighting the kinds of rare and expensive materials that are in fact held by special collections libraries?

04-00:16:15
Hanff:

Right. Sometimes public ignorance about what you have is a way of helping guard the temptations of the outside. The question about the value of theft is

also one of interest, even as I was dealing with the Michael Kunashko case. The UC police were very serious about it, and they helped me find it and they took me, with that search warrant, so that I could give them the evidence. It was interesting, because they were taking down notes as I was describing what I was looking at to them, so as I recognized, from all my reading, what I was seeing. But they also said, "Just as you're calling us with this theft, which we think may be worth \$100,000, rugs were stolen out of the president's house in Kensington, that were hundreds and thousands of dollars, so everything is relative," they said to me. [laughing] I was glad they took our situation seriously, but I understood that they were also dealing with much bigger thefts.

04-00:17:14
Meeker:

That's fascinating. You would never think of rugs.

04-00:17:16
Hanff:

You won't think about it, yeah. [laughter]

04-00:17:18
Meeker:

So all is well! I'm thinking about the policy recommendations that come out of this 1983 conference, and I imagine on-the-ground developments that are happening here at Berkeley. What are some of the key moments in the improvement and increasing sophistication of security procedures, technologies, et cetera?

04-00:17:45
Hanff:

For Bancroft, things happened sequentially through time. Once we had remodeled, back in 1971, the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill design, we had a small gallery, and you passed through that gallery to enter the reading room. In the initial days, we were registering readers at the reference desk, so you would go through the gallery and come into the reading room to get registered. But we had no one monitoring the gallery, so we decided to try to improve the situation, and so a small desk was set up inside the gallery which we could put a student assistant at, and the student assistant then was sort of watching the gallery, and also taking care of registration. And eventually we even put a computer at that desk, but this is just the beginning of the computer era when we were starting this up. So that gave us a better way of monitoring the security of the gallery, as well as a person who was really focused on registering readers and checking the material as people left the reading room, so that was a step upward.

We just continued evolving that through time, and eventually, once we had computer support in a lot of different ways, we moved our registration system so that it was controlled by a Microsoft Access database designed by a member of the staff who is still with us, Mary Elings. She worked for public services at that point and was very skillful at that kind of development, so she developed a number of software applications for public services, including registration. As time passed, that registration system was obsolete. The access

database was faltering. It was probably at death's door, because it was quite obsolete and it wasn't being maintained. And we were having some problems with maintaining the data in it, so we approached the Library Systems Office to see if they could help us, and initially they thought we should just struggle along, and they did not recommend a proprietary system. But then, about two years later, when it became really clear that they were going to have to do a fair amount of programming to help sustain us, they then reversed themselves and recommended that we go ahead and acquire the Aeon system, which we did just January of this year. That is a nationally accepted way of registering readers and keeping a permanent record of all requests, all readers, and being able to monitor the use of the collections with a much greater granularity of security. We really now know even better than we did, who has used which item and when.

04-00:20:21

Meeker:

The immediate thing, when I think of security, is cameras, access gates, physical observation of individuals, basic policies, but it seems like there has been an evolution to where it does move to this granular level, where there's an ability to track the most minute item and its location in the various—in the work forum. That's how you maintain security, as you know exactly where everything is at all times.

04-00:21:01

Hanff:

That is certainly part of it. The rebuilding of Bancroft, between 2005 and 2008, gave us a chance to bring in a security consultant who advised us on getting even better security. So we do indeed have mini-cameras, and we record everything that the cameras see for a certain number of days on end, and they've come in handy several times. We've had one opportunistic theft, in recent time—and kind of a sad situation. It was a senior getting close to her graduation, and she was using records of the Chancellor's Office out of the University Archives. She left the building, and it was the student guards, from the general library security, who provided the exit security for Bancroft, who found a manuscript document laid within her notebook—another case of interleaving. It should have been caught, ideally, by our registration person up in the Reference Room, but he wasn't feeling well that day and he wasn't paying very much attention, and she managed to get out—it wasn't a highly visible document, and it was certainly smaller than the notebook. And the student said, "What's this?" She professed total ignorance and surprise. But one of my colleagues, Dean Smith, happened to come out at that moment and saw that it was a document that he'd handed to her earlier in the day, and took it back and carried it back upstairs.

She left, but I got a call from the head of Bancroft Library security, and he asked me to come back—and I guess again, it was a Friday afternoon. So I got back about six thirty, just as the UC police arrived, and we reviewed the videotapes, and you could see very evidently that she was looking around to see if anybody was watching her—apparently not noticing the cameras. And

when no one was looking at her at all, she just quietly slipped the document into her notebook. When she was confronted by it, she said, “Well, I was trying to take a souvenir.” This took me a lot of weeks—I filed a protest—but Student Affairs had to evaluate what to do. They ultimately decided that she would graduate, and I was able to ban her from ever using The Bancroft Library again. I don’t like it, but it was the way it was.

04-00:23:30

Meeker:

Do you have any sense that these kinds of thefts have increased over the years, or that there’s a greater temptation for individuals to pull things out of the library in an unauthorized way?

04-00:23:44

Hanff:

I don’t know so much that I have a sense that it has increased, but what I have been aware of is that we have had incidents that were perpetrated by very sophisticated thieves, who were organizing themselves and planning. I think there may even have been a few little groups of people who figured out ways of going in and doing them. We haven’t seen so much of it on the West Coast, but I think part of it is because we register our readers and monitor. I think that helps—and we are well staffed. We complain about not having enough staff, and that’s literally true, but by comparison to most special collections operations, we have a large staff at Bancroft.

04-00:24:26

Meeker:

Do you find that any donors of materials want some sort of assurances that their materials are going to be truly protected? Is that something that they’re ever concerned about?

04-00:24:37

Hanff:

I’ve never heard any of them talk about theft as a concern. They would talk about security in terms of environment and a general secure operation, but I don’t really see that as a major thing that most of them think to ask.

04-00:24:52

Meeker:

Is there anything else about security and theft that you think is worth committing to the record?

04-00:24:56

Hanff:

Well, I think the principle we tried to advocate, and continue to advocate through the library profession, is that reporting of theft is important, because if you don’t report it, the possibility of recovering it is much less. And yet, it’s still a very hard thing to say we’ve been pilfered or we’ve been robbed. We just don’t like to do it, so it’s kind of a constant thing that we have to think about and occasionally talk about.

04-00:25:24

Meeker:

Well, and you wrote about this in the *College & Research Libraries News* in 1984.

04-00:25:27

Hanff: Right.

04-00:25:27

Meeker: Was that something that just was not *done* at that point in time? Did you get a response to that piece?

04-00:25:36

Hanff: Yes, for it was well received, and I had some feedback from it. I think often people were saying, “How do you do it there?” And we would certainly tell them what our mechanisms were.

04-00:25:49

Meeker: So let’s move on. I want to talk about a couple of projects in relation to cataloging and making materials more widely accessible and preserved. So that is, in particular, the kind of work that was done in relation to the retrospective conversion grant from the Department of Education. And I guess this ran from ’86 to ’91.

04-00:26:15

Hanff: That’s correct.

04-00:26:17

Meeker: What was this, and what was the significance of this for The Bancroft Library?

04-00:26:21

Hanff: By the time of that era, the card catalogs at larger research libraries had become extraordinarily unwieldy and difficult to maintain. The Library of Congress had three full card catalogs when I worked there. I rather enjoyed the experience of it, but they even had to compromise some of their principles. I got involved in a little project with them—this may be an aside—but they knew that I was a specialist in L. Frank Baum, so they asked me to come and help solve a problem. L. Frank Baum, the author of the *Wizard of Oz*, wrote about sixty books between 1919 and when he started, which was 1900. So in about nineteen years he wrote about sixty books. He wrote a lot of them under pseudonyms for juvenile series. I knew all of these things, and I could provide the documentary evidence that they needed, so I did a research project for them. In the principles of cataloging, each of those pseudonyms should have had a card reference in the card catalog that said, “For other works by this author, see L. Frank Baum,” and perhaps it would list the other pseudonyms. So I gave them the outline of the ideal, and then they called me in for a meeting and they said, “What you have recommended is exactly the standards that we try to follow. But this is a voluminous author, and we have three large card catalogs to maintain—and this would generate about 700 cards that we have to interfile and adjust and fix. So we have suggested a different approach, which is that there will be *see also* reference cards in each place.” And that worked fine for me—but it was interesting to me to hear them using

finance as a reason, but I was sensitized that the cost of maintaining the catalogs was high.

And I got to Berkeley, and it was high here as well. So at that point it began to be possible to consider converting the data, represented in typewritten cards or printed cards, because we used both into machine-readable form. Now, remember, I was at the Library of Congress, as an intern, from '67 into '68. And I then took a position and I was assistant to the director of the systems office. And so they had just published, the year before I got there, the machine-readable cataloging standards, the MARC format. That's a book that describes every possible type of data that would go into a catalog record. And then each type of data had a numeric code assigned to it, so that you could begin manipulating it through computer technology. So I had had some exposure to the intellectual part of thinking how we would do an online catalog. I actually worked at the Information Systems Office as a translator between the librarians, who were doing cataloging principles, and the programmers, who worked either in FORTRAN or COBOL. I didn't do either of those things, but I could be in the middle and communicate in two directions, and did.

So when I got to Berkeley, I had that background. And at the time you mentioned, we had the opportunity of seeking a grant from the Department of Education. Sue Rosenblatt had come in, and might not have had the title yet, but became the deputy university librarian during the time that she was here. She knew about grantwriting, and she knew about the programs that the Department of Education was supporting. So she worked with Jim Hart, who was basically the director of Bancroft and the overseer and endorser, and me as the coordinator of technical services, Tim Hoyer, who was a library assistant of enormous intellectual strength in the catalog division, and we produced a very good grant proposal. And then DOE bought it, and they gave us funding for five years.

The project then involved designing how we were going to do the conversion. There were a number of ways of capturing the data, but basically it had to be translated into machine-readable form in some form. Optical character [recognition] was a nascent technology, but it was clear that it wasn't good enough for the purpose. So basically, one needed to rely on individuals who were keying the data from the card sources. And so we then surveyed our existing records, and found that we had two different streams of master records. The rare book collection had been cataloged with the standards of the main library; Bancroft had its own standards. And so in one instance, the main entry card, which was usually the author card, had all of the annotations of additional information that might be needed, and in the other it was on the shelf list card, which was basically the card that had the call number recorded on it.

04-00:31:25

Meeker:

That's what I was going to ask, because in the special collections here, you clearly have rare books, and those have been more or less cataloged in the same way that the circulating library would catalog books. But then you also have these major manuscript collections that are really extensive. Were there catalog entries for each of the manuscript collections as well?

04-00:31:43

Hanff:

For the collections, but not for the individual items. And I will talk about—

04-00:31:46

Meeker:

And there were finding aids then, separately?

04-00:31:48

Hanff:

Right. We already had things that we now call *finding aids*. They were called *keys to the collection* in those days. The fact is, the cataloging of books is really what the conversion project I first was describing was about. And so for that, we could use OCLC in Ohio to do the conversion for us, and a plain vanilla conversion would have simply used the information on a standard Library of Congress catalog card printed by typesetting. But for us, since so much of our material was augmented by additional information—because we were doing a much finer detail of subject analysis and access, because of the nature of this collection, we needed those extra entries captured. And so we worked out a compromise—how far will we ask them to capture the information? And we did it for both collections, the Rare Book Collection and the Western Americana Collection, and took five years, but we ended up with a very strong online catalog presence. The library itself at that time was still using RLIN, which was based at Stanford. It was an alternative way of doing this work. But for the conversion we actually used OCLC, and then later we switched Berkeley from the RLN system to the OCLC system.

04-00:33:09

Meeker:

What is OCLC again?

04-00:33:10

Hanff:

It stood for the Ohio Consortium of Library Operations, or something like that. You'd have to look up the actual initialisms—and the initialisms were redefined through time. [note: currently Online Computer Library Center, formerly Ohio College Library Center] RLN stood for Research Libraries Information Network. So those were the two competing systems that existed. The success of the five-year project to convert the book catalog to machine-readable form was strong enough that we went ahead and submitted a new application to the Department of Education, and then this was for conversion of the manuscript catalog. And that was similar, in that there would have been a card record for every manuscript collection, but it didn't include, at that point, the finding aids. And so we did the conversion of the card files first, and then we had to figure out how to deal with the conversion or capture of the extensive information that is in the finding aids. And because many people don't know what a finding aid is—I describe it as basically a detailed

inventory of the content of a very large manuscript or archival collection, so that it provides greater access to content than simply a description that says, “Edmund Brown Papers,” which is what you would see in the catalog card, which might have a few subject headings and descriptors, but it wouldn’t be extensive. So in this case, the Brown Papers is a good case, because we do have Pat Brown’s papers. We have probably a three-hundred page finding aid, which allows us to talk about topical files that are in folders, and all of the people who corresponded with him through time.

04-00:34:51

Meeker:

This keying, who was this done by? Was this done at OCLC, or was this done by student employees here on campus?

04-00:34:59

Hanff:

No, the keying was done at OCLC in Ohio. I don’t know how it worked. I wasn’t actually there, but they had a large crew that took the photocopies of the cards that we sent and then keyed them in, manipulated them. They were probably matching the data that they saw on what we sent with a master record from the Library of Congress that they also had in hand. That’s the way they did it. Now, for the finding aids, that was an interesting project. I had assumed that still, in my naïveté, that we would use OCR, optical character [recognition], but it simply wasn’t accurate enough. And so by that point, it became clear that the way to do that was to send two copies of every finding aid—xerographic copies—to India, to a company there, that did double-blind keying for us. And double-blind keying means that two different scribes are looking at the same source text, keying it away—they might not even be English-speaking, but they’re keying very accurately. Then, the two different streams of data are compared by a computer, and every variation is then looked at by a live editor, to correct the miskeying, and that gives a very much more accurate thing than OCR can do.

04-00:36:14

Meeker:

When was that done?

04-00:36:15

Hanff:

Let’s see, what did you tell me the dates were for the—?

04-00:36:19

Meeker:

That was—’86 to ’91, was the card catalog.

04-00:36:22

Hanff:

So the retrospective conversion of the cards for manuscripts probably ended in ’93, and I would imagine that the finding aids then followed in the next two years after that. So into the nineties.

04-00:36:36

Meeker:

I’m wondering, in this ten-year process of digital conversion of finding aids and card catalogs, would you say that there were any innovations that came out of that work that maybe spread more broadly?

04-00:36:52

Hanff:

Yes. We had more influence than we even knew. I learned years later, because I became a friend of hers when she was the university librarian at Brown University, that Merrily [E.] Taylor was on the review committee of our original grant proposal to the Department of Education, and she said, "It was such a good proposal, I took a copy of it back to Brown and used it as the model for our retrospective conversion grant for the whole university library." So that was one thing that happened. But then for the finding aids, we were doing something that hadn't yet been done anywhere apparently. So initially, we called it the Bancroft Library Finding Aid Project. Then it became the Berkeley Finding Aid Project, because we knew there were other libraries on campus that also had finding aids that could use the same system. And then eventually it became the California Digital Library Finding Aid Project. So basically, what we did to show how to do that became central to the California Digital Library and the Online Archive of California.

04-00:37:53

Meeker:

Could you explain to me, now that you mention the CDL, what is the relationship of The Bancroft Library to CDL?

04-00:38:01

Hanff:

We're a client. I would say that's probably the right relationship. The California Digital Library is operated out of the Office of the President, and it initially existed to help the ten campuses at UC with library-related content in a variety of formats and levels of access. But then eventually, once the finding aid project was well established, it opened up, and any California library that has finding aids that it wants to mount, so long as it meets the standards that we have for mounting them, can supply—so now we have this remarkable resource in California of finding aids for libraries all over the place.

04-00:38:42

Meeker:

Yeah, beyond even the UC System.

04-00:38:44

Hanff:

Yeah, well beyond the UC System. So Huntington Library is there, for instance.

04-00:38:48

Meeker:

How does Bancroft Library determine what kinds of materials they want to ingest into the CDL, and what kinds of materials they don't?

04-00:38:58

Hanff:

So far as I know, everything we have is sent to CDL, in terms of finding aids. There are some finding aids that are so old here, and were done in a standard that isn't susceptible to conversion into the CDL standard, that they would have to be reprocessed in some way—but those are relatively few.

04-00:39:17

Meeker:

But then there's also actually the original materials, the raw materials as opposed to the metadata?

04-00:39:24

Hanff:

Ah! Well, the cost of conversion of the raw materials into digital format is so extravagantly high, at this point in our history, that there we don't do that automatically. Things are not just automatically digitized because we have them. We then have to choose—frequently enough we've picked topics or areas of study where we think we can get grants to support a general conversion, and then we will do that. So we've done projects that relate to social action. We've done projects that relate to the environment and things of that sort. And if we can conceive of a project, we will then push that project through and then try to do digital capture as part of the project. But we're still in the very, very beginning of that kind of thing.

04-00:40:16

Meeker:

Well, before scanning and digitization, there was microfilming.

04-00:40:19

Hanff:

Yes.

04-00:40:21

Meeker:

Which, of course, creates a microcopy that is reproducible and more widely accessible than the more fragile and larger, less-portable paper versions. Can you tell me about the process of microfilming portions of a collection, what the policies—what the ideas were, what the policies were. Were these to be replacements for accessing the original materials, or alternatives to be used by a certain population, like students, whereas the original materials would be used by more seasoned scholars? What was the rationale about microfilming some collections?

04-00:41:05

Hanff:

I think the original rationale was preservation. And if we had collections on deteriorating paper, or fragile for other reasons, we might go ahead then and have the material microfilmed. You asked a number of questions, and they all have different kinds of answers.

04-00:41:25

Meeker:

Right.

04-00:41:25

Hanff:

But let me try to summarize. You asked a question about selections from a collection that get microfilmed. That practice existed for a long time because we had a full-time curator of microfilm—Vivian [C.] Fisher was her name. She had studied with George Hammond, and she stayed on with Bancroft, and she was responsible for our newspaper collections and our microfilm collections. And because of the cost of doing microfilming, and the fact that we were trying to help scholars, we often were willing to take a request that a portion of a collection would be microfilmed. And then, if another requester asked for another portion, Vivian would splice those microfilms together. So she had a whole operation where she was reviewing film and splicing. Microfilm probably still has viability, but the Berkeley Library has just

decided that it will shut its microfilm operation because it's expensive to maintain it. There are some commercial sources to get the work done, but not only would you do the film—and the nice thing about microfilm is that normal, well-processed acetate microfilm has a shelf life of at least a hundred years. We do not have such a long experience with digital, and we've already watched the formats migrate from one system to another, so we're a little bit anxious about that kind of preservation. On the other hand, a wonderful thing about digital capture is that it can be done in full color, in which microfilm never was done, normally because color film is chemically unstable and the dyes are fugitive, so you can't assure a preservation of image. So black and white is very stable—and that's virtually the way we did all of the microfilming, was black-and-white medium.

04-00:43:12

Meeker:

That's fascinating. I had no idea about that. So what you're saying is that there was and is, up to now I guess, a microfilming facility here in the library?

04-00:43:28

Hanff:

That is true. One of our big projects—and it was multi-year—was the newspaper microfilming project, NMP it was called. Bancroft had its own NMP, and the main library had its NMP. And the same lab did the captures of the newspapers in both ways. The master negatives that were created from Bancroft-owned newspapers, we still have title to, in the way the records show. But quite a few years ago, we decided that the division between what was Bancroft's responsibility for Western American newspapers, through 1905—and [then] everything after that was in the main library—probably didn't make a lot of sense to most readers if they were looking for newspapers that were on microfilm. Going to one place for all of the film, for a particular title, probably made more sense. So at a certain point we went ahead and moved our reading copies of that microfilm to the newspaper room of the main library.

On the other hand, we were constantly microfilming manuscript sources at Bancroft. Those were, frequently enough, preservation copies, but we were not particularly loath to let people look at the originals, even when we had the film. And the film could be lent out on interlibrary loan, whereas Bancroft doesn't normally lend anything. The film we thought of as a surrogate and an extra, so we could do that. We're still refining our policies, because as time passed, the way people want to provide access or have access to things has shifted. But we still will lend newspaper microfilm if we happen to have it, or we will lend copies of microfilm where we have the original to look at and another reading copy. So there are little variations of that sort.

04-00:45:19

Meeker:

As a researcher who has worked in paper manuscripts and microfilm, I think I'm not alone in appreciating the paper manuscripts better. Are there ever any problems that you encounter, particularly in public services, about providing access to one or the other?

04-00:45:39

Hanff:

Well, I think one of the reasons we continued for a long time to provide access to the originals was related to that. It was easier to read the original than to read a microfilm version. And if you're really doing very close inspection of the manuscript source, where the color of the paper and the accidentals made by ink on paper are easy to see in the original, they may not be easy to see in black-and-white surrogates. So there was always a trade-off. Yes, for general information content, maybe the microfilm was sufficient. But now we were more concerned about the preservation of the originals. It has become a more important value of the library operation than it once was.

04-00:46:23

Meeker:

Was there a policy established to prioritize what should be microfilmed first?

04-00:46:33

Hanff:

I don't think a policy. We had a plan that we would microfilm all of our bound newspapers—and newspapers were bound annually, so we had these great big volumes. So that was a decision we made a long time ago. One peculiar thing about Bancroft is that we have preserved the originals. We have saved the original newspapers and put them into bundles, and they actually still survive in the warehouse. And we did a similar thing with the card catalog. The main library did its conversion of its card catalog, and I believe that the original cards were just then discarded. But we've boxed ours up and stored them, and occasionally that kind of record—I don't know what you would call it—a forensic record, has proved to be useful to us.

04-00:47:22

Meeker:

Interesting. Did microfilming impact how the collection was used at all, do you know?

04-00:47:31

Hanff:

Yes and no. One of the things that Bancroft had done—by the time I got here it was already well established—we were so keen on having the broadest possible coverage of our geographic area, Panama to Alaska/Rocky Mountains to the Pacific shore, and the development of that land, that we had strong programs of capturing microfilm from the national archives of Mexico, the national archives of Spain, and the national archives of Britain—and we have tens of thousands of reels of acquired microfilm of that sort. And we still have people using it. It really is just an adjunct to primary sources here. It's copies of primary sources that are in other repositories.

04-00:48:20

Meeker:

Did Bancroft license or sell their own microfilms to other repositories?

04-00:48:28

Hanff:

Seldom. We acquired, but we hardly ever placed in another repository things where we own the original. And we were restricted in some ways about what we could do to make available copies of the microfilm that we acquired from

foreign archives. Our policy was, still is to some extent, the owner of the original is the place you have to go to get a copy.

04-00:48:55

Meeker:

Okay. I'm curious, the microfilming project—did that help establish guidelines that are now being used when thinking about the digitization and scanning of the current collection today?

04-00:49:14

Hanff:

I'd have a hard time thinking about whether it established an approach. The fact that we were willing to make surrogates probably had some—that was a continuity. And the fact that we were doing it for preservation reasons was probably much the same philosophy for both. The dissemination was different. Microfilm was always a little bit more challenging to handle. As I said, if we had a reading copy of a film, we could lend a copy. And we also allowed individuals to purchase duplicate microfilm.

04-00:49:47

Meeker:

Oh, really?

04-00:49:48

Hanff:

And so that we would always be able to do. We continued to have a proprietary sense of copies of things where we own the manuscript originals, and we had a general policy that we would not place in another repository something where we owned the original. That modified through time, and even I think when Jim Hart was living we made a shift. If that repository was clearly a repository where that original might have been expected to be, we would allow them to have a copy to add to the collection, just as we were acquiring copies from the national archives of Spain and Mexico.

04-00:50:31

Meeker:

Interesting. Let's move on to talk a bit about development—and I know that we've touched on that previously. But the thing that I wanted to really ask you about is the relationship between the Bancroft Friends, and fundraising within The Bancroft Library, to what the library was doing overall. I understand the Friends was established well before the library had their own development officer or office. Is that correct?

04-00:51:07

Hanff:

That's correct.

04-00:51:09

Meeker:

Over the years that you've been here, and particularly perhaps beginning in 1990 when you're interim director, and then since that time, what has been the evolving relationship, if you will, between Bancroft efforts to find donors and sponsors for the work that we do here, versus the library overall's development efforts?

04-00:51:40

Hanff:

It's something I've given some thought to over time. I would say that the foundation of the Friends of The Bancroft Library, which occurred in 1946, was an early acknowledgement that a library of special collections was never going to be completely supported by state funding—it just wasn't a possibility, because we were buying rare and unique and high-value items and needed to be able to do that. So the group formed itself to provide funding that would allow that approach to developing the collections. The university library, in those days, was still largely expected to be state-funded. And I can say that the philosophy of donor acknowledgment that Jim Hart was using when I first got here, remains, I think, still something that we are likely to say in a letter of thank you to a donor, "your gift allows us to do program and collection support for which state funding is not available," and that was a philosophy of our operation. Of course, now we've seen the erosion of the state support for the university to such a large amount that—it's something less than 12 percent, I suspect, that we're now getting much less state support for the operation.

When the main library decided that it should start raising money, the approach was looked askance at I think by some, because Bancroft had been doing this for such a long time with reasonable success, that we suddenly saw somebody else perhaps competing with us. It may be that in the longer run people will be able to say—different people will support different things, and some people would support the university library generally and generously, just as other people would support the various library programs at Bancroft.

Now, I came in at a strange moment, as you've already heard me say. I was quietly acquired by Hart to manage the merger of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, and he needed an outsider who didn't come with the baggage of the Western Americana traditionalists or the rare book traditionalists. He needed somebody new and fresh, and I guess that was me. I just figured out mechanically and intellectually how to do the merger without worrying about the politics of it all. I know that the fear of the Western Americana specialists was that the merger would dilute the focus on Western Americana, but I think the reality was it expanded an interest in Bancroft well beyond either of the factions. It just really made it clear that this was a much more special kind of library than had ever seemed to be the case in earlier years. And so I think we've benefited, over the long haul, with all the donations coming in, some supporting this and some supporting that.

I also think that, from my own experience during the 1990-'95 period, it really wasn't so much that one figure should be the sole source of requesting support, but several of us, quite a few of us, with our own various specialties in the right context could explain what we were doing, and what we were trying to do, to an individual with capacity to support—and that worked. And so I began to become an advocate of a more general fundraising approach by Bancroft than had been the case earlier. As I think I said in an earlier

interview, when Jim Hart died there was no planned continuity. None of us knew quite what he was up to, and I had to learn on the job basically to do that.

04-00:55:24

Meeker:

I'm curious about the Bancroft operations vis-à-vis the larger library operations. Once there's a development office established in the larger library, given that the library is the mother to The Bancroft Library, were there attempts in the overall library development operation to say, "Okay, now we're the conduit through which all development dollars should go, and we will distribute it to Bancroft as needed." Did any of those kind of turf battles happen? Were there any concerns about that?

04-00:56:09

Hanff:

There were always concerns on the Bancroft side about that, but I don't think the reality was that way.

04-00:56:14

Meeker:

Oh good.

04-00:56:17

Hanff:

I think we found that their appeal was to a very different kind of audience, and our appeal was to still another kind of audience—and maybe several different kinds of audiences. The fact is that the paperwork, the fund reporting to the university development office, needed to be coordinated better, and to some extent we have relied on the Development Office of the library to assist us with that. After Charles was here, Charles Faulhaber, who was hired in the end of '95 to become director, Wendy Hanson was frequently in Bancroft's acquisition files duplicating or copying records, so that she would have a trail of various kinds of significant donations and endowments that have been established for Bancroft, because we had the only record for our successes or failures. So she was basically building up a background file, so that as new gifts from the same people came in, she would know how to handle them appropriately and report them appropriately, because the campus development office increasingly wanted more information than it was getting. Jim Hart was very private about what we had done. Our donor lists were not available, except within Bancroft, during his lifetime.

04-00:57:43

Meeker:

So what you're saying is that when Charles was here that information started to be more widely distributed?

04-00:57:48

Hanff:

That's correct.

04-00:57:50

Meeker:

Do you think that impacted development efforts here in the Bancroft at all?

04-00:57:56

Hanff:

I don't see any adverse effect. The mechanism we've used has been fairly quiet stewardship, long-term relationships nurtured and supported primarily through the Friends organization, but through individuals on the staff who maintain continuity with long-time donors. The main library donors we probably—we know some. Interestingly enough, when I became the acting director, Jack Rosston was the head of the Friends of the Bancroft Library. Once he retired from that position, he was then part of the Library Associates—and very active there—and so he provided support and nurturing for both operations, in a long association with the university.

04-00:58:52

Meeker:

Just wrapping this up, there's a new university librarian today, and there's a new development office that's forming. Do you have thoughts how, based on your observation of history, that relationship should evolve in years to come?

04-00:59:19

Hanff:

I would certainly hope that everyone recognizes that the long-standing relationships continue to be needing of nourishment, and we need to nurture the relationships. But I have a reasonable sense that that is understood and will continue in some way. There may be a more vigorous approach to fundraising in a new development office. That's, I think, a goal, because the university, Berkeley, is in pretty heavily dire financial straits right now, and I think it understands that increasingly we need to do something that makes clearer that we do need private support. I think that there will be forthcoming some new campaigns, some of which will be Bancroft-focused, some of which will be overall library-focused. I'm not sure quite how this is going to play out, but right now we're in this beginning stage of discussion and communication with the new people coming into the development office.

04-01:00:19

Meeker:

Well, we'll just leave it at that then. So what I'd like to talk about, probably for the remaining time that we've got today, is about these various task force and reports that were conducted mostly through the mid-1990s at the time that you were interim and acting director, and the kinds of recommendations those came up with—such things as basically the reorganization of the org chart creating curatorial positions in a way that they hadn't previously existed is one thing, rethinking public services, and so forth. Now, I looked at these reports, and my understanding is that there were three of them—and you might want to correct me—but there was one that I never saw that was an outside review of Bancroft operations. I don't think that was the same thing as a Bancroft Technical Operations Task Force. This was the Joe Barker one. Are those two the same?

04-01:01:29

Hanff:

They were different.

04-01:01:30

Meeker:

They were different.

04-01:01:31

Hanff:

And I don't have a clear memory now—this is a long time later, and I haven't looked at them in a long time. The outside review was something that I thought was valuable, but I think it was promoted—I'm not sure whether it was Joe Rosenthal or Dorothy Gregor. Do you know that yourself?

04-01:01:51

Meeker:

I don't, no.

04-01:01:53

Hanff:

All right. Dorothy had worked for Joe for a long time, then she'd been to the Library of Congress, and then she came back. But in any event, there were questions about whether we were set up well enough to sustain our operations going forward. We had, in our original iteration of structure, technical services work being done by maybe five or six units of The Bancroft Library, all in parallel. Now, one of the recommendations that had led to the merger of the Rare Book and Special Collections Departments acknowledged that there was no adequate technical services support—that's cataloging and acquisitions work for their Rare Book Collection, so they would benefit by being in Bancroft where we *did* have specialist staff doing those functions.

So there was already here an Acquisitions Division run by Patricia Howard. There was also already a very significant Cataloging Division that was run by Betty Todd. The Manuscripts Collection was run by Estelle Rebec, and the manuscripts staff did all of the processing of manuscript collections. The Pictorial Collection was, at that point, still barely supported, although Jim Hart was trying to establish a curator position—and then ultimately succeeded in appointing Larry Divinean as the first curator of pictures who actually had a training specialty in pictorial management. So they did their own processing. The history of science historian on staff had the responsibility for processing the manuscript and archival collections that were coming into that, and the University Archives had its responsibility for its collections.

So you had all of these things operating in tandem, and not necessarily coordinated. So there was a thought that perhaps by looking over the whole array and considering a reorganization, we could create some economies of scale and also reduce the unnecessary duplication among those several separate operations. So that was, I think, the first outside review. And I think the outside reviewers virtually said, "You've got all these things operating in parallel. There are ways that you can coordinate this so that there is a little bit more efficiency,"—or maybe a considerable amount of more efficiency.

Then the Joe Barker one that you mentioned—I don't quite remember when that occurred—but it was really focused on how the technical services should amalgamate and be managed directly.

04-01:04:32

Meeker:

So enacting the recommendations of that outside report?

04-01:04:37

Hanff: Right, right.

04-01:04:38

Meeker: And right, so the goal, from what I understand from reading through that, is that the Barker report lays out how you're going to move from format based—the org chart that you just described—to functional units.

04-01:04:52

Hanff: Yes.

04-01:04:53

Meeker: And I guess I'm curious if you could define what *functional units* mean, and how did that actually work out in reality?

04-01:05:00

Hanff: The terminology isn't fresh in my memory right now. It basically evolved—I don't know whether this is directly related to the Barker report, but it might be. It evolved that it would be useful to have a manager who was coordinating all technical services. In the time that Hart was there, I was called coordinator of Technical Services, but I only had two technical services things reporting to me: Catalog Division and the Acquisitions Division. The others all reported to the head of Public Service, who was the coordinator of Public Service and Special Materials, that was the terminology. So I think what we were trying to do was say we need a manager who can encompass the management of all those functions, and we initially had Jack Von Euw doing that. He was already on staff as a contract employee, through the manuscript retrospective conversion project, and so he attempted to do the management of that, but it was a very big job. And also, he was inheriting people who had existed under a completely different administration and a different kind of order. He was more skilled, I think, at the pictorial aspects of things than the general management of Technical Services staff. So when Charles was here, we reassigned Jack to become the curator of Pictorial Collections, which is really his background and specialty. We had moved Bonnie Hardwick, who was the head of the manuscripts unit, into a curatorial position in charge of Western Americana. We already had a person on staff who was a Latin Americanist, so we took advantage of some things that already were partly in place, and we reorganized, and for the first time identified positions as curator positions.

04-01:06:57

Meeker: It sounds like the way that you're describing it that it was a natural evolution, but what ends up happening is that at the Bancroft you have three large departments. You have Public Services, Technical Services, and Curatorial—is that how it—?

04-01:07:40

Hanff: That's essentially how it is now.

04-01:07:41

Meeker:

Okay. And is that as a result of these reports in the 1990s, that's how you get to this point?

04-01:07:48

Hanff:

Yes. We responded to the recommendations, and evolved a structure that reflected that. I should say that I had had some influence in this from Robert Rosenthal, who was one of the internationally renowned librarians in charge of the Rare Book Department at the University of Chicago. I was frequently enough the person who gave tours of operations when we had visiting dignitaries, and he was with me for one of those tours. In those days, we had reference librarians. I was one of those initially, and then got sidetracked by Jim Hart. But we had a Public Services Division that had five or six reference librarians working for it, and the reference librarians were all essentially generalists who were expected to be able to provide sound research and reference support for all of the collections at Bancroft. I was the first of these to be taken aside a little bit and removed from that direct function. I continued to do reference, and still do even now, all these years later.

But then, Rosenthal said to me, "I would not permit a reference librarian to work in Special Collections at Chicago." And I said, "Well, what do you do?" He said, "I have curators. Each of them is a highly qualified, extremely well-educated specialist in a particular area of our collecting strengths. And yes, they do consultation about content of their collections, but we don't have any generalists of the sort you're describing." And I tucked that away, and then as we were having these outside reviews I was seeing that there were some things that we might adjust that would reflect at least the Rosenthal perspective.

04-01:09:34

Meeker:

So that when you have this, you have the new Public Services Division where you've got a head of that, and then are there reference librarians, in a sense, who are reporting to that person?

04-01:09:47

Hanff:

We don't have any reference librarians. And I find this unfortunate. Not so much that we don't have reference librarians, but basically the people who had been reference librarians were evolved. Either they were replaced through time or they evolved into specialists. So indeed, Walter Brem was hired as the assistant head of Public Service. He was hired to be a reference librarian and assistant to the head, but he was also hired because he had a master's degree in Latin American studies, and his functional area was primarily serving to build the Latin American collections. It was awkward at the time, because Patricia Howard, who was the head of the Acquisitions Division, had been the de facto curator of Western American and Latin Americana from the moment that she was employed—and she was extremely good at it. We had predecessors to her who were extremely good. So the extraordinary richness of the collections, as they were in 1970, had largely been done by the

Acquisitions Division complemented by the people in the Manuscripts Division, because they were selecting the manuscripts that would go into the Western Americana collections on that side. So we had these specialists building collections who were not connected to reference. But then, Walter was a specialist doing collection-building, and then one by one, the positions got eaten up by a curatorial responsibility. So in my mind, each curator has a significant Public Services component. It's just that there's tension, because they have a lot of other things to do, and being part of the reference staff is just one of those things. And so it requires a certain balance in management to keep everybody providing the public service up front, along with all the curatorial responsibilities that they have.

04-01:11:43
Meeker:

Because what you're really talking about is over probably like a five- or six-year period, a true profound reorganization of the organizational structure happens here. What happens is you have what is now the curatorial group, the Technical Services, and Public Services—Public Services seems quite small at this point, yes, for people who are fully located in that?

04-01:12:12
Hanff:

Well, it depends on how you look at it.

04-01:12:16
Meeker:

Or are even those three categories as distinct as I'm portraying them?

04-01:12:20
Hanff:

In a funny way, not. The reference function of Public Services, and the circulation function, and the registration function, actually call on people from the other divisions. So we do have the three divisions—I guess we can call them that. Each curator spends a certain amount of time at the reference desk. And then we also have a few other people who work at the reference desk. Charles Faulhaber continues to be a reference desk person, and we have people from the Technical Services Division providing direct reference service at the desk. We have one person from the teaching library who is at the reference desk. So the actual FTE (full-time-equipment staff) assigned to Public Services is rather large, it's just that they're not all within the Public Services Division.

04-01:13:09
Meeker:

Right. That's helpful. Can you tell me more about the curatorial positions and roles? If we were talking about the Curatorial Division, are the only people in that the curators or the assistant curators?

04-01:13:27
Hanff:

I suppose we could say it that way. I could name the curators. The associate university archivist, Kathi Neal, is an archivist and she does public services. She handles the University Archives all by herself at the moment, because the position of university archivist is vacant.

The position of historian of science, which was a new position created by Hart, was filled by research historians. It was a different kind of an assignment, and they were all PhD research historians—well, there were only two of them in reality. Arthur Norberg was the first, and Robin [E.] Rider was the second. Then with her retirement, we couldn't replace, and we ended up hiring the former assistant university librarian for collections, David Farrell, who came to us, and he served in a dual role. He was university archivist, and he handled the History of Science and Technology Program, but he was not a historian of science. I did it—I filled in occasionally too, and I had a little bit of background because of my work at Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, and my reading. But I really wasn't a historian of science either, but I had some background and exposure, and I have filled in occasionally for that purpose. I'm doing that right now, in the absence of David Farrell.

But we had Bonnie Hardwick as the first Western Americana curator, and that was a position I created as I moved her from the Manuscripts Division as we reorganized Technical Services. She had a PhD which was complementary to being curator of Western Americana. And when she retired, I replaced the function with Theresa Salazar, as the curator of Western Americana. The Latin American position Walter had occupied, when he retired we couldn't replace it. And so for twelve years Theresa Salazar, who did not have Spanish as a language of her childhood—she had to learn Spanish on the job. She is from New Mexico, historically, but Spanish was not a great strength of hers, so she actually immersed herself in Spanish to master the language. And so for twelve years not only was she doing Western Americana, which is a full-time job, but she was also doing Latin Americana, which is a full-time job. And finally, just a year and a half ago we hired José Adrián Barragán-Alvarez, who is our current curator of Latin America, but that's new. We've been operating without one for a long time. So in that sense, the curator positions have been filled with vacancies for extended periods of time, and we'd just all fill in as well as we can across the borders.

04-01:16:10
Meeker:

And then, of course, Jack Von Euw in Pictorial, which you have mentioned.

04-01:16:12
Hanff:

Yes, right.

04-01:16:14
Meeker:

Can you give me perhaps an overview of what a curatorial job description is here? What fits within the purview of what they do? I understand this also comes about in large part because of the Bancroft Curatorial and Public Services Task Force that you headed up.

04-01:16:33
Hanff:

Right. The curators are responsible for special collections that are defined. Theresa's in charge of Western Americana of all formats. Jack Von Euw is the curator of pictorial material of all formats, because there are lots of formats

for pictorial things. José is responsible for the Latin Americana in all formats, and so forth. They are responsible for developing and nurturing and expanding their collections, largely building to the strength of those individual collections, expanding into new areas when opportunity presents itself, if there seems to be either a programmatic need to do it, or the funding is available to it. They're expected to do public programs, teaching, reference work, and promotion of the collections. They work diligently to produce our series of exhibitions, which are one of our main public ways of conveying to the public at large what the strengths of the various collections are through time. But basically, each of them is an interpreter of the collection, a builder of the collection, and the specialist within the collection.

04-01:17:52

Meeker:

So a knower of the collection. They have the intellectual control over the collection.

04-01:17:57

Hanff:

Right.

04-01:17:59

Meeker:

Are they ever asked to document the strengths and the weaknesses of the collection and develop a program: we have enough in this area, we should be growing in that area. In essence, coming up with collection policy for their specific area of expertise?

04-01:18:23

Hanff:

Well, virtually all of our collection areas were dealt with as recently as 2002, with some updating. But we did a major collection policy review, and wrote a long collection policy document. The trouble with collection policy documents is that they're basically guidelines; they're not policies in a strict sense. And in a special collections environment, it's very hard to build collections with a solid plan, because what becomes available in the way of rare books and manuscripts, really is quite a bit opportunistic. It just depends on what collections become available, what organizations are ready to turn over archival collections to the library, and so forth. But what I have done with David Faulds, who is the new rare book curator, is to urge him to expand what he's already doing. He's been immersing himself by just basically continual shelf browsing, to get a sense of what is there. He has made remarkable discoveries of things that appeal to him. He recognizes their significance in terms of the history of the book, or their research significance, but I've urged him to go ahead and expand that a little bit and begin articulating this, because he will now see strengths of the collection, areas that he thinks are weak. And then by writing this down, he creates something that's less than a full-fledged collection policy review, but a focused kind of policy review.

I noticed that the university library itself is thinking of doing something along this line as part of the strategic planning. I haven't listened to too much

discussion of what they're going to try to do, but I know that they're talking about doing just that kind of thing, some kind of general review of all of the collection policies.

Jack is constantly trying to build out his collection. He has certain principles that he follows. And again, opportunity, of course, influences a great deal of what he does. So of late we've heard of David Johnson, who was the first African American—maybe the only one—trained by Ansel Adams as a photographer, who did remarkable documentary images, and we acquired his archive just now—and so that's very current. But Jack is constantly looking in the field, and he's out all the time, meeting with photographers and sometimes collectors, trying to figure out what is out there that might come our way that fits into our general sense of what we're collecting.

04-01:21:04

Meeker:

One of the activities, I believe, that the curators do is they handle acquisitions. That's what you were just describing, right?

04-01:21:10

Hanff:

Right.

04-01:21:11

Meeker:

I understand that before the curatorial roles were played, there was an acquisitions staff. How did that staff respond to, and how did that activity evolve during this transformation period?

04-01:21:30

Hanff:

Acquisitions, as I mentioned, was run by Patricia Howard, and there was an assistant head of acquisitions for Western Americana, in my early years, whose name was Gerda Maskaleris (née Kornfeld), and she went back to her maiden name during the time that I was here. And for the Rare Book Collection there was an assistant—another librarian, who was half-time, Eloyde Tovey, who did the acquisition work for that. And each of those individuals had specialties. Eloyde Tovey was very good at modern literature, and particularly very good at modern poetry, which was a major thing that the Rare Book Collection was focused on when it merged with The Bancroft Library, the Beat Generation, and things, and that remains one of our major strengths. Pat Howard, as I said, dealt with both Western Americana and Latin Americana.

With Walter Brem having that specialty, one wasn't quite sure how it was going to play out, because they approached the building of the Latin American collections in different ways. But basically, Walter didn't deal much with antiquarian. He was more interested in current trade, as far as I could tell—I know this only because in '96, when Charles was brand new, we went to the antiquarian book fair in Los Angeles. We were expecting to see Mexican manuscripts of the Inquisition, which had gone from 1580 to 1818—a very long inquisition, much longer than the Spanish one, and those documents that

we were expecting to see were actually on the floor. Walter came and got me to come and look at them with the dealer, and I went and got Charles, because Charles could read the handwriting from the old Spanish documents. And I ended up being the person who had to negotiate the transaction, and that was when I first realized Walter doesn't deal with antiquarian. That isn't his comfort level. I could do it, but he wasn't there for that. He was there for the more modern things. So he was very active in the international organizations like SALALM [Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials], which would take him to Mexico or Latin America annually, and he would go to the book fairs in Mexico acquiring. And so he really was dealing with modern publication much more than the antiquarian.

I think José Adrián can do both, and so I've been excited to work with him so far because he's so keen. And he's also making discoveries in our collection! I don't know whether you've heard him describe it, but he was browsing the shelves, which is one of the best ways of knowing what we have, and discovered that we have things that are called *branded books*, and this was a tradition in monasteries in Mexico, to use a metal brand to burn the ownership insignia into the edges of the book, so we have quite a few of them. He knew about them from his work in earlier time, primarily in Texas, so he's discovered we have this little trove of these remarkable things. And now [that] I know what they look like, I found one in a private collection on the peninsula just about four months ago! [laughter]

04-01:24:36

Meeker:

Every couple of weeks you head up a Bancroft [Collection Development] Committee meeting, a BCOL meeting. One of the things that I find interesting in there is you have representatives primarily of the curatorial team in Bancroft, Technical Services—I suppose Public Services might be there sometimes too—but the interactions between Technical Services and the curatorial team, because you have the curators who are identifying and proposing to accession certain materials. Then you have the cataloger who needs to figure out a way to describe, and then you have someone like Steven Black, who it feels like is managing some of this work flow. Is that how you would see it, or was it a design in essence to work all through it?

04-01:25:35

Hanff:

Yeah, that's a tolerable description of what is there. Steven Black is the head of acquisitions, and that means that he's responsible for managing the funds, paying the bills, and ordering the merchandise.

04-01:25:47

Meeker:

But not selecting.

04-01:25:51

Hanff:

He does more selecting than he's given credit for.

04-01:25:53

Meeker: Okay.

04-01:25:54

Hanff: In the library profession, only librarians are allowed to be selectors, and so he can't quite be a selector. Bonnie Bearden, whom you probably don't know so well, is a major specialist in modern literature and poetry. So both of them read catalogs, identify things, and then refer them to the appropriate curator for decision about buying.

04-01:26:21

Meeker: So the curators, in essence, are the librarians.

04-01:26:25

Hanff: All of the curators are librarians, yeah.

04-01:26:26

Meeker: Okay. Is that actually the job category that they fall within?

04-01:26:32

Hanff: I don't know. I don't know what you mean by the question. But curator is, in the Berkeley context or UC context, is unique to Bancroft. It's not a technical title. It's a functional title, I guess.

04-01:26:47

Meeker: I'm thinking about the research units. As these curator roles were evolving, was there ever any consideration of the ROHO director or the Mark Twain director becoming curators of those collections, and those research units becoming more integrated, if you will, in Bancroft, in the same way that Pictorial or Western Americana would have been?

04-01:27:15

Hanff: Certainly it has been discussed by individuals. When I was the acting director I said to Bob [Robert H.] Hirst, the general editor at the Mark Twain Papers, that he really needed to be rethinking himself as a curator. And he said, "Why?" And I said, "Because you're responsible for the ongoing development of the collection." And he said, "But we don't add anything to the collection." I said, "We do now." And I think he'll give me credit for saying that to him, because we *do* acquire, and rather vigorously. But when Jim Hart was living, he told Bob, "I will raise money to fund your staff, but I don't have the time to raise money to build the collection." And so it was a kind of a trade-off. But I felt that, as things were expanding—and Jim Hart certainly expanded our ability and capacity to acquire—that we would have opportunity to acquire for the Mark Twain project, and we certainly do. We don't have dedicated funding for the purpose, but he comes to some of the curator meetings, and we have bought some very, very fine things for the Mark Twain Papers, and continue to do so as we go forward.

We had bought a little bit for the papyrus collection [Center for the Tebtunis Papyri], and again, of course Todd [Hickey] functions as the curator of the

papyrus collection. Building that collection is extravagantly expensive, generally speaking, and so we aren't buying a lot of material. It's not available, on the one hand, and we don't have a lot of money for it on the other. On the other hand, one of the things he did shortly after he became head of it was to review the documents about how the collection was acquired. This, as we know, was funded by Phoebe Hearst back in 1899 as an archaeological dig, expressly to find things for Berkeley. She wanted things to come to the University of California. The original discoveries in Tebtunis, of this archive of village records, buried, entombed, and so forth, ended up being carried back to Oxford University, which is where the archaeologists were based—and there was no papyrus program at Berkeley in 1899. So the things stayed in Oxford until the 1930s, and I suspect it was partly the pressure of the looming war, but they shipped a great quantity of the material to Berkeley and it just sat, warehoused in the library.

But after Todd was reviewing the documents, he realized that other parts of the collection that Oxford [had] did not come with the rest of it. So he did some inquiries, and I think we've seen two or three installments of shipments from Oxford under his watch, which have expanded our collection. And then he did the same thing with other parts that had gone to Boston, and I think he's had two installments coming in to us from Boston, of things that were part of that original archaeological collection that really belonged in Berkeley. I think there are a few more things to find!

04-01:30:14

Meeker:

Interesting. [laughing]

04-01:30:15

Hanff:

So yes, he will occasionally make a recommendation for a book acquisition to expand the reference collection there. Some of the things in the reference collection in the papyrus operation are actually rare books, and so it's a mixture of textbook and rare book, but he has also recommended the acquisition of certain documents, and we've acquired some.

04-01:30:37

Meeker:

Same story—what about the oral history component here? Is it seen as a curatorial role in a similar way, or is it a parallel separate track?

04-01:30:52

Hanff:

I've been putting pressure on you, and you might not have realized why. I want you to help us with the requests for reproduction and publication because I do see that as a function of the unit. I'm not sure *you* see it that way. But I do see that relationship as that kind of thing, in that regard. Similarly, I would say that where we're talking about donated collections of oral histories from other places, I would always at least try to get you to give me some advice. That you would say, "I don't think this one is worth pursuing," or, "Yes, by all means." But on the other hand, I can understand why you're saying, "But you've got a Western Americana specialist who should make that decision."

So I think it's something where I would at least see you as in an advisory capacity to us, and I put some pressure on you in that regard.

04-01:31:41

Meeker:

Well, we do actually now have a collection policy, or a set of guidelines, that when people are interested in donating we can refer them to some of the basic requirements, and that has to do with needing to bring in materials that are digitized, and that sort of thing.

You know, I'm curious also about the curator's role—are they supposed to engage in grant writing and fundraising in a way that the leads of the research units are as well?

04-01:32:16

Hanff:

They have all done that. Well, I can't say they all have, because some of the newer ones have not had the opportunity. But when we were doing our grant proposals, with David de Lorenzo being a very fine grant writer, he was always leaning on each of the curators when the grant proposal had to do with the development of funding for processing a particular collection—or expanding a particular collection. So the curators were always consulted as subject specialists within the areas of the grants that were being written.

04-01:32:54

Meeker:

So this reorg basically happened about twenty-five years ago.

04-01:32:58

Hanff:

It did.

04-01:33:00

Meeker:

Do you think that it has served the organization well during that period of time?

04-01:33:07

Hanff:

It seems to have. From my perspective, it was a kind of quiet evolution. I don't recall enormous angst or distress. I think the most challenging probably was for Bonnie Hardwick, because she really liked being in complete control of the Manuscript Collection, and it was hard for her to give up that level of control. But she also recognized that her educational background and specialties, from her PhD research, equipped her well to be a Western Americana curator. So in that way, I helped her move into something of comparable significance—maybe even of more significance from just being a manuscripts curator.

04-01:33:53

Meeker:

Looking forward, do you see any need for future reorganization of the staffing model here?

04-01:34:08

Hanff:

I don't know about reorganization. We do not seem to have enough staff to do all the things we're trying to do. I think that's been true perennially. The

reorganization didn't solve that problem. It may have relieved the pressure in some areas, and not in others. I'm concerned about Public Services because we simply don't have enough dedicated staff. And just because it's topical, yesterday I was the reference librarian scheduled from one o'clock to three o'clock, and it turned out that one of our librarians had been called away for a family emergency, and the other librarians were at professional meetings in other places. So it wasn't clear that we had anybody to replace me at three o'clock. And a call went out from Michael Lange, who coordinates the reference desk assignment, and somebody stepped forward who could do the task, and he came and replaced me. But I wasn't sure—I thought I was going to be there for the rest of the day. That's a crisis, but it's a short-term crisis.

But in the longer run, if we had more dedicated people on call, to cover that off-function, I think we would be better off. How we're to do that, I don't know. I don't, myself, have great hope that we would begin hiring reference librarians, because we'd need to create new positions, and the ones that we used to have evolved into curator positions, so it's a strange thing. I just don't know how we're going to go forward, because we don't seem to have enough staff to do all the functions that we're trying to do, and maybe there will be some reorganization that would require some belt-tightening, and some real decisions to narrow the focus and scope.

04-01:35:51

Meeker:

Yeah, it's fascinating to me that there's not full-time reference librarians or full-time—don't even call them reference librarians, but full-time dedicated staff that would serve on the reference desk, right?

04-01:36:07

Hanff:

Right.

04-01:36:09

Meeker:

That's relatively new, isn't it?

04-01:36:13

Hanff:

Not so relatively new. When did we do our big reorganization? It was just about 1995, so that's not so new.

04-01:36:21

Meeker:

So not since then. Interesting.

04-01:36:24

Hanff:

And even before that, I remember we were having some challenges because there were—everybody had multiple assignments. It's never been a case that you had anybody who just did reference. Even before, that wasn't the case. We always had multiple things that we were responsible for, but we were a little bit tighter about scheduling. And so you couldn't go away without having to negotiate rather vigorously about who would be away, and who would be covering at a particular time.

04-01:36:54

Meeker:

Do you have any thoughts on how the organization might solve that perennial problem?

04-01:37:01

Hanff:

The scheduling problem?

04-01:37:02

Meeker:

Yeah, just the availability of trained individuals.

04-01:37:08

Hanff:

I think you may actually experience this—there may be a topic of the meeting of the curator group—the curator group is the largest group we have that meets regularly that uses an amalgamation of people from all of operating divisions. And I've relied on it over the years, and I think Elaine [Tennant] has as well, to be a way—kind of a sounding board for the whole. I know that I'm going to be getting a proposal from Public Services about making things better for the scheduling, and I said, "We *can* discuss this at the curatorial group. We might instead prefer to discuss it initially at the administrative group, BAG, as we call it—you're on that—and decide." But it's going to be kind of a tussle, because it means that there's the possibility that some people are going to have to give up some of the things they value highly to focus a little bit more on scheduling the public service operation. Time will tell.

04-01:38:07

Meeker:

[laughing] Okay, well we'll leave it there for that. I'm wondering if you can give me a sense of the evolution and the transformation of the relationship of these research units—Twain, papyrus, and oral history—to the larger Bancroft. Do you have any general thoughts on that, and how those relationships have evolved over the years?

04-01:38:56

Hanff:

I think I do have some perspective. Jim Hart established the sense, I think, that the Regional Oral History Office and the Mark Twain Papers were adjuncts to The Bancroft Library, but were not part of The Bancroft Library operation. He certainly functioned with them in that regard. So whatever fundraising they did, with him, was separate from whatever happened to the library side of the thing.

Now, from the perspective of the oral history operation, that seemed fine to me, because the model then was that everything was funded as a project on an ongoing basis, and it required specialized funding and specialized projects, and it really wasn't part of the mainstream library operation. The Mark Twain operation was also quite separate. It's true there's a collection there, but that collection was not part of the Rare Book Collection. It was an independent acquisition of the university early on, and the editorial function that exists, which was started so long ago—I guess 1961 or thereabouts with National Endowment for the Humanities support—really is not something that a library would normally be able to do on its own. And so the fact is that it's a

collection that is exploited by a team of eight editors for publication on an ongoing basis, and that really is not a normal library function. So the fact that it existed apart from the rest of the library always seemed to me, at least understandable.

Fundraising has evolved a bit. The Oral History Center gets funding more generally with a lot of support, I think, from the director, although I'm sure you do most of the fundraising for your program. And Hart did a lot for the Oral History Program before. And then Bob Hirst has been very successful through his grants. But other support has come, and so he's got the Mark Twain Luncheon Club support group, and they came to provide the matching required each year for the National Endowment for the Humanities, although I'm not sure they ever achieved the actual goal of \$150,000 a year. But they certainly have helped, in that regard.

04-01:41:17

Meeker:

I'm curious, under the directorships of Faulhaber or Tennant, do they have the same perspective that Hart developed—?

04-01:41:26

Hanff:

I don't think so. I think Charles and Elaine both see the whole as more cohesive than Hart did. I think Hart really did see a library and two satellites. And I think that Charles embraced the whole. He didn't initially. You know that initially he was skeptical about both of those operations, but he quickly embraced them and began providing more general support for them.

04-01:41:57

Meeker:

From where you stood, did you see that—have substantive changes for the Bancroft or for the research units? The change of vision, I guess?

04-01:42:13

Hanff:

Less so, I think, from my perspective, because they were always there for me. I was always aware of them. I told you anecdotally—but I don't mind repeating it—there was a crisis during my interim directorship when I was summoned by the university librarian to be told that the oral history program was hundreds of thousands of dollars short of its obligations, and it was cause for major panic. And the oral history program was taken away from Bancroft and reported directly to the library business officer for several years, as he reestablished a funding model and an accounting model that would allow them to be able—they being the Regional Oral History Office—to manage their assets in a more professional way. Once that was established, and I think it took him about two years, he had confidence, and they could return—and they did. So I think by the time Charles came, they were once again reporting to the director. That was a crisis of interesting proportion, and I know that part of it was related to a commitment to a particular oral history series that the funding ultimately did come in, but it came in several years later than anticipated, so the operation was borrowing against the future, in a way that didn't seem to work very well for accountant types.

04-01:43:43

Meeker: [laughing] Right! Hirst was hired in 1980, I believe.

04-01:43:50

Hanff: I think that's right.

04-01:43:54

Meeker: What was his role then, do you recall? What he was brought in to be, and has that role grown and evolved over the years?

04-01:44:05

Hanff: He was hired as the general editor. And so he came in to run the operation. The person who had run it before was a librarian who was somewhat of a social eccentric, and was given that assignment to work with Henry Nash Smith, from the English Department, and he took over the management of the editors and the staff. Apparently, from what I've heard, he didn't really have any interesting in editing himself, but he had all these graduate students who were working in there and doing the editing.

When Bob came back from UCLA—because he'd been an assistant professor there—to become the head of the Mark Twain operation, he brought with him a set of values and principles of a very high level of editorial quality that had not been attempted before. And he basically, through almost sheer personality, managed to shift the thing into something that ended up, years later, being acknowledged by the Modern Language Association as the most significant intellectual control of editorial process ever achieved in American letters. This is really something that Bob did because that's where his mind is; that's where he focuses. The quality has to be extremely high, and they have learned techniques of editing and analysis of manuscript sources that are far beyond what almost any other scholar is doing in the world.

04-01:45:49

Meeker: That's an interesting intellectual role that he plays, right? And like you said, it's been recognized. There's also an administrative role that he plays, as almost like a nonprofit director, right?

04-01:46:07

Hanff: Also that.

04-01:46:09

Meeker: Yeah. Is that kind of a role that was there when he was brought in as general editor? Or is that something that has grown over the years?

04-01:46:21

Hanff: I think he always ended up doing what he needed to do. I don't know that it was ever a plan on his part. He certainly had to manage the series of National Endowment for the Humanities grants. We don't do any of these things unilaterally. As you already know, we had an earlier discussion where I was stumped by a question about how Bancroft managed its budget. Bancroft *didn't* manage its budget. It was done by the Library Business [Services]

office as a whole. The Regional Oral History Office had to manage its budget because it was getting the money to pay for its various programs. Similarly, Bob was managing funding because he was getting the grants that had to pay his career salaried staff, so he had to maintain numbers. But he always has done that with support from the business office, and so the accounting is not done by Bob or by the unit—it's done by the Library Business Services office. And so he's constantly in communication with—Kris Leonardo is actually the person he primarily works with. But in earlier years he also had good access to the Sponsored Projects Office, and they were, for a long number of years, quite willing to waive indirect costs—not something that we're experiencing right now—but they did for many years, and he would negotiate that as well as he could.

There was a crisis at one point—I don't quite remember all of the circumstance of the crisis, but there was some disgruntlement with the program, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* did a report which caused the National Endowment for the Humanities to decide that they needed to come and investigate with a site visit. And this was during the time that I was acting director. So I got word from somebody in the NEH that they were coming to do an audit of the Mark Twain Papers, and that they were going to have a meeting with Vice Chancellor John Heilbron, and they expected me to come to a meeting with him. I had never been summoned to something like that before. I knew him, because he was a historian of science, and I knew him from Bancroft. So the appointed hour came, and I arrived, and I thought I was going to be answering questions. But what John Heilbron did instead was say, "Well, Peter, this is your show. Tell us what you want us to know." I wasn't prepared for that, so I had to wing it. But I did, and I said I wanted Guinevere Griest, who was the head of the NEH, to hear how much competition we sensed there was on campus for the resources of the National Endowment for the Humanities—which of course she knew. And that's the way I presented it.

And then somebody said—I think it was Guinevere who said, "I gather that the head of Sponsored Projects is coming to this meeting. I don't know why she is coming." And I said, "Well, it seemed appropriate for her to confirm what I'm telling you about the competition for your resources, and I'm hoping that she will recommend a waiver of indirect costs." And John Heilbron bristled, "That is *not* her prerogative." And Guinevere Griest, who was very southern, leaned across the table and said, "Ah, but John, it would mean so much to us if you waive the indirect costs." And the woman came in, and she said, "I want to recommend the waiver of indirect costs." There was nothing more that John Heilbron could do. [laughter] So I won that battle without even understanding that I was doing it! So that was a great thing that helped the Mark Twain project at a particular moment. I guess, in a way, you could say it was good thinking that was intuitive. [laughing] But it was interesting. It didn't alienate me from John Heilbron. I still see him occasionally. But it was an interesting time for us, and it did get the Mark Twain project through a hump that it was dealing with.

04-01:50:13

Meeker: What was the investigation regarding?

04-01:50:16

Hanff: I cannot remember. You'd almost have to ask Bob. I can't remember what the irritation of the moment was, but it was something that was critical, and I don't remember who the head of the NEH was at that moment. Guinevere Griest was the manager of the NEH, but I think it was somebody at a higher level that had been embarrassed by something said in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

04-01:50:36

Meeker: Willa Baum was the long-time director of the Oral History Center, or what was then the Regional Oral History Office. When she retired, Richard Cándida-Smith was brought in as the new director—I understand a somewhat controversial hire. Do you have any insight into that transition, and why an outside historian, who had a different profile than the person who had been here for a time, upon retirement—?

04-01:51:16

Hanff: I don't have a lot of insight on it. I know that Charles was trying to help the Oral History Center become a more professional, academic, scholarly operation, and it seemed that Richard Cándida-Smith could provide that kind of leadership. I didn't have a lot of interaction with him, so I don't actually know how well it worked out, from his perspective or the Oral History Center's perspective. But he was there for quite a few years, and he certainly went through some of our strategic planning initiatives with Charles and the rest of us, so I was aware of him that way. But I don't think we had a lot of library dialog. And remember, the Oral History Center was still historically pretty much apart from the main library operation, so it didn't seem unusual that I wouldn't hear a lot from Richard. But I certainly was aware of him and talked to him occasionally.

04-01:52:13

Meeker: Well, and a fair portion of time we were up in Evans Hall, because of the rebuild.

04-01:52:20

Hanff: That's true too, so out of sight, out of mind. [laughter]

04-01:52:23

Meeker: All right. Why don't we end there for today.

04-01:52:25

Hanff: All right.

Interview 5: June 27, 2017

05-00:00:00

Meeker: Today is Tuesday, June 27, 2017. This is Martin Meeker interviewing Peter Hanff for The Bancroft Library, and this is interview session number five. We are here in the conference room of The Bancroft Library. Let's get started. What I'd like to talk to you about now is after the period of time that you served as acting and interim director of The Bancroft Library, there was finally a hire for a permanent director of The Bancroft Library, and that was in 1995. Charles Faulhaber came on as the new Bancroft director. Can you tell me a little bit about the search process that resulted in his hiring?

05-00:00:58

Hanff: Yes. It was a bit complicated. I think about two years into the absence, after Jim Hart died and I was called interim director, there was a recruitment. And although I think the chancellor had asked that there be at least three candidates recommended, the search committee recommended only one. Shall I name that one?

05-00:01:20

Meeker: Yes, please.

05-00:01:21

Hanff: It was Professor Robert Middlekauff from the Department of History, who had been president of the Huntington Library and Gardens for about five years, several years before that, knew a great deal about fundraising, had extraordinary success in Los Angeles during that time, but he returned to Berkeley because he really wanted to teach. So he was a candidate, and I don't quite know what all he knew—he has talked to me about it a little bit, years later. But he was the candidate of choice, and he negotiated very hard. He asked that all of the vacant positions on the Bancroft staffing roster be restored by the general library, and he asked permission to remove Bancroft Library from the administration of the university library, and to move off campus and build its own building. It was an ambitious plan. It scared me, because I was aware of more than I think an outside person would have been, how integrated we were with the infrastructure of technical and human resources support from the library. It was the chancellor who turned him down; it was not the university librarian.

05-00:02:35

Meeker: Who was the chancellor then?

05-00:02:37

Hanff: It would have been Chang-Lin Tien, and Dorothy Gregor was the university librarian at the time.

05-00:02:44

Meeker: Did you ever get a sense of what their objection to this ambitious plan was?

05-00:02:48

Hanff:

I don't know, because Dorothy apparently had conceded the release of the positions; she told me that herself. And that was quite amazing, because we were all suffering from shortages of funding for staff at that point, but I'm guessing that the ambition of being involved in a full-fledged fundraising campaign to build a building was probably more than Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien wanted to be connected to at that point.

05-00:03:16

Meeker:

Well, rather than give an idea, did you ever get a sense of what was driving this ambition on the part of Middlekauff? What did he hope to accomplish with this move?

05-00:03:30

Hanff:

I think he really felt that Bancroft had a mission, a legitimate mission, that was completely independent of the normal university library. And the only way he could really see it flourishing long into the future was to have that kind of autonomy. We'd had a lot of autonomy when Jim Hart was director, because he had been a vice chancellor before. And I would say that, at least in spirit, he reported to Mike Heyman, as the chancellor, more than he did to the university librarian. We were here as part—and I know that he was in constant communication with Joe Rosenthal in those early years. Jim Skipper was actually the university librarian who had hired Hart. So Jim Skipper was there, then a few others, and then Joe Rosenthal for a long number of years. It was a different kind of an environment, but Jim always had access to the chancellor through that time, so we had a lot of autonomy at that point.

05-00:04:23

Meeker:

Did it seem like, when Hart left, that some of that autonomy for the library also dissipated?

05-00:04:30

Hanff:

Perhaps a little. I would say that the way Hart had managed the fundraising was very much in his own bosom. He didn't share much information, and so at the beginning there was no Library Associates, other than the Friends of the Bancroft Library. And our information about our donors was ours; it wasn't shared. And so once he was away, I didn't have the autonomy that he had had, and yet they pretty much left us the way we were, partly because it was an interim situation and we weren't sure what the next director was going to want to do.

05-00:05:08

Meeker:

When you were acting director, did you get brought around to the Bohemian Club at all?

05-00:05:15

Hanff:

Not that way. I was there as a guest a few times, but I was never promoted as a potential member.

05-00:05:21

Meeker:

Hadn't there been a history of that, that the Bancroft director was typically promoted as a [member]?

05-00:05:27

Hanff:

Certainly Hart was one. We had another member of the staff who was a member of the Bohemian Club, and that was the curator of pictorial collections, Larry Dinnean. He was a performing member of the Bohemian Club. He's a singer, among other things. We had two members of the Bohemian Club at that particular time.

05-00:05:45

Meeker:

So once the chancellor said we're not going to meet all of your wishes, Middlekauff pulled out?

05-00:05:57

Hanff:

That's correct. And so then, we had done some of the outside studies of Bancroft structure, and I said, "If we're going to make structural and administrative changes here, I should probably be designated as the acting director," so my title was changed to acting director. So I did that for about three years. I knew Charles beforehand, so once he became a viable candidate, the offer was made to him and he accepted it immediately.

05-00:06:24

Meeker:

Did they run a full search?

05-00:06:28

Hanff:

Yes, we did. In fact, actually it was an interesting search. There were five librarians interviewed in that round. I was one of the five. Kevin Starr was one of the five. The fellow who was in charge of the John Hay Library at Brown University was also one of the candidates. I don't remember the other two librarian candidates, but I learned later, from one of the search committee people at a higher level, that it was a courtesy interview. They really had never expected to put a librarian in charge of Bancroft. It had always been a faculty director.

05-00:06:58

Meeker:

Interesting. So even someone like Kevin Starr was not a serious candidate?

05-00:07:04

Hanff:

Right.

05-00:07:04

Meeker:

That's interesting. And so Charles was the one faculty candidate amongst those five finalists?

05-00:07:11

Hanff:

No, there were two finalists; I probably won't mention the other finalist. But there had been some rumors about the other finalist, and after months of impasse—a year I think—and that other finalist becoming angrier and angrier

by the minute, I talked to Peter Lyman and said, “These are the grapevine rumors I’ve heard.” And he said, “That explains several things that have been going on that I could not understand. Thank you.” And the next day, he called Charles.

05-00:07:43

Meeker: What do you suppose the delay was, on Lyman’s part, for making the appointment?

05-00:07:47

Hanff: It wasn’t his—it was the Academic Senate.

05-00:07:49

Meeker: Oh, really?

05-00:07:51

Hanff: Yeah, so I don’t know.

05-00:07:53

Meeker: So tell me about the director position that Charles steps into. Was it organized or conceptualized any differently than, for instance, Hart’s had been?

05-00:08:06

Hanff: I don’t think so. It seems to me that what I was doing was holding things together in a structure that had existed, as I perceived it at any rate, during my earlier years here—and Charles stepped in. He certainly took command immediately, and he was careful. He didn’t know what it was going to be like to work with somebody who’d been an acting director for five years. So he gave it a year, to see if we got along well and worked well together, and we did. So he eventually created the position of deputy director for me, and that just moved things forward. He had his own way of wanting to learn, and he knew a great deal. He was an early modern Spanish/Portuguese professor, so he already had strong connections to aspects of the collections here. He is not a shy person, and he likes the socializing very much, so he was quickly put into the Bohemian Club, and I think loved it—still does, I believe.

He had good managers that were in place already. So we had Bonnie Hardwick as the curator of Western Americana at that point. We had Jack Von Euw, who had grown up through the Technical Services support for the Manuscripts Division, and now running the whole Technical Services operation, although his strength was really more in the area of pictorial collections. And so Charles surveyed the scene, and then made some adjustments of assignment, and asked Jack to become the curator of the Pictorial Collection. And we recruited David de Lorenzo as the head of Technical Services, and he was later created—in the position of associate director.

05-00:09:46

Meeker: When was de Lorenzo hired? Do you recall?

05-00:09:49

Hanff: I don't recall the date. I'd have to look at some kind of a list to tell you.

05-00:09:54

Meeker: Late 1990s?

05-00:09:58

Hanff: I would think maybe in the early nineties, you're right. [Narrator Addendum: Started around the beginning of July 2001.]

05-00:10:05

Meeker: Okay. Just thinking about my own experience heading up the Oral History Center as a full-time staff, and the kinds of work and duties that I feel are expected of me, versus the work and duties that were expected of a part-time faculty director. They're not the same. Did you see any similar comparison between you, as a full-time staff/acting director, and then what Charles was expected to do when he came on?

05-00:10:51

Hanff: I didn't see a change in that regard, because although Charles came in as a teaching faculty member, he was certainly giving virtually full-time to Bancroft as well. And I don't know how long he continued with his teaching assignment, but he certainly retired from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese some years into the directorship and was full-time director after that. But he was actually already giving us the time. He just basically did what needed to be done. A great challenge to him was that not long after he became director—remember, this is 1995—so David de Lorenzo came later, maybe almost—well, I don't quite know when, but it would have been the late nineties, at least. [Narrator Addendum: July 2001.]

Charles was approached by the campus to say that the Office of the President had had to cancel a seismic retrofitting project for a building at some other campus, and they would like to turn their attention to rebuilding The Bancroft Library building. And they wanted Charles's acquiescence to that, but it was going to involve major fundraising of the sort that Bancroft had never experienced before. Charles didn't think about it for too long. He really didn't feel he had a choice, in practical terms. We needed to do the seismic retrofitting, we believed, and there was an opportunity there.

So he accepted that responsibility and was very fortunate in having a team of senior development specialists backing him up, one of whom was Mike Heyman, Ira Michael Heyman, the former chancellor, who had been for some years at the Smithsonian, I guess as its director, and had come back to Berkeley in retirement. And another one was Mac Laetsch, who was I think the first faculty head of campus development and was available to help with this. And although we did an outside review using a Chicago specialty company to survey our capacity to raise money, they came up and said, "You have the capacity, with the lists of people you've provided us, of raising about

\$7 million in the timeframe that you have.” We, however, knew we needed to raise a lot more than that. And interestingly enough, in that period of the raising of funding we managed to get \$36 million from private sources. Those sources were matched evenly with the state, so they paid for the physical infrastructure, and we paid for making the Bancroft look like a modern rare book library.

05-00:13:27

Meeker:

At that point in time, had there already been plans and designs for the retrofit that everyone knew needed to happen?

05-00:13:36

Hanff:

We knew that it needed to happen; we didn’t have much in the way of plans. The original rebuilding of the Doe building involved replacing the original stacks of the Doe Library, which were a cast-iron structure with glass plate floors, and ruled *poor* for seismic strength. After the ’89 earthquake, there was an incentive to begin dealing with that. A master plan was developed that would have involved creating not only the underground stacks that we have to the north of the building, but another set of underground stacks that would have gone over to the esplanade by the Campanile on the east side of the building, and that would have, presumably, been for special collections. But the combined grand plan was far costlier than the state legislature was willing to support for the university, and we learned early that we had to cut off one part of the plan. So the main stacks were the priority for that time. So our approach didn’t involve new underground addition; it really just involved retrofitting the Library Annex building that was built, I guess, in 1949-’50 from an Arthur Brown design.

05-00:14:53

Meeker:

But like the main Doe stacks, The Bancroft Library also had that similar kind of internal shelving, right?

05-00:15:04

Hanff:

No, it was actually quite different. We had—I don’t remember the brand—but it was installed shelving on yellow enameled steel stanchions, with the shelves locked into the stanchions with double pins on either end of the shelf. The system was fine, but the building had a problem—and that was that the odd-numbered tiers, which were three, five, and seven, were not tied into the structure of the building. They floated as steel-reinforced concrete slabs on those stanchions, and so the seismologists said that in a bad shake, the concrete slabs would begin vibrating sideways and would slice through the superstructure of the building and cause the whole thing to collapse. So we did have some incentive to want to make this better, and indeed what happened is the plan went forward, and tiers three, five, and seven were removed. And that left us with far less of a shelving area, so we put in compact shelving into our new stacks.

05-00:16:15

Meeker:

I'm curious—before this opportunity was given to the Bancroft in order to raise funds and do the retrofit, what were the plans for actually dealing with that potentially hazardous situation with the building?

05-00:16:29

Hanff:

What do you mean?

05-00:16:31

Meeker:

I mean clearly everyone knew that something needed to be done. Was there a five-year or a ten- or a twenty-year plan for actually getting that done?

05-00:16:41

Hanff:

No, I don't think the university had come up with any timing for that—that's why it hit us by surprise, that suddenly we'd been moved to the first priority. We were glad to be moved to the first priority. We've been very pleased overall with the result of the rebuilding.

05-00:16:57

Meeker:

How was the budget developed for that? This other firm talks about the development capacity topping out at \$7 million—eventually \$36 million is raised. Where does the budgeting process fit into all of this?

05-00:17:14

Hanff:

The budgeting process for a large complex building like that involves a lot of the campus infrastructure, in the way of staffing. So we had campus space planning officers, we had the library space planning officers. We retained the services of two architectural firms working in tandem with each other to do the development of the proposal, and as they developed what needed to be done, we saw what the financial need was, and we also found that we had greater capacity than the outside consultants could have anticipated. But again, I say we were very fortunate in that we had Mike Heyman, who had been so long and so strongly connected with Berkeley and well connected in the Bay Area philanthropic community—and Mac Laetsch was the same. So there were a lot of people who stepped forward to help with the financials.

05-00:18:02

Meeker:

Did you play much of a role in the meetings in which people were deciding about what needed to happen with the building itself, the physical structure?

05-00:18:14

Hanff:

Yes. I had a significant role, I would say. Our space planner for Bancroft staff was Tony Bliss, the rare book librarian. And because what we were trying to do was turn this into a state-of-the-art rare book and manuscript library, he was very good for that particular purpose. I knew certain things like the requirements of humidity control, temperature, and such, because I had been doing, for a long number of years, planning for preservation and conservation. I had even started, when I was at the Library of Congress as an intern, working as a volunteer in that operation there, the conservation department. So I had a long background. I was sent by the university to Columbia

University in 1978 to a special program, federally funded, to teach middle managers how to develop conservation programs. Berkeley is the only one that got one out of the exercise, but I was involved in that. So I had that kind of a connection to all of this.

And we were making sure that the security was state of the art, and for all of these things we had special consultants coming in to advise the architects about what needed to happen—and us. And then we also set up internal staff committees to consider what to do to strengthen and improve security. In a way, this is like a follow-up of what I talked about last time, when we were talking about library theft. We had had some theft in Bancroft, and we wanted to be more secure than we had been, and this was an opportunity to do that as well.

05-00:19:44

Meeker:

You know, in addition to security, which we did talk about a little bit, and then also what you just referred to as far as an ideal environment for storing rare materials, what else was on the wish list for you and for Bancroft staff, recognizing this building was basically gutted and there was not quite a blank slate, but an empty box that could be filled?

05-00:20:09

Hanff:

We hoped to have a much larger exhibition space, and we got that. We had a very small exhibition space in the previous remodel, but it was something which we had not had before that. We wanted to have more seminar rooms. We only had one seminar room before the retrofit. And then I guess later we got two more, because I had some success with Jean Stone, and she gave us funding, just about 1995, just as Charles was arriving, to develop the seminar room on the third floor of the building, called the Jean and Irving Stone Seminar Room. And for a brief period of time, we also had the Krouzian Study Center, which was funded in part by Carol Christ, who was then vice chancellor and provost—along with funding from the Krouzian family. That was a second seminar room, and it was immediately adjacent to the Stone Room. But those were both outside of the general perimeter of Bancroft's secure operations, so they were an interesting annex to the annex of Bancroft.

05-00:21:11

Meeker:

Oh, those had previously been outside, and now—?

05-00:21:14

Hanff:

Yes, and interestingly enough, the architects—the primary architect was Ratcliff, and [Noll & Tam]. It turns out Tam is Ratcliff's wife, so that was an interesting two companies working together. But they looked over the Stone Room and said, "This is a room that demonstrates that we can do something really fine in this library annex from 1950. We're going to preserve this room, because it's already fine," and so that room is the only one that survived intact.

05-00:21:51

Meeker:

Was the hope for additional seminar rooms this idea to have more regular courses, catalog courses being taught here? What was the purpose for devoting real estate to that?

05-00:22:04

Hanff:

We had always made our collections available to seminars, and there was more demand for that kind of access than we could provide with a single seminar room or two, and we had hoped to increase that visibility and promotion of the collections and their use. I don't know that it had much more significance than that. And we were fortunate; we ended up with four seminar rooms plus the press room, which is now the James D. Hart Press Room, with its printing press operation—and we do teach printing to classes each semester. So it's part of what we do. The seminar rooms are primarily on the third floor near the reference room, and then we have a seminar room here on the fourth floor that can be assigned as well.

05-00:22:52

Meeker:

There's quite a bit of public space in this new iteration of The Bancroft Library—open space not occupied by offices or seminar rooms. You have the two-story foyer, you have a fair amount of space down near the security desk, up on the second floor you have a fair amount of space—was that part of the wish list, that there was more room for people to circulate around?

05-00:23:18

Hanff:

There has been a movement for at least 150 years to create *temples of learning*, I think we could call them. A grand statement in support of rare books and manuscripts, and the mission of such collections, is often reflected in its architecture. So indeed, when we did the first remodeling back in 1970-'71, we used Skidmore, Owings & Merrill because they had designed the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale. Bancroft's director, Jim Hart, was here primarily because the head of the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library had recommended the creation of the merger of the Rare Book Collection in the Doe Library with Bancroft, and they needed somebody with international stature and a strong bibliophilic sense to be the faculty director—and Jim Hart fit that bill.

05-00:24:17

Meeker:

So what you're saying is for the current iteration of the building, the gilded dome and everything, was about an elevated temple of learning kind of architecture?

05-00:24:27

Hanff:

It does—I think that was the concept of it, and it was a way of attracting donors, I think, because people tend to gravitate toward things that are very, very well designed and very attractive and inviting. And that was one of the goals we had for this. There were some lovely side benefits for staff. When I got to Bancroft, back in 1970, there were no offices for Public Services staff, so all five or six of us had little desks inside the stacks. And then with the

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill remodel, we gained space on the fifth tier, which had formerly been the Serials Department of the main library. And we had a common room which had desks in it for reference staff. And now, almost all of the middle managers have offices of their own, often with windows. This was not possible on the old iteration, so I think the staff spaces have gotten to be much more comfortable, and they're much more expansive than they were before.

05-00:25:32

Meeker:

What kind of role did the staff play in the design of the different staff spaces?

05-00:25:39

Hanff:

Everyone was invited to participate in a lot of different kinds of meetings to talk about perceived needs and goals for improving operational spaces. The architects were very open to listening. That was not true with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. They were more elevated, in some way—in their own minds anyway.

I don't know whether I told you this before, but there was a funny episode when I first got here. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill had come up with a master plan for the remodeled Bancroft Library. And I was aware that the staff were up in arms about it, and they weren't being listened to. But I was the new kid on the block, and I was invited by Jim Skipper and Jim Hart to come look at the model: a three-dimensional model of the new Bancroft reading room. The chief problem that all the staff saw was that they were preserving access to the Doe Library through The Bancroft Library, and you would come in through the eastern door, you would turn right to go into the reading room, walk past all of the readers working with rare books and manuscripts, and continue on over to the main library. So the reading room had become a corridor. And no one was able to get the word through to the architects—or even really to Jim Skipper and Jim Hart.

And so I walked into the meeting, and I looked at the design, saw that they had really done what I had been told they were doing, and I turned to Jim Hart and I said, "Jim, you've been in many rare book reading rooms all over the world. Did you ever before see one that wasn't a cul-de-sac?" And Jim Hart had not, and Jim Skipper took a large black pen and drew a great big X across the pass-through, and that was the end of that particular problem.

So we had had the experience of not being listened to, and now suddenly we were being encouraged to talk to the architects, and they were visibly taking notes. They had also photographed all the spaces that existed—all of our work areas—so they had a good sense of what we were trying to do and what we did do, and they listened as well as they could. Then at a certain point, Fred Yasaki, who was the library space planner, got tired of all of the interlocutors and shut down that interface. We have some problems that we have to correct,

going forward, because of that. But on the whole, they did listen to us very well.

05-00:28:07

Meeker: What are some of those issues?

05-00:28:08

Hanff: We have challenges in the reading room still. The old reading room functioned well in terms of services to the readers, but we were right on top of the readers in the layout. The reading room reference desk and circulation desk were in a square right in the center of the readers' space, and so every conversation was noisy and distracting. In fact, I have to say that the first thing I noticed about The Bancroft Library, when I arrived in 1970, was it was a very noisy library. And I know that John Barr Tompkins happily said, "I always contend that any scholar worth his salt knows how to concentrate and ignore noise." That's not true for all scholars, but at any rate, we have always been a noisy reading room. So one of the things we had identified is separating the reference area from the readers, and in a way they did that. But then, because we also needed to have free access of moving the collections in and out to the circulation desk, there are no walls. And so all the noise at the reference desk goes into the reading room, so we didn't really achieve the silencing of the reading room yet. Maybe someday we will, but we haven't yet.

05-00:29:23

Meeker: Do you think the reading room is big enough?

05-00:29:25

Hanff: Oh, it's bigger in terms of seating than the previous one—which isn't literally true. The previous reading room had a seating capacity, approved by the fire marshal, of fifty-five. But we learned fairly quickly after we were being heavily used, that we couldn't really service the room if there were more than thirty readers in it. And so we ended up, for quite a few years, having waiting lists. We even did a meeting with faculty consultants to say, "Who should have priority?" And they said it should be first come, first served, faculty included, and so it was always very egalitarian in that way. There could be as many as five or six people waiting to get into the reading room, [waiting] for somebody to leave. I don't think we've had a waiting list in the new space, although we do have, I think, forty-four seats. But there are days when it's very heavily used, and we sometimes have to ask for some extra circulation support.

05-00:30:20

Meeker: During these conversations around space planning, did anything that you would consider to be innovative or forward-looking come out and actually become implemented?

05-00:30:33

Hanff:

That's a good question. For us, that whole introduction of temperature and humidity control was brand new. It's not that—it was a technology that existed. We always were aware that in the Bay Area we have an unusually temperate climate. It's relatively cool; it's not terribly, terribly humid; and it's not terribly, terribly arid. There are a few days each year in both directions. But if you were in libraries in the Midwest or the East, the ambient humidity and the use of coal to fire their furnaces had had enormous deleterious effect on materials. And so I could look at books on the shelves in the Library of Congress, copyright deposit copies, cataloged, classified, put on the shelves—obviously never read again. You could open them up, and they were totally brittle, just sitting there being hit by atmosphere that was full of acid.

You would look at the same books in a California library—and that's even true in Los Angeles, although they've had more pollution than we have up here—and the books would be perfectly fine. So we were fortunate, in some ways, that our environment was pretty good, but we wanted to be more serious about temperature and humidity control to protect the material for the long haul. That was an innovation for us. We had to worry about things like ultraviolet radiation from fluorescent lighting and from windows. And so the windows have all been treated with ultraviolet-filtering film, and we ordered fluorescent tubing that doesn't radiate ultraviolet so much.

05-00:32:08

Meeker:

And also the sealing of the windows—permanently.

05-00:32:10

Hanff:

Yes, probably that too. [laughing]

05-00:32:12

Meeker:

Well, yeah—they sort of used to open. [laughing]

05-00:32:16

Hanff:

Yeah, yeah.

05-00:32:18

Meeker:

One more question about the fundraising in advance of the retrofit. Do you recall if there was a particular message or argument that was made and then distributed amongst the fundraisers to actually get across the finish line and raise the funds that needed to be raised for it?

05-00:32:44

Hanff:

There were promotional materials developed. There was a kind of a—I wouldn't call it a book exactly, but it was a large pamphlet that was elegantly designed. And it talked about the richness of the collections that are an enormous cultural legacy for the people of California, that are already what make Bancroft the way it is. And so it emphasized that. It also emphasized the teaching, and I think maybe, in a way, the building of the seminar rooms was just a confirmation to the donors that we really were serious about that aspect.

One thing that was interesting about Bancroft when I first got here—and remember my background was I was at UCLA-Santa Barbara before that, then I was at the Library of Congress. I saw the rare book department at the Library of Congress and worked in it as a volunteer—or yes, as an intern. And then I was at the Lilly Library at Indiana University. The rare book collection at the Library of Congress and Indiana University's Lilly are truly rare book collections. They are focusing on things that are so fragile and rare that they are not encouraged to be used.

And I got to Bancroft, the Western Americana Bancroft, which is what I was part of initially, and I remember in my training John Barr Tompkins said some things that are interesting to hear, a little bit harsh, but in fact a kind of reality. "We mark our books so that no one will want to steal them," was one of the statements. And, "This is a working library. It is not a rare book library, and we expect our books to be used up." And what I could see, coming in from the Lilly, where everything was pristine, nothing was acquired that wasn't in Lilly condition—it was a standard that they had. The deputy director opened every book package and examined the books to be sure that they were in that condition. Here the books were heavily used; they were often in library binding. The shelves were somewhat rough, in the sense that books were in and out—there was no uniformity of presentation.

It was really a very funky looking library, and I remember thinking: What have I done to myself? Because I had been in a very rarified situation before. But once I was here and saw the nature of the use of the collections, I became part of the Bancroft tradition. I think that one of the things we really do here—and I think a lot of our readers from all over the world notice it—is we want people to have what they need for their research, and we push the use of the collection with great delight and pleasure. And that enjoyment, that we all have in what we're doing, is quite noticeable to our readers.

05-00:35:30
Meeker:

That's interesting. How do you communicate that? How do you let the public know that it's all right to request these materials, and that we expect that you'll use them? Of course you want them to be courteous and not tear pages out. [laughing]

05-00:35:47
Hanff:

We certainly present them, when they register, with what our standards for handling are. We monitor our reading room. The reference librarian strolls away from the reference desk to walk through the reading room, just to see how things are being handled, several times during every session at the reference desk. And then, I think where they really see the enthusiasm is when we get engaged in what they're doing for research or reference help. And we really just, all of us—every single member of the staff, I think, if they have a public interface—go the extra mile to help the people find what they're looking for.

05-00:36:23

Meeker:

Can you talk a little through the process by which the entire library was emptied and then refilled?

05-00:36:31

Hanff:

Yes, it was a big project. We hired Nor-Cal, which is a Bay Area moving service company, and they formed a team of, I think, a dozen fellows—it was all men. There were two foremen, and I don't think I ever anticipated such esprit-de-corps as they had. They knew they were doing something really important. They took enormous pride in it, and it was just really very enjoyable. We had to pack up everything in every direction, but we took care of the manuscript materials ourselves. Those were already in containers. But we also had to help with the decanting of the books. They did a lot of the actual work of placing things in boxes and labeling things. And then we already had space developed in the building downtown, 2121 Allston Way, which was a building we were leasing for the interim period from the [Judah L.] Magnes Museum. And we knew that certain things had to go to storage because there wasn't enough room at Magnes. So it was very carefully engineered, and I think Randy Brandt was probably the chief engineer of that. I don't remember the whole nature of the teamwork. I wasn't so directly involved in it, so for me it was happening.

But examples of the esprit-de-corps—I can mention one particular one. In this building, in the foundation around it, we have something that we call *the moat*. And it's subterranean on the east side of the building, and on the north side and the south side, until the hill drops away and it's no longer subterranean. When the building was built, the architects of the time, Brown, Arthur Brown, put in this space which we call a moat because there's an outer foundational wall as an outer barrier, then there's a gap that may be five feet wide, which is like a corridor. And it's around the complete perimeter of the core of the building. And the purpose of that is that the undergrounds streams, which this hilly country is full of, were not ever to be able to breach the inner wall. And when the architects came through, I walked them through the moat and I said, "Look, this has worked very well. You see absolutely no water stains, so whatever they did, they did it right." And they said, "They did it right, and we're going to preserve that." So indeed, that moat was preserved. So that's the moat.

We stored things in the moat, and then eventually when we were no longer on the level where we had been storing things, and what was left in that area was thought to be Bancroft trash, stuff that could be removed. So I said to Tony Bliss one day, "I wonder if we should go look at the Tier Two moat and see if there's anything of value in it." And he said, "Oh no, it was checked out years ago." But I was suspicious, so I went down and let myself into the moat and walked along, and I found a great pile of cartons, which are the larger boxes, and stacks of old cloth book boxes that had been made for a rare book

collection, and we weren't using the book boxes anymore, so they were just stacked there. Maybe they would have been used again for something else.

But I found that two or three of the cartons in one of the stacks were heavy, so I happened to mention it to one of the Nor-Cal foremen. I said, "I'm thinking of going down and pulling some of these to look at." He said, "Oh, don't do that. We're going to have to vacate that moat anyway, so why don't you just let us bring everything up and put it into your vacating reading room?" We weren't using the reading room during this period. "And you can look at it more easily up here." So they just went down and got it. And so I went and got Tony. I said, "Let's look in the first box." And there was one nothing piece in the first carton. And the next thing I took out was a portfolio, and I opened it up, and it said, "Yosemite Trip #2. Ansel Adams. Original Parmelian prints," a portfolio that we didn't even know we had. It was never cataloged. It must have been something in the rare book collection. It was worth a great deal, in several different ways. It was obvious that the content was worth a great deal to us, but it also had a great deal of monetary value. And so whatever it cost to have the foreman get his staff to move it up, was covered by that discovery. [laughing] And that was the only really significant thing we found that way.

But one of the things you have to do when you're moving libraries is scan the shelves, and scan the shelves again—and then again. Because invariably, things just end up lying flat on a shelf and are overlooked, because everybody is so busy doing other things. And so that was a case of that sort.

05-00:41:14

Meeker:

Do you know if anything was lost?

05-00:41:16

Hanff:

Nothing that we know of was lost.

05-00:41:18

Meeker:

Wow. That's remarkable.

05-00:41:21

Hanff:

Yeah, it was—they were very, very careful, and we engineered the move very carefully as well, so everything was carefully numbered and kept track of.

05-00:41:31

Meeker:

Did the project happen more or less on budget and on time?

05-00:41:36

Hanff:

Yes, I believe it did. We were supposed to be back in the building in 2008, and we definitely were. The moving back in was probably just about as challenging as the moving out, but Nor-Cal brought in the cartons and they opened the cartons, and then they placed the things on the shelves for us.

There's a seismic thing that we can talk about. On the first floor, which has twelve-foot-high ceilings, the compact shelving and the fixed shelving are very tall, and you have special ladders on wheels that—the wheels are flexible, so when you stand on the ladder, the ladder goes to the floor and becomes stable. But as they were locating things on the upper levels of this particular range of stacks, they noticed that the stacks swayed from north to south, and at fourteen inches, at the top. It was quite a noticeable sway, and they commented on it. And so over the next two and a half years, knowing that we had swaying shelves— And I showed people; I walked them in and said, "Look what I can do." And I would push the shelves back and forth, and they could all see this flexibility.

The next two and a half years, we had four different seismologists come through and examine this. And the answer was pretty much the same from every one of them, "Well, it's not life-threatening." And I said, "I'm not only concerned about lives, but also about the collection. And in a big earthquake with all of those shelves swaying like that, I'm afraid that we would begin losing things that fell from twelve feet up to the floor." And so we finally had a big summit meeting with campus officials, library officials, and the shelving company, and went through a review—and the shelving company had come up with a proposed solution. They would, at their expense, completely take everything off of the first floor and put it temporarily in storage—a big project. They would then drill into the concrete ceiling and bolt the swaying shelves to stabilize them to the ceiling. Then they would have to pay for a massive clean-up of all concrete dust, and then pay for everything to be moved back in.

I listened to this very elaborate and very expensive project that they were proposing—and I wasn't being cheeky, I don't think. But maybe I was. I have that capacity. I said, "Tim," who was the lead of that company, "Could you tell us what it would cost to replace the free-standing fixed shelving with the compactors?" Charles told me afterward he was really ticked off that I asked such a stupid question. The answer was, when they gathered all the expense they were proposing to take on their own—\$25,000. So we put in compactors! Compactors have the interesting characteristic that they are locked into tracks on the floor, and apparently are very seismically sound. So we did replace one row of fixed shelving with compactors. And just the other day I was walking through with the same shelving company and the library space planning officers, to consider what we might do—because there are still unused tracks. We're running out of space, so we wanted to see what it would cost us, in phases, to add more compactors. But that's a feature of this peculiar building.

05-00:45:07
Meeker:

During Charles's term as director, can you think of any other significant developments that he presided over?

05-00:45:19

Hanff:

Let me think. It depends on what you mean. Certainly collections came in on his watch that he was extremely instrumental in placing here. Some of them had actually come under his watch earlier than his being the director. One of the most important collections from Spain is the [pronouncing with a Castilian accent] Fernán Núñez manuscript collections. That's N-U-N-E-Z [spells] but he always used the Castilian *th* for the Z. And this was an interesting private family library, where everything that they wanted in the way of a book was hand-transcribed in manuscript. And it seems to me it's sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscript copies of books—it might even be a little bit earlier—but it's several hundred volumes. It's a major research resource, and it shows the erudition of this particular Spanish family in a historic period, and is a wonderful adjunct to the things that we have.

But right after Charles started—he came in the end of 1995—we had the big antiquarian international book fair in Los Angeles. We always send quite a crew of us to the book fairs, and various selectors, and sometimes other staff, to scout for things that would enrich the collections here. And I knew from Walter Brem, our curator of Latin America, that Howard Karno was going to be bringing in manuscript documents that were originally owned by a family in Mexico City, and these were manuscript documents of trials of the Mexican Inquisition dating from about 1580 to 1818. I learned from all of this that the Mexican Inquisition lasted far longer than the Spanish Inquisition. We went down; I started to walk Charles around to meet some of the major booksellers that we deal with a fair amount. Walter came running up to me, and literally grabbed my jacket sleeves and said, “You need to come and look at these documents.” And so I left Charles alone and went over to look at the stuff that Howard Karno had—and looked at them for just a few moments and realized that these were very substantial documents. As I said, they really did date from the 1580s to 1818, and I think there were fifty-three trials that were documented in this way. And this is old manuscript material in leather bindings, soft leather bindings, that were kind of the things that courts might keep on the shelf, almost like suede. So I went back and got Charles, and it was good that I did that, because Charles could read all that handwriting readily enough because he was an early modern Spanish specialist.

And we then had a meeting, and there were eight Bancroft staff at this meeting to consider this potential purchase, plus Lucia Diamond, who was the rare book librarian from the law library, who managed the collection that is called the Robbins Collection. It's an endowed collection with considerable funding. She had hoped to be able to help us with this purchase, but she found that whoever was running the fund for her was not willing to help Bancroft buy these things. But what we evaluated, among ourselves, was that if we could get Karno to accept payment in two successive fiscal years, and we could raise half of the money for the purchase, we could probably do this safely without interfering with ongoing acquisition.

And so I ended up being the person who had to negotiate with Karno, because Walter Brem's specialty was not historic material, and Charles was brand new. So I laid out the terms that I hoped that he would agree to, and one of the things was to get the things off the floor right away. I wanted them brought back to Berkeley that same day, and they were. I think Bill Roberts, the university archivist, was coming back late evening anyway, so I think he just carried the material back with him. And then, I said that we needed about six or seven weeks to evaluate our funding resources to be sure we could manage it. And several things of that sort—the two years, two fiscal years was acceptable to him. He accepted all of my things. The only thing I didn't say to him was, "Walter Brem will be calling the national archives in Mexico to be sure these were not stolen." And they were not stolen.

So we brought them back. I made a couple of suggestions to Charles of people that I thought might be interested in helping us. He made the calls; I did not. And they were purchased completely, with a little more for the conservation work, by the donors. And so we didn't actually spend any endowment money on it. And it was fascinating to me that we could do this. I hadn't done that kind of a direct purchase of such size—it was a significant purchase at the time.

05-00:50:17

Meeker:

Was it a six figure kind of purchase?

05-00:50:18

Hanff:

It was a six figure purchase. And then, a year later, we had a celebration of the acquisition, to show off some of the material, and we invited the donors, who came, and the consul general of Mexico, who brought his young cultural attaché with him. I was chatting with the cultural attaché—one thing I did discover, although I had asked Walter to check with the national archives, and he had done that—what I didn't know was that there was a patrimony law that had just recently come into play in Mexico. Charles and Walter had gone down to the national archives for a visit, and the archivist, in front of her staff, scolded them for having taken those things—or having purchased those things without license. But they were already out of the country by the time we did it, and nothing more was said at that point. But then I was talking to the cultural attaché, and I said, "We're quite sensitive to the reality that these were at one point in Mexico and are now here." He said, "Peter, don't give that any more consideration. We have known where that collection was since 1818, and we never had the resources to buy it from the family that owned it. And Bancroft has always shared, through microfilm and other ways, everything that it gets that has to do with cultural Mexican heritage. So you have kept the collection together, and it otherwise would have been scattered all over the world, so you have done everybody a favor." So I said, "I really appreciate your generosity, and I don't mind saying that at least at Bancroft, we realize that we are still in Alta California."

05-00:51:55

Meeker:

That brings up a really interesting question, something that we haven't talked about much—and that is collection policy. And I'm thinking, particularly beginning in the 1990s in a big way, perhaps even a bit before that, you started to have cultural institutions around the world receiving a fair amount of criticism, either because of running afoul of what would eventually become these patrimony laws that maybe didn't exist, but there was still a cultural sensibility that something should stay in a country. Or more extreme, what institutions like the Getty and others have had to deal with, and that is purchasing, perhaps inadvertently, stolen materials or materials that were not licensed to leave the country, and then having to return those. How does the Bancroft address that, because collecting around Mexico and Central America is part of the collection policy, correct?

05-00:52:55

Hanff:

It is. And we try to be very careful. Indeed, I was trying to be very careful. I just didn't know that the law had changed. And as it turned out, with the full support of the Mexican government through the office of the consul general, we got away with it. But if I had known that before, we would have done it differently. We have occasionally been approached about things that are here from long ago, and we have to be very careful about this, because there are some aspects of the law that say that because we have cataloged everything publicly, and it's internationally available through the online catalog and has been for quite a few years, there's a kind of a built in statute of limitations. But it varies from country to country, including—the United States has its rules, but other countries may have their rules.

And then, in the collection that's probably the most affected by this, on an ongoing basis—the papyrus collection—Todd Hickey is actually the one who wrote the international standards. I realized the pain it caused him—although he believed what he had done was the right thing—because we were offered some manuscript documents that were in British Columbia, papyrus manuscript documents, and they were central to the kinds of things that we collect. But there is a requirement that you have a clear chain of ownership provenance to a date before a certain date—let's just say the date is 1990, and it might be that date—but in this case that information was not available. There was no way we could find out if the things had really left before the current Egyptian rules, and so he had to let the collection go. And I remember the agony he was in, because he wrote the rules and he had to follow the rules, and yet he believed the rules were right. So that was a collection we turned down.

If we should find that we have something stolen, then we are obliged—ethically and perhaps legally—to undo that problem. But there are gray areas that when—we have quite a lot of collections here that came in when things were very casually handled by various county resources of the State of California even. And so you never quite know. Again, there are things that

have happened through time that can be rescued by us in some ways. There was the secularization of the Franciscan missions by the Mexican government—I think it was 1835—and the collections wandered or they were destroyed. They just didn't survive. Some pieces did, and Bancroft himself, in the nineteenth century, took advantage of what was available in the market to acquire a fair amount of that, and over the years other things have come in.

I don't think I've told you this before, but there was an adventure I had with Walter Brem, when I got a phone call from somebody named Ruy [E.] Kern. Have we talked about this fellow?

05-00:55:59

Meeker:

No.

05-00:56:00

Hanff:

Ruy Kern said he wanted to present to The Bancroft Library a gift of a Mexican manuscript volume. So I took Walter—I don't have Spanish. Strangely enough, that wasn't a language I studied, so I've been at Bancroft as a fraud all these years. I have a little Russian, French, and German, but not Spanish. So I took Walter Brem with me, and we were driving up to Vallejo to look at this material. And I said, "I don't know the name *Ruy*. Is that a Spanish name?" He said, "It is a Spanish name, but it's not a common name." And I said, "I wonder if this person might be related to the German Kerns who married into one of the Spanish land families?" It turned out that wasn't the case. But we got to the house; I knocked on the door. Ruy Kern opened the door, and I looked right at him and I said, "You're a Vallejo!" He looked just like the Vallejo portraits, and he was a Vallejo. His grandmother—or maybe it was his great-grandmother—had gone into Mission San Jose, which is actually in Alameda County, not in Santa Clara County, after the secularization, and grabbed the baptismal record book from the mission, and that's what he was presenting us. And so there's nobody to claim that that belongs somewhere else, so it's here—preserved and accessible.

05-00:57:19

Meeker:

Have these kinds of issues, in particular, over the last twenty years, nations creating these patrimony laws and being more protective and concerned about what they consider their national heritage leaving their borders—has that impacted the collection policy of a library that does collect internationally?

05-00:57:41

Hanff:

I'm not sure it impacts the collection policy as such, but it would certainly have an impact on a judgment about whether to acquire. That's not quite the same thing as a collection policy.

05-00:57:52

Meeker:

Right.

05-00:57:53

Hanff:

And so because we primarily deal with people in the antiquarian book trade—and we hope honorable people in the antiquarian book trade—we do rely a certain amount on their good sense, their judgment, their awareness of the international trade laws. And so when we acquire things, we usually feel that the title is clear. A mistake can be made, or there can be some deceit, in which case the way it works is that that bookseller, if it's discovered it has sold you a stolen book, has to buy it back from you. And so you may not be able to assure that it goes back to where it rightfully belongs, but you end up giving it back. It's no longer with you. I don't think that has happened to us—at least I don't recall such an incident.

But I do know of a similar situation in the music library on campus. There was a manuscript score for an orchestral piece, and I'm trying to remember which British composer it was. It was a twentieth century composer of some name, but I have actually forgotten—and maybe it shouldn't be mentioned anyway. But the music librarian at the time called me up for help, because they'd had that in the music library for about forty years. And it was cataloged publicly, and at some point the widow of the composer discovered that they had it, and she could demonstrate that it actually had never been given to the person who placed it in the music library, who was a conductor. He had it as a score to conduct, and had come to California, was there for a long time, and at his death it was just part of his effects and it was there. And so the music librarian was hoping I could help him figure out how to rescue the situation, and I investigated it and I said, "I'm afraid there's nothing you can do but return it." And it was returned.

05-00:59:45

Meeker:

Fascinating. You know, I think that this started during Charles's term—and that was the Magnes merger.

05-00:59:54

Hanff:

Yes.

05-00:59:54

Meeker:

Did you play much of a role in those negotiations, and can you—?

05-00:59:59

Hanff:

A little bit. Maybe more even than I had wanted to. I thought it was—I didn't think that was my responsibility to do it, but in fact, I often went with him to meetings, at his request, for the discussions. I had known the Magnes Museum as an enterprise. Of course, as I said a little while ago, we rented space from the Magnes Museum in the building in downtown Berkeley. And it was after Seymour Fromer died, who was the founder of Magnes, that two of the major figures in the foundation for Magnes figured that it was probably time to consider placing Magnes in a more permanent institutional relationship. And so they had already tried one thing—they had tried to merge with the Jewish Museum in San Francisco, and that didn't work very well and there was a

divorce, they said. And so we went into this with our eyes reasonably wide open, and it was complicated.

It was dealt with a great deal by the attorneys for both parties: the university and the Magnes Foundation. And so I was being fairly scrupulous in trying to read the various contractual proposals, and there was a problem with one of the drafts. We had had a meeting in—let's just say February—and I read the draft that resulted. And it stipulated that certain senior staff of Magnes would become temporary employees of the university, for a period of two years, during which time we would evaluate what we needed in the way of permanent staff. Then there was a new draft in April, and I read it. Charles didn't like reading legal documents, and Tom Leonard, the university librarian, had looked at it but had been told by Irene Kim in University Relations, that it was just cosmetic changes. But when I read it, I realized that those temporary staff were now listed as career staff, which meant that we had an obligation to pay their salaries after the end of two years.

I went directly to Tom and said, "Look, have you read this?" He said, "I looked at it quickly." And I said, "Read it, please." And then I showed him the paragraph, and he said, "Will you please call Julie Conner, who is campus counsel?" And so I sent it to her, and there were more negotiations and adjustments. And I did have some role in this—it was not always easy. I really enjoyed working with the people when they were with us. As it happened, there was an adjustment, which I think is still ongoing, and I don't think this has been fully resolved. George Breslauer retired as—was he vice chancellor and provost?—and was called back to become the director of Magnes. So the museum functions of Magnes, and the staff in downtown Berkeley at 2121 Allston Way, report to him—but the collections of books and manuscripts are primarily ours to deal with.

05-01:03:14

Meeker:

So the merger was more or less completed, but then some of the functions were spun off to an independent—?

05-01:03:21

Hanff:

Right, and I think that's an ongoing—it's not fully resolved, but it's slowly migrating in a direction of two different places that are called Magnes.

05-01:03:31

Meeker:

Thinking prospectively, there are a large number of interesting community-based collections around the Bay Area. It's not always easy for a community-based archive or historical society to make ends meet. If another one came to you, in your capacity here as deputy director, how would you respond to that as far as bringing on a whole major collection?

05-01:04:04

Hanff:

We've done this a few times. We have generally done this through fairly intense negotiation. We have the curatorial group, and we try—that includes

people from Technical Services, because they end up bearing the brunt of the physical preparation work, the cataloging, the creation of finding aids and such, and we try to evaluate impact on us and relevance of the collection's content to our primary mission. So where we have organizational documents in some abundance, and would add additional ones, are in environmental activist organizations. We started a long time ago being the archive of the Sierra Club, and we've added Save the Bay and other organizations like that through time. Those seem, to us, to fit our general mandate. Thus far at least, we haven't limited ourselves too much in the way of space and cost. I'm not sure that that approach will persist in the coming years, because the university itself has gotten to a point where it's wondering how it's going to sustain itself going forward in time. But those are things that will have to be considered at various points as we move forward.

But we look at some things askance. I know that some years ago—not too many years ago—the estate of the King of Torts—what was his name? Melvin Belli wanted to place his archive with us, and we don't collect law, and we don't normally collect legal collections. David de Lorenzo had been a law librarian at Harvard, so he had some strong sense of that. He and I had both agreed we didn't want Melvin Belli's papers. No doubt, they were interesting culturally. He was a very flamboyant figure in California and American culture, but it wasn't the kind of thing we felt we should have. Plus, a lot of it would have been attorney-client privileged information, so we said no. But then they came back, and David de Lorenzo took a certain quantity of them. Even all these years later, there are still things coming out of the woodwork. "Do you want this part of the Melvin Belli archive?" And I always have to look at them very carefully and say, "What is the content?" Then I consult with the other curators, and we evaluate whether there is enough in this particular clump to justify bringing it in. There are other cases where we've taken in papers where we can't provide immediate access to them. Over a long period of time of having sealed the collections—and we don't do it often, but we do have some sealed collections—there will be less sensitivity about what's in them, and then they can become open for scholars. So a certain part of what we do is holding on to, warehousing for the future, for a day when those things can be opened and made more readily accessible.

05-01:07:13
Meeker:

I wonder in this current day and age of limited financial resources as well as limited space, how do those considerations begin to impact collections?

05-01:07:28
Hanff:

I'm wondering the same thing. I don't have an answer to that. We are in the middle, right now, of helping the university librarian push for the addition of another wing to the Northern Regional Library Facility in Richmond. The drawings have already been done. I think, actually, they have got drawings for two or three more wings that were already executed for the site. But the State of California and the university city both began slowing down on the support

for the large collections. But I think we have persuaded the Office of the President that this is a crucial thing to do. But after this one, I'm not so sure we'll be able to push in that direction, and then we will really begin, maybe for the first time, thinking carefully about how much volume we can actually reasonably manage. That has not been a primary consideration in the long time that I've been here, but I am aware that it could become one.

05-01:08:22

Meeker:

What about deaccessioning to weed out or thin out collections of material that is now deemed to be irrelevant or duplicative, or something along those lines?

05-01:08:36

Hanff:

It doesn't happen very often, because we try to be sure that when we take it in in the first place, it has permanent research value. But most of our gift agreements, especially since we've been—we really didn't do gift agreements in such a formal way until Bonnie Hardwick was here, but she understood the value of them, so since she was here we've established a series of gift agreements reviewed by counsel. But we do stipulate in most of them that we can determine that the things that are not relevant to the collection or the research purposes can either be returned to the donor or destroyed. Mostly it's destroyed, because when they give it to you they don't want it back. But we do have some outs along those lines, but very seldom have we had to deal with the reality of a deaccession. And then, using the judgment to prune a collection could be done, but it's a costly and intense undertaking, and I don't think we've had much experience trying to do it.

05-01:09:46

Meeker:

You said that Charles was here for a year, and then you were moved into the position of deputy director. In that year, what was your title, do you recall?

05-01:09:59

Hanff:

Yes, up until that point I was still called coordinator of technical services.

05-01:10:04

Meeker:

Can you tell me about your new job description vis-à-vis what the director was doing? What was your relationship, and what were your areas that you headed up versus what Charles was doing?

05-01:10:22

Hanff:

As deputy director I have two large areas of Bancroft reporting to me. The Public Services operation reports to me and the curators report to me, and the other position, head of technical services, which became associate director, handles all of the Technical Services units. I think that one may have more FTE than I do. But the public services is one of the major things we exist for, so that's an important part, and it has a fairly good-sized staff. And the curators, when we're fully staffed, number eight to ten, depending on which configuration we're using. So my role was primarily that. But I can just say, in terms of general operational things, I run the curatorial meeting, which has evolved through time into something that ends up being something of a

consultative body. The director usually sits with the meetings as well. And while we're really focusing mostly on collections, we talk about other issues relating to public service, technical services, and general policies, so it becomes a kind of a large middle management group that's considering what needs to be done or evolved or changed through time.

05-01:11:38

Meeker: And this is the BCOL meeting, right?

05-01:11:39

Hanff: Yeah, the BCOL meeting. And you're a part of it.

05-01:11:42

Meeker: [laughing] Yes.

05-01:11:43

Hanff: And you do show up!

05-01:11:44

Meeker: On occasion. Fridays are often a good day for me to do interviews, or a good day for my interviewees to be interviewed. Tell me a little bit more about the BCOL, and how and why it has evolved in the way that it has.

05-01:12:01

Hanff: When Charles was first here, we had another group that was called Bancroft Administrative Group, BAG. It still exists, but doesn't meet frequently. And then we had another group—I'm trying to remember what we called it—but it was actually the heads of the divisions of Bancroft, so that was a true middle manager group at a slightly higher level of administrative responsibility. And that one basically just stopped meeting, and because it was not meeting—and the same people were attending BCOL we just morphed BCOL into taking over that function.

Elaine Tennant's perspective on it interests me, because she's looking at it with fresh eyes. She arrived and started coming to the BCOL meetings, and she said it fascinated her to watch, because the discussions there, which are focused on collections, involve people with responsibilities for widely differing aspects of the collections at Bancroft, and we present to each other information about why we think this particular acquisition is important or we argue against it. She sees a lot of give and take there and a great deal of collegial consideration. And so she sees it as a group that is doing the decisions about the collection, rather than a curator being solely responsible for a particular collection.

05-01:13:27

Meeker: That's interesting, but I want to push back a little bit on that, because my experience, when I've been to it—as observed—is that a curator will present something, and because that person is advocating for something and they have an area of expertise presumably related to what is being accessioned, there

seems to be a reluctance among others in the room to do anything—really to question it or to ask for a more thorough justification than what is provided.

05-01:14:07

Hanff: You've obviously not been at some of the meetings that have been rather heated.

05-01:14:10

Meeker: Okay.

05-01:14:11

Hanff: Yeah, we have sometimes quite heated discussions. It's also true that we sometimes will acquiesce because we think the person is making an adequate case for an acquisition where we might generally think maybe this isn't the most appropriate thing for the library in the long run. But on the whole, the curators are pretty careful to pick things that seem appropriate to them, and usually if it seems appropriate to them, it probably would seem appropriate to all of us because we all are building the collection in unison.

05-01:14:44

Meeker: One thing I've wondered about that meeting is Steven Black is the keeper of the endowment list, and figures out how much is left and what's appropriate to be drawn from different accounts. Are the curators each given an equal budget each year?

05-01:15:03

Hanff: No, not at all.

05-01:15:05

Meeker: How is that managed?

05-01:15:08

Hanff: It's actually managed in the process of the BCOL. Steven keeps the numbers, which are really maintained by the Library Business Office, so he has reports and he monitors the funding available. He also has been doing it for a long time, so he's pretty much aware of what the restrictions are on the various endowments. The curators may have—well, I don't know—Theresa Salazar is the manager of one of the curatorial endowments, and that's the Harvey Fund, and that is a fund that is for the purpose of buying books and manuscripts relating to California, Oregon, and Washington. It's very restricted, and it's a very sizable endowment, and so that's a fund that she is the primary manager of and she uses it a great deal in the meetings. But she is sometimes able to extend it to help one of the other curators, if the material was appropriate, even though it might really be thought of as a rare book acquisition. The Rare Book Collection has a few funds that it can tap, but they're almost always director's discretionary funds. There's nothing really managed by the individual curators. In fact, I guess all of them are funds that are at the discretion of the director, so the fact is that in practical terms, we do spend

them in the ways that you've seen at the meetings, but we don't actually have a budget for the curators.

05-01:16:39

Meeker:

Is that something that's ever been discussed, or has it just been a collegiality that has created a culture by which one curator doesn't dominate purchases in one year?

05-01:16:49

Hanff:

Well, we're lucky that the collection that is the biggest has the biggest endowment. I guess in the past—I would say in all of my time here—Jim Hart was the sole arbiter of expenditure during his time. It wasn't that way with me. I really felt that I have these specialists, these experts—I want them to tell me what they think and why they think it, and that's sort of the way that evolved. But the way the money is managed is, since it's endowment money, primarily opportunistic. We never really know what's going to become available to us. There are other funds that we spend in a different way, but you don't see those discussed at BCOL, because anything that costs less than \$2,000 doesn't go to BCOL for discussion. That's determined directly by the curator, depending on available funds. And we have traditionally had about \$180,000 a year of what we called state funds, coming through as part of the appropriation of the university library. The way we handled that was to use that money for trade books, because that's basically the way library funding from the state is spent; you buy your trade books, books that are available in the trade. And the money that we were talking about at BCOL is money that is to buy special collections material, the rare and unique, so it's like two kinds of money, and you would never see the other part being discussed. And we handled the state funding in a variety of ways. We'd certainly buy individual things, because we see them in a catalog or they were offered to us. But we do use approval plans, which means that we have certain vendors or companies that are constantly looking for things that we've defined, that we would like to have the monographs that are published come in, and those are set up and that's pretty automatic. Curators often, in fact, don't deal with that. They've set up the limitations and definitions, and then that's something the acquisitions staff just manage on an ongoing basis.

05-01:19:02

Meeker:

Fascinating. It's good to have the explanation for how that works out. I'd like actually to move on in the timeline and to ask about the transition from Charles Faulhaber to Elaine Tennant. Charles Faulhaber had already retired from his teaching position here, so it seems natural that he would leave the directorship of the Bancroft as well, at a certain time. Were there any particular events that he communicated to you that said that he was ready to step down?

05-01:19:37

Hanff:

Well, he had said that when he finished the campaign and the building was finished, he probably would retire fairly soon afterward. He stayed several

years beyond that. I don't know exactly what thinking he had about when it was time for him to retire, but he did let me know that he was going to aim for such and such a date, and he did retire. And then for a very brief time I was once again acting director, but it wasn't a long interval this particular time. Elaine Tennant was a candidate for the director position, and we all knew her, just as we had all known Charles, because she was a heavy user of the research services at Bancroft, and I think even more than Charles. Maybe because the German Department had more students, or maybe it was just Elaine's approach to it, but we saw a lot more of her graduate students working in Bancroft over the years than I remember seeing of Charles's students. She set up quite a few courses that were taught within our seminar rooms, and really did a lot of steering of students our way. So when she became a candidate, it was a candidacy that we all thought was a good one.

05-01:20:48

Meeker:

And it was a competitive search. There were a few—

05-01:20:50

Hanff:

It was, again, yes.

05-01:20:51

Meeker:

—a few candidates. I assume you were on the search committee—yes? No?

05-01:20:59

Hanff:

Let me think about that. I don't think so. I don't think staff were on the search committee. I think it was done at a higher level than that. I was certainly involved in interview sessions, but that's a little different from what you're asking. I don't think we had a—it wasn't a staff search; it was a faculty search, in effect.

05-01:21:21

Meeker:

Did you get a sense that the search committee was interested in what the staff had to say about the different candidates?

05-01:21:27

Hanff:

I think they heard us, yeah, I do. In fact, in a funny way, with Charles's appointment, they knew what everybody said. It's just that there were two viable candidates seemingly, and one wasn't sure which was the better of the two, so it took an awfully long time. And it really—it was the stalling of the Academic Senate that first time that caused this to happen the way it did.

05-01:21:55

Meeker:

Was there much of that kind of uncertainty at the time that Elaine was hired?

05-01:22:01

Hanff:

Not that I'm aware of.

05-01:22:04

Meeker:

Did you get a sense of what her agenda was coming into this position?

05-01:22:12

Hanff:

Yes, I think she was keen on building up what Charles, I think, had really started, and that was to provide a more stable support for the research groups of which you were a part. So Mark Twain already was fairly well funded by that time, and you [the Oral History Center] have become better funded since she got here, and she has hoped that the Center for Tebtunis Papyri would attract funding. That one has proved harder to find the funding for. We've got interesting groups in the nation, and in California, that are interested, but thus far the funding hasn't fallen into place, but she was really trying to stabilize the groups and provide them with endowment support that would allow them to continue their various functional areas with good support.

05-01:23:08

Meeker:

Any other particular issues around the public role of the library, the role of students in the library, things along those lines?

05-01:23:18

Hanff:

Well, I've worked more closely with her in connection with the Friends. Charles didn't need my attention for the Friends operation, and Elaine has preferred that I be present for that. I think she's also used me in a slightly different way. If she is away, I step into going to things like Lead Team in the main library. We didn't have that kind of relationship to the library administration when Charles was here, so I didn't have a role to step into. But in times when she's planning a longer absence, then I substitute for her in that way. But I think she basically was looking forward to increasing endowment for the support of the collections, in addition to the endowment to support the research groups.

05-01:24:10

Meeker:

That's a very difficult thing to do, just development work overall, right? And then endowments are oftentimes a difficult sell for people who are interested in making donations, because they want to donate to something that they're going to see happen in their lifetime.

05-01:24:30

Hanff:

Yes.

05-01:24:32

Meeker:

Have you gotten a sense about how she's managed to create a convincing case? Have you had conversations with her along these lines about what you think has worked over previous years to help make a convincing case to donors, for the Bancroft?

05-01:24:53

Hanff:

It's not the kind of thing we normally talk about at great length. She did expect more support from development specialists. We really had no direct staff supporting development when Charles was here. Dave Duer, who was the head of the Library Development Office, was earmarked to be the primary staff support for the campaign for the building, so I think in that sense we had

support, but Dave worked out of his own unit, not within Bancroft. When Elaine came, she had been promised a development officer who would work directly for Bancroft, and we had one for about a year and a half I guess it was, but she was ill and she wasn't renewed. And then we were left without support, and I think Elaine required more support, because remember, Elaine has continued teaching. She is here as a half-time director, and she was much more actively teaching in all the time that she's been here than seemed to be the case with Charles. I don't quite know how he was managing his time, but I am more aware of constraints on her time because of that. We have some hope, now that the new university librarian is here and is developing this stronger new development program, that we will see direct support again—or at least much more focused support than we've had over the earlier years of Elaine's tenure.

05-01:26:25

Meeker:

I'm curious about the concept of a part-time faculty director of The Bancroft Library. Do you have a particular opinion on that now that you've seen what The Bancroft Library leadership can be from a variety of different perspectives? Hart, who was basically a full-time director—is that correct?

05-01:26:49

Hanff:

He was, yeah, he was—I think he was always a full-time director.

05-01:26:52

Meeker:

Charles, who maybe started out more part-time and became more full-time.

05-01:26:57

Hanff:

Yeah.

05-01:26:58

Meeker:

And then your role as a full-time staff director.

05-01:27:01

Hanff:

Right.

05-01:27:03

Meeker:

And now a faculty director who is very keen on maintaining a teaching profile, so therefore is part-time.

05-01:27:11

Hanff:

Right, to me it's workable. It's just a matter of having enough staff to provide a variety of services. So basically, as deputy director I'm a general manager of a large part of the library, and I think from Elaine's perspective I also back her up in general oversight of everything. But if we were expecting development support and didn't get it, which is really what happened, we were kind of handicapped. We didn't have—as I said, we didn't have a dedicated development person before, but we had the assignment of Dave Duer when Charles was starting, but then there were other people who joined the campaign group, that were really strong in the community, and helped that big building campaign be a success. Elaine has had considerable successes, but

they have not been supported so much by the additional staff, and that has been a problem that has disappointed her, I think. That's why we have some hope, for this new iteration, that there will be people in place. I think it was partly that Tom Leonard, who was the university librarian—and he was basically in a long, slow retirement. He was moving toward retirement, and so he wasn't willing to make certain decisions that would have created very strong support for Bancroft in a particular iteration. He was leaving that to the next university librarian.

05-01:28:41

Meeker:

Interesting. What about her engagement and management of the Friends group? How did that differ from—?

05-01:28:53

Hanff:

She went right into that. I'm not sure that she—I didn't observe what Charles was doing with the Friends; I wasn't connected then. But I have watched her do that—and she has relied a lot on the Friends as a development group to support her program and Bancroft. I helped a little bit, just before she got here. In that brief interim, I went to a council meeting. The reason that happens is that there has to be a university employee who serves technically as the secretary of the corporation of the Friends of The Bancroft Library—that's a requirement of university rules. So I went to this meeting, and I was little cautious. I hadn't been at a meeting for a long time. I didn't even know several of the people there. I was meeting them for the first time. This was done in the law office in a high-rise in the Embarcadero Center, and I had a suggestion to make, which was that if they were looking for something to support, they might want to consider setting up a fund to support the incoming director for exhibitions, because I knew they were going to continue being a priority. We had a new exhibition gallery—it cost about \$50,000 of real money to set up each exhibition. And I proposed to them that they might give me \$100,000—and they were so glad to do it that I should have asked for more than I thought! I did it cautiously, but they just accepted this as wisdom, and so she came in and there was a little nest egg sitting there waiting for her to step right in and begin her program in that regard. Exhibitions are extremely important to Elaine as well, and as you know, in the new situation, we have three exhibition areas that we manage on an ongoing basis, so that was something that was helpful to her. And the fact that the Council of the Friends was there to provide that kind of support, I think just gave her the impetus to turn to them and say, "I like that support, and I need more of it." And so I think that's the approach she has used.

05-01:31:00

Meeker:

During Elaine's tenure, how are new Friends Council members selected? What is she looking for?

05-01:31:08

Hanff:

That I don't quite know. I'm not on the committee that does that kind of investigation. She certainly is looking for people who can either be direct and

support financially, or are well connected enough in the community to do the same thing. But we have a variety of types of council members, and some of them might be more interested in helping great promotional programs, and that happens as well. So I don't quite know what her priorities are for that. I only sit—I'm not on any of the real committees of the Friends. I'm there at the council meetings, and I sit at some of the financial meetings, but I don't deal with the nominating committee or any of those things.

05-01:31:52

Meeker:

One thing it seems like hasn't happened much during her tenure is all-staff meetings. I know that Charles would hold those fairly regularly. Is there a reason for that?

05-01:32:06

Hanff:

What do you mean by an all-staff meeting? An early bird?

05-01:32:08

Meeker:

I remember early birds, yeah.

05-01:32:10

Hanff:

Yeah, I don't know. I don't think there's a particular reason. I think. Now, one thing that Charles was doing that Elaine has not done is—remember in his early years—you were probably on staff already—we went through a series of organizational reviews. Do you remember that?

05-01:32:28

Meeker:

No, I don't really remember that. I got here in about 2003.

05-01:32:29

Hanff:

Maybe you came later. I know that Richard Cándida-Smith was involved in that, because we were trying to come up with plans for the future—strategic planning, we called it. And I remember the groaning of staff. I think we got through three different strategic planning programs with Charles in his first several years here, and I don't know that Elaine finds those particularly helpful—and I don't think the staff did either, really. So that's one kind of meeting we haven't had too much of. But we are actually planning another early bird fairly soon, to retrain us in emergency response. What other kinds—tell me what you're remembering about them.

05-01:33:14

Meeker:

You know, I don't remember them particularly that often—maybe once every month or two, but it was just an early bird, and I remember the people from different parts of the library were asked to provide an update, a group testimony.

05-01:33:32

Hanff:

Yeah, I can remember some of those. I think if Elaine had found that there was a grassroots interest in that, she probably would have done it, but I don't think she's had that kind of sense of it from the people. We have other kinds of meetings in Bancroft that didn't happen when Charles was here. There's

now a Public Services Group that meets, and that pretty much began even when Shannon Supple was still here, because the staff felt they needed a little bit more direction than they were getting. And so I started sitting in on those meetings with them, and then Shannon left, and so I continue to sit in on those meetings, and I think they're very productive. It's a very smart group of people, and they're very, very committed to public service and sometimes they need to get some feedback from management, so I'm there for that. And they've got good ideas, and sometimes the ideas are a little bit off to the side and need a bit of refocus, from my perspective, so that's been happening.

05-01:34:32

Meeker:

I'm curious about staff turnover. I don't know if recent years have seen more. But has this been something that has been of concern to you and Elaine?

05-01:34:45

Hanff:

Well—

05-01:34:47

Meeker:

Particularly in senior positions, thinking about Technical Services and Public Services.

05-01:34:53

Hanff:

We've been worrying about it, because we're all mature. I've been here for such a long time, and I think a senior member of the staff in lots of different ways, but age is one of them. David de Lorenzo basically was in a position to take retirement, because he really wanted more money than the university could provide, and he found a way of doing that by retiring here and going to Oregon. We were disappointed that that happened, because he'd been really a strong member of the management group. Shannon was really interested in a different kind of library than we were, and I don't think she realized it until she was in the position, so she wasn't here very long. The rest of the departures have pretty much been retirements. I haven't seen people leaving through disaffection, as such. But one of the problems has been that we haven't been able to replace people. And then I just saw that news from Carol Christ yesterday, about 450 positions having been lost in the current year, and more needed to be lost. So I don't know—it makes me nervous.

05-01:36:00

Meeker:

Well, it does make you nervous, and as somebody who hires people himself, I'm always worried about our ability to pay competitive salaries in the Bay Area.

05-01:36:13

Hanff:

Right.

05-01:36:14

Meeker:

I have no idea how Systems does it, when they're trying to hire from a pool of individuals who can get paid twice as much in the private sector.

05-01:36:25

Hanff:

I don't know much about how the Systems things work. I have watched one or two of the really good ones go out and come back. I think that there may be benefits that the university offers to its employees that are stronger than in the private sector. I'm guessing that; I don't know it for sure. I've never tried to do a comparison. But I think that people went out and came back because here they had a great deal of security and a significant role and a lot of admiration from their colleagues, which maybe they didn't find in the private sector. I'm just talking about the Systems Office when I say that.

Here we've had some good recruitments of late. We finally, after a twelve-year hiatus, have a curator of Latin American material. I am right now in the middle of recruiting for a new head of Technical Services, and we will have our first candidate interview on July 5, and the second one is, I think on July 18. I'm leaving town tomorrow, so I'm anxious, because I'm the search committee chair, so I'm sending things out—even this morning I was sending things out to the search committee. The announcement is coming in from the Library Human Resources Office, and I think it came in just before we started the interview session this morning, so I've got to get that circulated. And then we also have a Public Services position—the description has gone through review by the CAPA, the Committee on Appointment, Promotion, and Advancement. I think it's now ready to be posted, and I'm waiting for that to happen next.

05-01:38:05

Meeker:

Before we run out of time today, I want to talk a bit about your Oz studies and the publication of this great book from the Book Club of California. But I do want to wrap up the Bancroft chapter of this and get your sense on what you think the most critical issues facing The Bancroft Library are today—and you might have just referred to one of them there in talking about the staff recruitments. But from where you stand, having been here for decades, you're in as good a position as anyone to diagnose the real challenges.

05-01:38:50

Hanff:

Yeah, the real challenges continue to be staff support for the programs that we have defined as ours. We have been without a historian of science for a long number of years, and when I say that I mean a historian. We had originally started the program with research historians as staff members, and there were two in a row for the History of Science and Technology Program. But when Robin Rider left for Stanford, she was never replaced directly. We then had David Farrell, who had been an assistant university librarian, come over to us—and he'd been in special collections in the history of science in earlier parts of his career, so he came in as university archivist and took on, in addition, some support for the History of Science Program. But then he retired a number of years ago, and once again, I'm filling in in the background as well as I can. I'm helping the associate university archivist with dealing with faculty papers in the sciences, but I also deal with other collections that are history of science collections. And it's not a program that—I don't know, in

the long run maybe we will look at it and say, "This is a program that we started rather late, and maybe we just can't sustain it." I don't know whether we will get to a position like that, but it certainly shows as a position that is not filled on our roster of positions.

And right now we don't have a university archivist. We've got Kathi [Neal] as the associate university archivist, but we need a different kind of a figure, we think, to be the university archivist, and the position's vacant. It could, perhaps, be recruited again. We had some hope when Jeff MacKie-Mason arrived, who came in and said, "What do you mean you have one or two people doing archives? We had sixteen [people] at Michigan." I said, "We never have that kind of support here." So I don't know. I can believe that at a certain point maybe it's time to do an organizational review of the sort we did quite a few years ago, and see whether we have resources or commitments in our minds to go forward. But I think we believe all of these things are important, and so at the moment we think of them as positions that are vacant.

05-01:41:07

Meeker:

Do you have any off-the-cuff thoughts, if you will, about what a reorganized Bancroft Library might look like, if in fact you think there is even a justification for reorganizing portions of the work that's being done here?

05-01:41:30

Hanff:

That's a good question. Probably I don't have a vision of a different approach to it. The support for reference and the public could be stronger than it is. We've talked a little bit about that before. The positions of reference librarians morphed, through time, into curatorial positions, and that leaves a void in terms of adequate staffing for the basic main reference function. And in a library like Bancroft, there was a virtue to having reference librarians. We were all generalists, and even now, even though we've got curators who are specialists, they all have broader awareness of the collections than just their own narrow special area. But I think in the previous iteration we really had a number of reference librarians who had a stronger command of everything, and I haven't seen that evolve or sustain itself as a model. I was part of the dismantling of it when we switched to the curatorial thing, and I thought maybe something between the two extremes would be an appropriate thing. And so I could say, and I've actually said to them, maybe it's time for us to consider creating some new positions, if they should become available in this climate, that are simply reference positions.

05-01:42:56

Meeker:

Do you think that The Bancroft Library should be doing more what might be called public engagement work, making the collections accessible and intelligible to a broader public, beyond the core constituencies of scholars and students on campus?

05-01:43:17

Hanff:

We think we do that, to some extent, through Calisphere and the Online Archive of California. Actually, you had the exhibition on gay and lesbian things, and that was something that became funded so that it became a K-12 program.

And yes, we like that kind of an approach, and I think at the moment the mechanics of being outreach-focused in that way are challenging, because the staffing is limited. On the other hand, I have done—actually, this was something I did some years ago. It was just a one-time thing, but we had students, gifted students from a bilingual school in Oakland who were in the fourth and fifth grade, I think. So I had one oral historian and me doing the presentation to these young people! And Charles came to greet them, and it was a bilingual school of Spanish and English, and it was good for me, because as I said before, I don't have Spanish—and Charles always speaks with Castilian pronunciation. And so after he left I made a joke to the students, "He always uses Castilian pronunciation, although I have heard him use Mexican pronunciation." And it turned out their teacher was Castilian, and so the joke was doubly funny to them. The oral history thing meant a lot to them, and the presentation on the scope of the collection, particularly in my way of focusing on it, the primary sources that deal with the Mexican cultural heritage of Alta California, meant a lot to them as well.

And then I watched the students with considerable interest, because as I said, it's a bilingual school. Some of them had Spanish as a native language—one had Portuguese as a native language. Others were from California, and so if they had Spanish, it was not formal Spanish; it was household Spanish. And the students, starting to look at the manuscript documents, clustered, two or three in a group, because they each had skill sets. I watched them integrate their approach to understanding what they were looking at, in a way that I wouldn't have anticipated—although now that we've got group learning emphasized in the Moffitt Library—I said, "These kids knew about group learning early!" And that was kind of fun. We all do some public program and outreach, and invite the public in, but we don't have a lot of resources for this. I've just had to deal with a request from a schoolteacher who wants to bring 300 high school students to Bancroft as a group to, in part, look at the gallery.

05-01:45:53

Meeker:

[laughing] How do you respond to that! Right.

05-01:45:57

Hanff:

And then there was a panic, because the gallery can't handle that large a crowd. But we have a policy—groups like that can come in, but there have to be two teachers, and no more than twenty students at a time. And I said, "Fall back on the policy. We developed it for a reason." And so that's something that's in the background right as we talk. I don't know what's going to happen, but I think the information went back to the teacher.

05-01:46:23

Meeker:

Interesting. You know, Elaine I think has been director for five or six years at this point in time, so it's probably premature to be talking about what's next. But based on your observation of several directors, as well as fulfilling that role yourself, when it's time to look for a new director, what kind of qualities do you think are essential for a successful person?

05-01:46:49

Hanff:

I think the person has to be very scholarly focused, has to understand the politics of the Academic Senate. I think that's been extremely important in the history of The Bancroft Library.

05-01:47:01

Meeker:

How so?

05-01:47:03

Hanff:

Our policies are not like the library policies. We have a different mandate and a different mission, and I'm not sure that the library would sustain that if we didn't have a faculty director. I think they would sweep us in as just another branch. That's not unusual, I think, but it's something that has concerned me. I think our mission has been very well supported by a high-level academic faculty member with a vision of what Bancroft is trying to do. I have watched administrative reaction in the library, of people who are still here, when we talked about the heavy teaching load, because *all* the curators teach. I taught with Jim Casey, a credit course for quite a number of years. Initially, it was in the College of Engineering, and then eventually we moved it over to Undergraduate Studies. It's just a small—I guess it's a one-and-a-half-unit course. It's not a big course, in that sense. But it was a course that got graded. And I sat there, and Elaine was explaining: we *teach*. And then somebody in the admin said, "What do you mean, you teach?" She said, "We teach. We give grades!" Absolutely flabbergasted! And I think the underground of that was, "That's not appropriate for librarians." So that's why I think that what we have been doing is very well supported, and we need something different to make that be sustainable. That's a concern I would have going into the future.

05-01:48:39

Meeker:

Anything else?

05-01:48:42

Hanff:

The person needs to be very good with people skills of a broad sort. They certainly need to have the ability to work with people who would support Bancroft financially, so development is definitely something that needs to happen. I think with both Charles and Elaine we've had very strong social skill sets, and certainly James D. Hart had those. So I think that is another thing—and I don't think all academics are like that. I think some really—either don't want to do that kind of thing, or they're not comfortable doing it, and I don't know which, but I think it's important to a library like Bancroft. And we've always said—Jim Hart's wording was the right one, "We thank

you for supporting programs at The Bancroft Library that are not otherwise supported by the state.” And that’s something that the director has to be able to—has to believe it and has to be able to articulate it.

05-01:49:40

Meeker:

So we began our conversations talking about your upbringing, and a lot of that was your interest in young adult and children’s literature, particularly *The Wizard of Oz*, and I think we maybe mentioned a little bit *Alice in Wonderland*. I wonder if we could end today with revisiting your interests in there, and you’ve played a leadership role for many years in the International Wizard of Oz Club.

05-01:50:16

Hanff:

Right.

05-01:50:18

Meeker:

Can you tell me about this organization and the various roles that you’ve played in it?

05-01:50:23

Hanff:

Yes, in fact, I’m going to be doing a history of the club. It’s sixty years old this year, just this coming weekend, and I’ve been thinking about it a little bit along the history lines. But I have the original letter that I got from Roland Baughman, who was head of special collections at Columbia University. He wrote to me in 1960 in response to a letter I wrote to him. My high school librarian, as I mentioned when we first started talking, was a mentor, in effect, and she had suggested several people that I might write to when she understood I was very seriously interested in L. Frank Baum. And then he, in turn, referred me to somebody in Chicago who was a major collector: Dick [Dickinson P.] Martin. And I wrote to him, and he in turn referred me to Justin [G.] Schiller, who was a high school student in New York who was actually the founder of the Oz Club when he was thirteen. And so I have the original letters I received from them in an album that I kept. I didn’t keep my files in an album normally, but those original letters obviously meant something to me at the time, so those are there. I was really keen, as all the club was at that point, on the books: the book collection, how to collect, where to find the material, what the variant editions were, and that kind of thing. That was an interest of mine, but it really was a focus of all of the founders of the club at that point.

And the club grew larger and larger and larger, and the magazine that we produce—Justin had started it as a mimeographed sheet of four pages, I think. Within a couple of years, Dick Martin, who was a professional commercial artist, took over the design and layout of the magazine. It was still very thin. It was still black and white for a while, but he was a good designer, and so already he introduced better content and better design. He was a very fine writer; not a highly educated individual, but a very, very fine writer and a very great bibliographer. So under his direction, the magazine evolved.

And then at a certain point, I went off to work at the Library of Congress. Dick Martin had recommended the club, which had probably said all that needed to be said about L. Frank Baum, should discontinue *The Baum Bugle*, our journal. And I think he meant it! He was tired, he had done what he wanted to do. There were three other members of the organization, and they said, “Oh no! We’ll take it over.” And one of those was a twin named David [L.] Greene, whose brother was Douglas [G.] Greene, both in PhD programs, one in Philadelphia and the other at the University of Chicago—and I was at the Library of Congress. It was an easy train ride up to Philadelphia, and I was a far better typist than either of them, and so I went up and spent a lot of time visiting with Dave, from Washington, in my two years there. And I proposed, as they had taken it over, that I would start being the typesetter, in a sense, a typewriter, because we were doing photo offset magazines. Dick had taught us how to do the layouts and the pasting up of illustrations and such. And so I produced one number of the magazine in Washington, DC, and then went on to Indiana University and found a printer there who could carry it on for the year I was there. And then I brought it to Berkeley, and I must have run it in Berkeley, as production editor, for about five years.

And then, in the interim of all of this, Doug Greene and I started a project to do *Bibliographia Oziana: [A Concise Bibliographic Checklist of the Oz Books by L. Frank Baum and His Successors]*, a book, which we’ve disguised—we were basically going back to scratch. We decided we needed to look at every book, and all the variants, from a more bibliographic perspective than had happened before, and so we produced the book in ’76. And it was certainly the best-selling book the club ever published. It’s still in print, and I think Oak Knoll sells it, among other places. But it isn’t a bestseller in the larger scheme of things, but it was there, and we did a revision of it in 1988—

05-01:54:40

Meeker:

Do you know how many copies it sold over the years?

05-01:54:43

Hanff:

No, but I would imagine 15,000 or 20,000 maybe. It’s a specialty field. I never—

05-01:54:51

Meeker:

Because that’s a not insubstantial figure.

05-01:54:53

Hanff:

No, it was a good thing, and it was widely used as a primary bibliographic source. In fairly recent years there was a young man, an amazing young man—he’s younger than I am, but he was a boy when I knew him in the club a long time ago—who grew up to become an antiquarian bookseller. His name is Paul [R.] Bienvenue. He sent an email message to our coordinator of publishing, let’s say ten years ago. And it was just a seven-page diatribe about the bibliography getting more and more formal.

05-01:55:27

Meeker: Getting more—?

05-01:55:27

Hanff: More and more formal. Much more erudite, and he didn't like that. And so the coordinator of publishing forwarded Paul's letter to me—it wasn't intended for my eyes. And I called up the then-author of the bibliographical series, and he said, "I didn't give any credence to that. He's just a twit." And I said, "It made me furious." And he then read it, then he became furious. I waited six weeks, because I had to calm down, and then I called Paul up and said, "I read your letter." "But you weren't supposed to see my letter." I said, "Nevertheless, I read your letter, and several of us have for a long time said there was something that needed to be done beyond the bibliography—and that's a collector's guide. And I think you should do it." And he *did* do it! And it's a beautiful book: [*The Book Collectors Guide to L. Frank Baum and Oz*]. He learned how to do type layout, typesetting; he arranged for the printing of it in China—it's filled with color illustrations, which ours was not. And it has now supplanted the *Bibliographia Oziana* in most of the antiquarian book trade—I see the citation of Bienvenue rather than Hanff! [laughing]

05-01:56:34

Meeker: But what is the difference between the two volumes?

05-01:56:36

Hanff: His is a much more discursive description of the books, how they look. Ours was really very bibliographical. The title page transcribes this way—the physical structure is thus. His is much more expansive than that, and beautifully illustrated in color, so that was a nice thing to watch happen. I've got another one going on right now, which is *Bibliographia Baumiana*, which is a much more substantial book, and is really very formally bibliographical. It should print sometime later in the summer. But I've been serving as bibliography editor since 1976 at least, before that. And so that's something I do for the club and it's something I do for the journal. And to some extent, I still work on it myself.

05-01:57:22

Meeker: You mentioned this conference. Can you tell me about the conferences? These have been annual affairs that have been held?

05-01:57:28

Hanff: Yes. The club had its very first convention, as they called it, in 1961, just four years after the club started. And it was held at a rustic country lodge in central Indiana on Bass Lake, in Knox, Indiana. And it was the lodge that was run by Harry Neal Baum, L. Frank Baum's last surviving son and his much younger, vivacious wife Brenda. I read about it, but I was a kid in California. I couldn't go to a thing like that. Then I met Harry Neal Baum the year before he died, and then in—'67 I think is when he died—I was in Washington, DC, from '67 to '69. I was able finally, in '68, to go to the very last convention at Bass Lake, and that was fascinating, because I now was meeting these people that I

had been reading the articles of for years, and the camaraderie was enormous and intense. And we followed Brenda, the following year, to a new resort in Holland, Michigan, called Castle Park, which is a 150 acre compound on the bluff over Lake Michigan, just south of Holland, Michigan, forested, with cottages, and then this central yellow brick castle with an annex that extended it out, so there were rooms to rent. And we took it over the weekend before the season started, every year, for our convention. And we did that as long as the Castle continued to operate, and then they realized, as cottage holders, that the Castle needed a lot of work, and they decided to just discontinue the public access to the place. So that closed, and we continued those meetings.

But in '64, back I California, I won a book collection contest, the very first one at Santa Barbara, with my L. Frank Baum collection. And my parents were suddenly won over—they'd worried about this kid collecting children's books as a young adult, but they saw that this was something that in the academic community might have merit. So I took advantage of that, and we held the very first West Coast Oz meeting, a one-day event, at their house in the San Fernando Valley, in August of 1964. Members of the Baum family came to that, and we did an exhibition—it was the first show—the first program was ambitious. [C.] Warren Hollister, professor of medieval history at Santa Barbara, a serious Baum collector, and I.

Where we had gaps Mrs. Baum, Edna [D.] Baum in Claremont lent a few things from her collection. We did a complete exhibition of every published work of L. Frank Baum, which—we moved all the furniture out of the living room. I rented tables, and we put out all these rare first editions and inscribed copies. And for Mrs. Baum's books, I actually went to a small store and bought a glass display case. I wanted to rent it, but he wouldn't rent it to me. He sold it to me, and then bought it back, because he was afraid I would break it. And so her rarest things were displayed that way. She liked it so much that she held the next one, the following year, at her 8500 square foot house in Claremont, California. I became a close friend of hers, and I organized her whole library, which was scattered all over that big house. And I learned a lot of bibliographic things from that—I then went off to the Library of Congress, and she died in '68, in her eighties. I was able to help rescue her collection, because it was supposed to go to her grandson, Robert [A. Baum]. A ne'er-do-well uncle of Robert tried to sell it privately, and I ended up getting asked by Robert's father to depose myself before a notary, and I actually had a complete inventory of it, so I sent all that to the legal people in California and rescued the collection—so he still has it, all these years later. And then, I continue my own collecting.

The club eventually had incorporated, before I was even aware that it had. We discovered that the executive secretary, who was a really long-time volunteer, spent almost all of his spare time, seven days a week, running the club, had been naming, on the reports to the State of Illinois, members of the board of directors—never asking any of them if they wanted to be on the board of

directors. They weren't elected, and this began to be a problem, because as the magazine matured, he had a different vision of what it should be like. And we began having some, not unusual, battles between the publishing arm of the group and the fellow running it at central. Eventually, we had some political battles and—

05-02:02:07

Meeker:

What were the debates about? What were the different visions?

05-02:02:13

Hanff:

Well, one had to do with the way we had to finance the magazine. In Washington DC, and in Indiana, I could go into a printer and set up the expectation and pay them once the magazine was done. In California, you had to pay a deposit. He absolutely refused to pay a deposit. "I will not deal with companies that don't trust me," is what he said. And that was a problem! [laughing] We had a different reality out here. And there were other—I don't remember all of the issues, but they were issues pretty much of what the scope of the magazine should be, what kinds of content it should have.

Eventually, I talked to the president of the club, who was Russell [P.] MacFall, night editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, and the author of the first biography of L. Frank Baum, about this. He said, "Oh, you should have told me this sooner. We can fix this." He was a parliamentarian, and I was dealing with the struggles down at the grassroots level. And so we decided that the board members had to be elected by the members-at-large. It could be done by mail ballot, and I worried about that, because Fred, the secretary, nominated all his cronies, and I was worrying about that. But we had an incoming person to take over my editorial role named Jerry [V.] Tobias, who was a psychologist at the University of Oklahoma, and he said, "Pete, the common wisdom is almost always better than the single wisdom of an individual. It's going to be all right. Even if he packs the board, there will be a common sense of what is appropriate." [laughter] And he was right! And that's how I learned parliamentary procedure or parliamentary reality. It generally works that if you trust it, it will come up with a reasonable common wisdom.

At some point I became president, and there were no rules about how long one would be president, and so I think the term was identified as three years. And I served twice, and they couldn't find somebody to run it, so I actually served three terms in a row, at which point I rewrote the by-laws and said no more than two terms, then you can have a break. And then I was elected some years later, and I got to end of my sixth year, and they said, "We can't find anybody to replace you. We're going to have a modification of the by-laws for one term, one more, so I did—so ultimately I did eighteen years of this, and I said, "Enough already!" [laughter] And so I have not been president since then, but I still am the budget and finance chair of the committee for that.

In the middle of all of this, Dick Martin—I mentioned him before—died in 1990 and left us a substantial collection that he had formed, the best that was ever formed—dust-jacketed copies of children’s books, books inscribed by Baum to his mother and his wife and his sister—it was an amazing collection. He left it with a stipulation that he hoped we would sell it, so that other collectors could have the pleasure he had in acquiring it, and the club would have money. We did sell a lot of it—not all of it. There’s still a fairly good chunk. And then in 2000 I rented a space here in the Bay Area at the Mechanics’ Institute to house that collection, and once we had it—and because we’re a 501(c)(3) organization, other people began giving us things, and some of the Dick Martin things that had been sold have been donated back to us.

So there are some really remarkable treasures there. And when I go to Chicago in early August, I’m going to be meeting at the Newberry Library with some of the officers there, because we’re a very small organization, and maintaining a collection is probably not the right thing for us to do. But we’ve been trying it for the last seventeen years—and we’ll see what happens.

05-02:06:05
Meeker:

So you’re considering depositing the collection?

05-02:06:09
Hanff:

Possibly placing it—this is interesting, because there is a committee that ostensibly exists to plan for the future of the collection, but this is not that committee’s meeting. It’s a meeting that I’m having, with myself as honorary curator. The outgoing president of the club, the incoming president of the club, and a librarian who ran the children’s collection at Fresno State are meeting with officers at the Newberry that—I know one of them very well, and we’ll talk it over. I don’t really know. I’ve got the club counsel reviewing what our options might be. I believe we have the right to do it, if we’re transferring 501(c)(3) assets from one organization to another, but we also have the opportunity—the right—to sell it and make more money for the club. It’s just that I’m not sure the club should have more money than it’s got. We’re maintaining the office without any damage to ourselves, and our treasurer doesn’t know why I’m letting them lead me into this meeting with Newberry, but I said, “We just need to know what our options are.”

05-02:07:10
Meeker:

Is it run on an endowment or just a bank account?

05-02:07:12
Hanff:

It’s a fund functioning as endowment. We have two small endowments. One of them, that’s the larger of the two, was established by a fellow named Pete Cervenak, who took in one of my other child guys who grew up, who died of AIDS about 1991. Pete had taken him in when he was really sick, and Rob had nothing, except his collection, so he left that to Pete. And Pete initially was going to try to catalog it very, very elaborately, and I advised him—and I

just kept my mouth shut, because I realized what he wanted to do was not going to be possible for him to do. It was just overelaborate. About five years later, he decided he would sell it and give the club the money to create an endowment in memory of Rob MacVeigh. So that must have been about 2000, because I established the office and put the name of the International Wizard of Oz Club, our web address, and the Rob Roy MacVeigh Memorial Gallery, all on the door. It's still there, and he lived long enough to see that. But he also died not too long afterward, and left another bequest to add to that. So this is a little endowment. But that one's an interesting one—it has an end. If the club doesn't wish to continue doing that, then we must turn that fund over to an organization that supports gay and lesbian youth, another 501(c)(3). So that one—I know what would happen to that fund if we closed this office. The other one is a fund that will stay with the club, but it's much smaller.

05-02:08:43

Meeker:

You know, when you mention in passing about going to the first gathering of the organization, your first gathering of the organization in '68—first of all, one thing—you said a yellow brick castle. What is this that you're referring to?

05-02:08:59

Hanff:

Oh, there is a resort. It's a private club, 150 acres in Holland, Michigan or in the outskirts of it, on the bluff above Lake Michigan. And there's an 1890 yellow brick castle that sits there in the center of the property. It was an estate. And at some point, when they wanted to make a hotel out of it, they created a large wooden annex to it, so the castle was a corner of this complex, and the lobby and the dining rooms and the kitchens below, were all outside the actual perimeter of the yellow brick castle. There were two other outbuildings—one of them was called Slave Quarters and the other one was called Plantation House. And the owners of this property were from North Carolina, and in the winter they had a resort in North Carolina, and all of their black staff came up to Holland, Michigan in the summer months. I remember being startled by this when I first went there, which would have been in '69, because you have this staff of black people taking people over to the Slave Quarters and to the Plantation House. And I thought—this is a throwback from another era. But they were the staff, and they had been doing this for years. It was just something I noticed at the time. The club eventually, as I said, decided that it couldn't maintain the hotel property.

So I went back again, just a few years ago in a group gathering when we were in Holland, Michigan, and took pictures of the edifice with all the superstructure gone. But I knew so much about what was there that one of the docents for our trip, who has lived at the property all her life, was my tour guide, and I chose to go with her—and I knew too much. She knew we were there every year, but she was never part of the group, so she never saw what our activities were, and I had all this lore to tell. So I actually conducted the tour with her—half of what was said was me. And I said, “And if we should

go into the old-timers club, down in the basement of the tower, of the castle, we will find, I think, unless you've changed it, drawings on the wall in frames that were done by the illustrator of the Oz book of 1951. That has nothing to do with Oz, but we were using that room, and I happened to say, "Oh, these are by Dirk Gringhuis," who is this illustrator. They all knew those pictures. They never knew anything about them, and they never knew they were connected to the Oz tradition. So she went and got her key out of the house, and came back and opened the space and got all these—I'm doing a history, as I said, of the club, so I'm looking at these pictures just the last few days.

05-02:11:43

Meeker:

One thing you also mentioned about this first meeting was that there was this moment of recognition, and all these names that you had been seeing in writing—you get to meet these people in person. Can you tell me what that group of people was like and what the social element of that convention was like?

05-02:12:02

Hanff:

Yes. I can do that. Barbara Koelle was a clinical psychologist of children in Philadelphia, still living. She's ninety-something. She came to our meeting in Philadelphia last summer—very frail, but she's older and well in most respects, and her husband's still living too, and I think they're exactly the same age. And then there was Irene [G.] Fisher, who was an artist, but she was essentially a housewife, but she was a very good artist. She had studied to some extent at the Art Institute [of Chicago], and she sold four paintings a year to the Art Institute's juried rental collection, so that was something she did. She also was showing every year in the Old Town Art Show, which is a street show that is very popular in Chicago—also juried. So she was a member. She and I became extremely close over the years, and Barbara Koelle is still a close friend. The Greene twins were certainly there. Jerry Tobias was there, the clinical psychologist I mentioned. Brenda Baum, the widow of Harry was this vivacious, remarkable individual. She was a professional hostess, major opera buff. There was a professor of music, there was an Indiana journalist; there was a kid named John Fricke, who was seventeen when I met him—he was from Milwaukee—and he has become the world's premier biographer of Judy Garland, and a specialist on the MGM *Wizard of Oz*. And he's actually going to be up at this Portland gathering this weekend, and they will be hosting a showing of the MGM movie at the Century 21, or whatever they call the theater in downtown Portland. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to get to that, but I would like to. But I've known all these people for a really long time, and as I said, one of the Greene twins was Doug, and he and I are the co-authors of the bibliography. Jim [James E.] Haff was there, and he was a—I guess he was a cartographer for the air force. But I just talked to his long-time companion, she has just, in her nineties, moved to Arizona. I never really understood—I knew why they hadn't married. She was devoutly Catholic and divorced, and could never marry again, and so she never did. Jim died fairly young from some kind of heart problem, but I never

quite understood what his role was, and she said, “Actually, he was never allowed to discuss his role as a cartographer for the air force,” but that’s about as much as we knew. [laughing] But he was a major collector. So it was a lot of collectors, really, in those days. Jerry Tobias had a daughter named Patricia [E. Tobias], Patty, and she is the founder of the Buster Keaton Society of America, and lives with her husband down in San Pedro, California. So it has really been like an extended family for a really long time.

05-02:15:12

Meeker:

I’m curious that these conventions—are they run in the way that an academic convention is, people give presentations and audience comments? No?

05-02:15:23

Hanff:

No, they’re more social than that, I think. There are programs. We would, in the Midwest particularly, we always had an auction—that was a Saturday event. And it was to raise money for the club, but it was also to build your collection, and really good stuff was offered. There might be a magician doing a magic show as the Wizard of Oz. There might be a puppet show—same guy, in fact, was able to do both things. In the earlier years there were quite a group of people who would gather around the piano and sing after dinner. It was very family-like. It wasn’t really a convention. Then, because of stupid people like me, papers began to be read, and so it began to be a mixture of serious and not-so-serious presentations.

On the West Coast, in particular, it began to have programs that were theatrical, because there were a number of people on the West Coast who were interested in theater, and one of them is a ballet dancer. His partner is David Maxine, who is a publisher and a designer of stage things. And so they began doing program planning for me in the last years that I was doing the West Coast at Asilomar. And for the fiftieth Winkie Convention—we named our conventions for the regions of Oz. Munchkins are the people of the East, Winkies are the people of the West, Quadlings are the people of the South, Gillikins are the people of the North, and the Emerald City is the middle. And so the West Coast meeting was called, from the very beginning, *Winkie Convention*. So David wanted to do a much more elaborate stage show than we could do at Asilomar, and could afford to do it with the same kind of budget we used at Asilomar—if we did it in San Diego—because there’s a hotel that existed there that supported science fiction and fantasy groups fairly well. And we did our fiftieth show there, and it was a revival of a 1913 musical extravaganza by L. Frank Baum and Louis [F.] Gottschalk, called *The Tik-Tok Man of Oz*.

I was looking at the pictures of that the other night too, because I took a lot of pictures. I watched—Paul Bienvenue had a five-year-old son at that thing, and the son’s now nine. But I was trying as hard as I could, sitting in the audience and not understanding even how to use my digital camera properly, because I couldn’t use flash, to catch the kid, because he’s in the first row, sitting on his

dad's lap—absolutely enthralled from the beginning to the end of an extremely overlong show. But he also was flirted with by the cast, and so he was getting reinforced, but you can see from the pictures that I got that this kid is totally caught up in the action on the stage right in front of him. It's kind of fun. So it has been like that. The group is congenial, and the talent is high. And people are from all kinds of walks of life—lots of families. It has been a very interesting mixture of people over the years.

05-02:18:28

Meeker:

This would be pretty speculative, I would guess, but in addition to a love of L. Frank Baum, his books, and other cultural products that come from those, is there anything else that you would say unites this group of people?

05-02:18:45

Hanff:

The group now is united by some kind of a concept of Oz, but they don't know what that concept is. The old-timers were the book people, and in more recent time people have been interested in the movies, the products that are manufactured as toys or promotional pieces from the movies, the new literature that is coming out, which are pastiche novels that transform Oz into some other mode of reality in the present time.

05-02:19:18

Meeker:

Like *Wicked*, or something?

05-02:19:21

Hanff:

Yeah, like *Wicked*. I actually met Gregory Maguire at the world premiere of *Wicked*, which was done in San Francisco at the Geary Theater, I guess. He wrote to me and said, "I've never met you. Can we meet during the intermission?" And I went out—he had described himself, so I could see him in his gray three-piece suit, a rather short man, a *wonderful* speaker. He's really—he writes beautifully and he speaks beautifully, so it was kind of a pleasure. I've seen him in other events where he's been talking. And yeah, that's the kind of reinterpretation, among others, that have happened. I think that the people who run the magazine tend to be scholarly types—that perhaps isn't surprising. And the editors have really produced a magazine that I think we can be very proud of. It tends to run forty-eight to sixty-four pages, has full color covers now, and articles all over the map. It's kind of fun to watch what people are interested in, but there are so many kinds of ways of thinking about Oz and its manifestations and culture. I tend to be the old-timer, so I tend to do historical pieces and bibliographical analysis or historical analysis.

05-02:20:39

Meeker:

What do suppose has sustained your lifelong interest in L. Frank Baum's books?

05-02:20:44

Hanff:

For me, it was the collecting—I think. On the club side though, I think it was the people. I just really—I found a family, in an interesting way. I will give you one example. Irene Fisher, who lived into—I think she was about eighty

when she died. She died a few years ago from Parkinson's, lived a very comfortable suburban life in Glencoe, Illinois, north of Chicago. Her husband was a wholesaler of poultry and vegetables for the dining clubs, which is a big institution in the Chicago area. It includes country clubs, but there are other dining clubs as well. And they lived in Glencoe, raised three kids, and she and I had bonded at the moment we met. And so because of the way the clubs socialized at the conventions, after all the formalities of the evening program were over, a crowd of us would gather in somebody's oversized room for drinking and chatting, until two or three in the morning.

And one of the years, her son Danny Fisher was returning to Glencoe for the summer from Michigan State University, so he was going to spend the night with us at the Castle. And two of his buddies arrived in a little tiny Volkswagen, the old style. They were dressed in Hebraic robes, had long kinky beards and long hair and sandals, and the conservative crowd were frightened—and appalled. I walked right up to them and greeted them and welcomed them. I learned that one of them was Lion, and one of them was Mouse. Lion roared or growled, and Mouse squeaked. That was the level of communication. [laughter] It was the hippie era! For me this was fine, and it was fine for Irene—it wasn't fine for everybody, but I could keep them with me, and keep them apart from everybody else, and that worked too. So they left—they were heading off to some other venue—and Danny stayed with us and we had our party.

About two in the morning, there were probably twenty or so of us at the party, and somebody came in from outside and said the Aurora Borealis is displaying, and I had never seen that before. So twelve of us walked out, up to the top of the forested dune, and we just had our arms hooked into each other. We stood transfixed, for about an hour, watching the Aurora Borealis—and it was emotional. [pause] [overcome with emotion]

05-02:23:32

Meeker:

I feel like that's a great way to end! It's a beautiful story, and I think it really, for me, makes me understand a lifelong attraction to something, and the community that's built around it.

05-02:23:50

Hanff:

Yeah. I mean it when I say it was like family, and it still is, and it's kind of nice.

05-02:23:54

Meeker:

And you're going to go up this weekend to—?

05-02:23:57

Hanff:

Yeah, I have two this summer. There's the one in Portland, and then there's another one in Chicago. So yeah, those will be fun.

05-02:24:05

Meeker:

Well, just the last thing I want to ask about is this remarkable book that you've published recently, *Cyclone on the Prairies*: [*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz and Arts & Crafts of Publishing in Chicago, 1900*]. Can you tell me a little bit how that came to be? It's a very well written and beautifully put together history.

05-02:24:21

Hanff:

Well, thank you for that. Yeah, I was approached by Jerry Cole, of the Book Club of California, who is one of the long-standing donors to Bancroft, and his wife Gerry Cole also. And Geraldine Cole's sister was Peggy Cahill, so these are people from the Weber family. The Coles were both always sympathetic to Oz anyway, and they knew I was passionate about it. So Jerry called up and said, "Would you be willing to write the text for a book club leaf book about *The Wizard of Oz*? And I responded, "Well, if you've got breakable copies of *The Wizard of Oz*, I would." And in two weeks, they had two copies of the first edition of *The Wizard of Oz*. I think they might already have had them when he asked the question—so I was stuck. I had to do it.

So I did two things right away. I realized I was going to do this as a research project. I couldn't just do it out of the top of my head. I know they expected me to write the text out of the top of my head, but I didn't want to do it that way. And the other thing I did was to collate the two copies that we had—they're called breakers, because they're defective enough that they're not complete, and they couldn't really be sold in commerce normally. So I figured that every person who got a book, a leaf book, had to have an illustrated leaf from the text. Now, this is a very elaborately illustrated book. It was printed, throughout, in two colors, and the colors varied from section to section, according to the story line of the book itself. Gray for Kansas, which is described as gray. Blue for the Munchkin country, and so forth. So that's what I expected—everybody had to get an illustration. And in the two copies there were only eight color plates, and there would have been forty-eight color plates if they had been complete. But there weren't enough leaves of text to create 300 copies, and that was the number for the edition. So I said, "We need a third copy." And they didn't know how to get one, so I had to do some networking, but I have connections. And somebody in New Jersey keeps breakers, so he sold us a breaker. And then someplace, late in the production, Mark Selvaggio, who is an antiquarian bookseller here in Berkeley, donated a fourth copy—and that one, I think was virtually complete. So they actually had a little bit of an overabundance of the leaves to put into the book.

So then I began the research, and I'm afraid it did take me five and a half years, and in the course of doing the work my father and Jerry Cole both died, so the book is dedicated to them. I went traveling from coast to coast, looking for primary sources, and learned a great deal in the course of it. I knew some of the general outline of the printing history, the design history. Bancroft is rich in aspects of this, because we have very strong Arts & Crafts book era

material, particularly strong holdings of William Morris and the Kelmscott Press, and the ancillary presses that developed as something that that inspired. And this was happening in Chicago. It happened in San Francisco—less in New York, for some reason. And I went ahead and thought through what I wanted to say about how the influence of that Arts & Crafts movement, which was really, really active in 1890s Chicago, can be seen in the physical book that this represented, and that's what the essay is about.

05-02:27:58

Meeker:

What kind of response have you gotten to it?

05-02:28:00

Hanff:

Very favorable response. A little bit of disappointment among the Oz club people, because it was too costly for them to buy. And so you asked earlier if there might be a trade edition, and I hope that there will be. The contract permits it, but it hasn't been set up yet.

05-02:28:16

Meeker:

Well, let's hope that happens.

05-02:28:18

Hanff:

Yeah, I hope so too.

05-02:28:20

Meeker:

Do you have any final thoughts, or anything else you'd like to add before we wrap up?

05-02:28:25

Hanff:

Yeah, well I told you about the passion for the Oz club—you just saw that demonstrated. But I would say that's also a passion of the people at The Bancroft Library, for The Bancroft Library. We tend to see ourselves as part of a very strong little community, supporting access to the collections and the kind of research that this operation supports, and it's a very strong collegial feeling that we have.

05-02:28:50

Meeker:

Yeah. Well, good—thank you very much, Peter.

05-02:28:52

Hanff:

Yeah, thanks.

[End of Interview]