

Oral History Center
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Connections and Friendships:
Roger Samuelsen's Years with the University of California

Interviews conducted by
Paul Burnett
in 2016 and 2017

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Roger Samuelsen and the Mark Twain bench, 2017

Roger Samuelson has held a number of key administrative positions for the University of California System. A graduate of UC Berkeley's School of Law in 1964, Samuelson was the Director of the UC's Natural Reserve System from 1974 until 1991. He subsequently served on the Executive Staff to the Site Selection Task Force, which was responsible for recommending to the President and The Regents the site of the tenth campus, and assumed several leadership roles during the early development of UC Merced. Throughout his career, he has maintained a deep involvement in UC Berkeley, and served on multiple boards and committees. He has also served on boards and committees with the Save the Redwoods League, the Lindsay Wildlife Museum, and the Orinda Community Church.

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Preface by Watson “Mac” Laetsch

I first met Roger when he was Director of the Natural Land and Water Reserve System of the University of California, and I was appointed to this institution’s advisory committee. I was a Professor in the Botany Department at UC Berkeley, and I could already see the enormous potential of this large and remarkable collection of natural history reserves, which is unique to California.

In the 1960s and 70s, Ken Norris and Mildred Mathias laid out and oversaw an ambitious plan to establish natural reserves for every major ecosystem in the state of California. It was Roger who provided exemplary leadership in enlarging this Natural Reserve System, as it is now known, and in promoting its use for teaching and research. The NRS has been an incredible resource for fields such as archeology, climate science, conservation biology, and ecology, and it remains a unique and valuable feature of the University of California. But the NRS did not have an easy road, and it required a talented leader to muster levels of support sufficient to place it on a strong footing. Simply put, without Roger, we might not have a Natural Reserve System.

Following his exemplary work with the NRS, Roger continued to serve the University in a variety of positions. We both served on advisory boards for the College of Natural Resources and the UC Berkeley Library. Berkeley's Bancroft Library is the home of the Mark Twain Papers Project and is the world center for the study of Twain and his manuscripts. The latter includes a vast number of unpublished letters. The Friends of the MTPP support its publications, publish a newsletter, and sponsor public talks by Twain experts. I was chairing the Committee when Roger retired, and I quickly persuaded him to co-chair the Committee. As anticipated, the Committee's activities have increased.

Berkeley was lucky Roger enrolled as a student. Since walking in the door, he has been a model supporter of the campus. Just think what would happen if most alumni were like Roger in their multifaceted support of Berkeley!

Preface by Bob Carpenter

The name Roger Samuelsen is often mentioned along with some reference to the University of California. He was a student — in fact, student body president — at UC Berkeley and later found his first full time UC job in 1967 as Coordinator of Special Projects in the Office of the President. More recently he has been a UC Berkeley Fellow and has been involved with the Mark Twain Project on the Cal campus. But to me, Roger will always be connected with UC Merced.

I first met Roger in 1989 soon after the university had begun their formal search for a location for their tenth campus. Over twenty communities in the San Joaquin Valley had thrown their hats in the ring for the honor of being the home of the next UC.

Merced was one of those communities, and I was serving as the chairman of the local volunteer group that had pulled together to promote our community as the perfect location. Roger Samuelsen was our point person for a UC evaluation team that included senior staff members Trudi Heinecke, Chris Adams, and Karen Merritt. They were tasked with asking the right questions and evaluating the answers from the many communities that were competing for the new campus.

And there was plenty to evaluate: water availability, supporting infrastructure, political environment, community and local government support, noise and soil issues, air quality and so much more. Roger's attention to detail and analytical bent, along with his diplomatic nature and easy-going personality, made him a perfect liaison to the local communities. I'm sure that he made every community feel that it had a great shot of landing the tenth campus.

Speaking of noise issues, Roger invited me to lunch at a downtown Merced restaurant early in the process. That day the B-52s operating out of nearby Castle Air Force base were flying training patterns over Merced and as each bomber passed overhead the restaurant windows rattled noisily. Roger casually asked if noise was a problem in town. "What noise?" I responded with a smile.

Roger let it go but he had a noise expert with monitoring equipment out at the Merced site the next day. The air force base closed a couple of years after that meeting and Roger told me that he knew that our local committee had great power when we were able to arrange a military base closure to eliminate noise as an obstacle to siting the campus in Merced. Roger had — and has — a great sense of humor.

On another occasion, Roger brought UC Berkeley Chancellor Tien to Merced and invited me to meet with them. Dr. Tien was one of two chancellors on the site selection committee. I knew Roger well enough by then that I knew that he always stopped for a coffee drink at Leny's Cafe on his way out of town. Our committee arranged to have every employee at Leny's dressed in

UC Merced hats and shirts. I'm sure that you can imagine the surprise and delight on the faces of Roger and Chancellor Tien when they saw the staff outfitted for a campus that didn't yet exist.

It's now been 28 years since I first met Roger. Roger and his wife Jeane have become good friends of my wife Suzanne and I and we actively look for opportunities to connect. Sometimes those are around UC related projects though we also connect from time to time around Giants games such as pregame meet ups at Momo's or connecting at Spring Training.

We in Merced can now proudly add our names to the long list of those who immediately think of the University of California when we hear the name Roger Samuelsen. So many of us were fortunate to know and work with Roger during the site selection process and then during the early years of the university here. I personally prize my relationship with Roger and look forward to many more years of connections with him — UC and otherwise.

Interview History

This oral history is, like many of those that are part of the University History series, the continuation of institutional history by means of a life story. Through the life of Roger Samuelsen, we learn about the history of the development of the Natural Reserve System of the University of California; the site selection for the tenth campus of the UC system, UC Merced; and the changing fortunes and evolution of UC Berkeley, his alma mater and an important lifelong focus.

What immediately became apparent as I was preparing for this oral history was the enthusiasm his friends and former colleagues showed for the project. The refrain was that Roger was a key driver in the institutions that he helped to found and develop. As I began to work with Roger, I wanted to understand this particular species of administrator in the UC system. For many years, Roger was the director of the Natural Reserve System, which he shepherded from its initial foundation to encompass dozens of sites across California, preserving and guaranteeing access to unique ecosystems for the benefit of the public, students, and the international scientific community.

What did it take to succeed in roles such as these? Like the organisms in the ecosystems he worked to preserve, Roger fit well into the ecosystem of the University of California. When he graduated from UC Berkeley, Roger was passionate about student life and politics, and was already well developed to lead a purposeful life. After training as a lawyer, he immersed himself in the elements that make up higher education in California: laws, rules, institutions, money, and people, most of all people. This immersion would serve him well in his second career helping to develop the recommendations for the final site of the tenth campus of the University of California – UC Merced.

Both the NRS and the UC Merced site-selection stories turn on the use of land in California. It is difficult to think of a more contentious domain with more numerous stakeholders. It will become apparent in this oral history that the key to success in managing these contentious spaces was Roger's passion for the people and nature of California. He developed strong bonds with the people with whom he worked in the course of his career. He grew to share the deeper purpose of the preservation of the diversity of life in these precious ecosystems of California, and the preservation of the diversity of opportunity that the University of California represents. To that end, he has devoted uncounted hours volunteering his time and efforts to strengthen the university by helping to raise funds and administer programs for the university system and even K-12 schools. Since his encounters with Clark Kerr as a young man, Roger has spent his life fostering the furtherance of the democratic ideal of California education.

I am concerned that Roger's humility and care for others sometimes obscured the extent of his roles in these larger stories. You will note that he readily deflects attention away from himself and toward the work and importance of his friends, family, and colleagues. For Roger, this oral

history was in many ways an exercise in the expression of gratitude. But it is also perhaps an example of how he has lived a life very deeply connected to others.

Paul Burnett, Berkeley, CA

Interview 1: April 12, 2016

01-00:00:05

Burnett: This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series. This is our first session on April 12, 2016 and we're here in the Oral History Center of the Bancroft Library. Welcome.

01-00:00:23

Samuelsen: Thank you.

01-00:00:24

Burnett: It's customary to start all oral histories at the beginning. So why don't you tell me your date of birth and a little bit about your family background.

01-00:00:37

Samuelsen: I was born on August 18, 1936 in Pasadena, California. So I'm a native Californian. My parents, Rube Samuelsen and Doris Samuelsen, had been married a little over a year at the time I was born. They christened me James Roger Samuelsen and I've always gone by Roger. I think the reason for the name was that my dad's full name was Reuben Crossby Samuelsen and he never liked that name, felt that it held him back professionally and personally as life went on. And he was interested in giving me something that he thought was distinguished. They followed suit six-and-a-half years later when my brother was born. My brother's full name is Gary Scott Samuelsen but he goes by his middle name, as well.

01-00:01:43

Burnett: And so they anticipated distinguished careers, or they at least—

01-00:01:49

Samuelsen: Well, I'm not sure about that.

01-00:01:50

Burnett: They at least paved the way with some distinguished names.

01-00:01:55

Samuelsen: That's right.

01-00:01:59

Burnett: And you said you're a native Californian. And your parents are from California, as well?

01-00:02:03

Samuelsen: My mother is. She was born in Parlier, California, just south of Fresno. Her parents were gold miners and were born in You Bet, California, which is very near Nevada City and now is a ghost town.

01-00:02:24

Burnett: Wow.

01-00:02:25

Samuelsen: And the irony there is that her parents, my grandparents on my mother's side, were born in exactly the same house thirteen years apart.

01-00:02:35

Burnett: Wow.

01-00:02:37

Samuelsen: So the parents of my grandmother obviously bought the home of the parents of my grandfather at some stage during those thirteen years. So I guess that makes me a third generation Californian.

01-00:02:54

Burnett: Right. And it was called You Bet?

01-00:02:58

Samuelsen: You Bet. And we have a book written about You Bet and the gold mining there. My great-grandfather was also a gold miner. So it was quite a story. And the story becomes particularly interesting when my grandfather took issue with some of the ownership of the gold mines, took the side of the labor union. And he and two buddies I think one night at the end of a long evening of drinking and carousing were tarred and feathered and forced out of town. So he was engaged to my grandmother but left her for about a year, until she could find the means of somehow getting to Berkeley, where they were married some years later.

01-00:03:57

Burnett: And he survived this tarring and feathering?

01-00:04:02

Samuelsen: He did. But decided to go into farming, ranching, ultimately banking, and ultimately ended up in this town of Parlier, where they gave birth to eight children, and one of those children was my mother.

01-00:04:22

Burnett: Wow. So there's a lot in the family lore that resembles the kind of classic lore of California, the prospectors and the miners and ranchers.

01-00:04:37

Samuelsen: That's right.

01-00:04:38

Burnett: So that's all in the family background.

01-00:04:40

Samuelsen: That's right.

01-00:04:41

Burnett: And you're born in 1936, which is, I guess, two years after the Okies are coming out to California. Were there any stories in your family about the Depression? How did the Depression impact your family at all?

01-00:05:02

Samuelson:

Well, my father was born in Minneapolis and he lost his mother when he was only five years old. He was one of six children. And one of the children died but the other five children, including my dad, and my grandfather, his father, migrated to California during that time in hopes of finding work. And my grandfather was a carpenter, as I recall, so ended up in Fresno County, ultimately in Fresno, California. I sensed that they just really scrounged to make ends meet. The story that one of my cousins used to tell is that before leaving Minneapolis to take the long trip to California they anticipated it would take five days on the train and so they packed a sandwich a day for each of the six, the five kids and my grandfather, and somehow that's how they made ends meet in coming across to California and ultimately settling.

01-00:06:28

Burnett:

Wow. That's tremendous. And so your father is here in California. Can you talk a little bit about his career and can you talk a little bit about your mother's career? They met how? Do you know that story?

01-00:06:50

Samuelson:

Well, they met in this little town of Parlier that I've been mentioning, because next to Parlier is the town of Selma. And one of my dad's sisters lived in Selma and knew my mother and my mother's family through the church, I believe. So she's the one who introduced them in 1930 or thereabouts, five years before my folks were ultimately married.

01-00:07:23

Burnett:

Oh, wow.

01-00:07:24

Samuelson:

But my dad went to Fresno High School and ironically, while I think of it, I had occasion to look at the yearbook his senior year the other day and I was very much surprised to see that his ambition in the high school yearbook was to become president of the University of California.

01-00:07:51

Burnett:

Really?

01-00:07:52

Samuelson:

I don't recall ever hearing that story. But there was also a column in the yearbook on destiny and his destiny was to become a gardener. And we can come back to that later but I think it reflects a dichotomy with my dad: on the one hand ambitious but on the other hand rather concerned about his image and lacking confidence. And that's ironic given what his life ended up to be. So he ended up going to the University of California. He was in the class of 1923. And somewhat apropos to your earlier question, he earned his way through college as a dishwasher. And my brother and I heard that story over and over again as we were growing up because I think it reflected how poor the family was and how desperate they were. But he was determined to get a higher education. And parenthetically, I would say that he used it to help us

appreciate what we had and I think he used this with both of us to say, "I want your time at the University of California to be far better than mine, to be able to join a fraternity, to be able to be active in sports and activities, to get the full benefit of your education," and for that I'm very, very grateful.

So after graduating from Cal he worked for a while with Southern Pacific as a draftsman but ultimately made his way to Pasadena, where one of his sisters was living. One of the stories that I recall dad telling was that soon after arriving in Pasadena, and this would have been in the late twenties, I would say 1928, thereabouts, he walked all the way from his sister's house in Pasadena to the Rose Bowl, which had to be five or six miles away, and back, because he wanted to wander around the Rose Bowl and become better acquainted with it. Little did he know at the time that the Rose Bowl was going to become such a cornerstone of his life.

In any event, he took a job with the local newspaper and I think that was a job reporting on plays that were being performed at the Pasadena Playhouse, on community meetings, that type of thing. But one day he heard there was an opening in the sports department, so he went upstairs and asked if he could have a job. That started a long career ultimately as sports editor of the *Pasadena Independent Star News*. That was his primary focus all those years. And obviously with the Rose Bowl and Tournament of Roses being in Pasadena, he became very involved with both. In 1951 he published a history of the Rose Bowl game, which at the time was the definitive history of what they call "the granddaddy of them all." He also went on into TV and radio commentary. His articles as years went on were published weekly in such papers as the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Portland Oregonian*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the like. But in those days you didn't have computers, you had typewriters. And he was a two-fingered typist. So he would type out each one of those individually and send them off. So he was a workaholic. He worked seven days a week trying to make ends meet. He might get twenty-five dollars a column or something like that. So that's a thumbnail of my dad.

My mother, having been raised in Parlier, was basically raised on a farm and went to Parlier High School. Again, ironically I had occasion not too long ago to go to her yearbook and, much to my and my brother's surprise, what I found was that her ambition was to drive a car which did not require gas. I have no idea where this came from. This had to be in late 1915, '17, maybe 1918, something like that. And when I get to my brother, we can talk more about his career. But he is very much today into the business of fuel cell and hydrogen technology as an alternative to gas. And when I told my brother about this he just couldn't believe it. And, again, this is a story we didn't recall.

But mom had an older brother who went to USC. And he convinced her to apply to USC and attend, which I think is rather amazing because at that time Parlier, near Fresno, was a long way from Los Angeles and the only way you

could get there was over the Ridge Route, which was, I think, a dirt road going along the ridge, somehow separating the Central Valley from the Los Angeles Basin. And it had to be an all-day drive each way. But they shared that journey, my uncle and my mom. So she went to USC and graduated there in 1931. Went on to become an elementary school teacher and was just beloved, as I recall, by her students, many of whom, over the years, would understand that I was related to my mom and would thank me for my mom. She was just wonderful. So I had this wonderful combination of a sports writer on the one hand in the sports world, and an educator on the other. My brother and I greatly benefited from that.

01-00:15:01

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. Your father did a Bachelor of Arts degree at Cal? Is that what he majored in?

01-00:15:13

Samuelson:

His major was economics. I don't know whether he ever used that or how he used it or how he evolved to become a draftsman. He had wonderful penmanship but I don't recall ever seeing anything he actually drafted or drew.

01-00:15:34

Burnett:

But he took whatever aptitudes were being cultivated at Cal. He took that and went into the direction of being a professional writer and a celebrated one, too, I understand.

01-00:15:44

Samuelson:

Yeah. Dad received a lot of wonderful honors over the years. He received the Grantland Rice Award in I think 1962 for writing excellence along the lines of Grantland Rice. He became an honorary member of the Tournament of Roses. Several years ago he became a member of the Rose Bowl Hall of Fame and my brother and I had the great honor of accepting that award at a kick-off luncheon the day before the USC-Michigan Game, I think it was 2007, and walking out in the middle of the field between the third and fourth quarters of the game itself to take a bow on behalf of our dad. So it was a pretty special time for Scott and me.

01-00:16:44

Burnett:

Wow. So you were born in 1936. So your early childhood would have been the war years. Now, you would have been very, very young. You would have been eight or nine years old when the war ended. Because that's a period of tremendous change on the home front, as it were, in California—I don't know how much Pasadena changed during that time—do you have any recollections of the impact of World War II and how that shaped where you were when you were growing up?

01-00:17:29

Samuelson:

Well, certainly on a first-hand basis I was well-aware of rationing, of coupons, of lines to get gas, of having to hoard goods in the basement in case there was

a bombing or whatever, of putting black shades over the windows when called upon for fear of attracting enemy flyovers. Pasadena I don't think itself changed that much. But certainly I was observing a lot of changes in the whole Southern California area. And I have come to realize that a lot of that had to do with World War II. A lot of the efforts to prepare for the war effort were centered there. Technology was being built up. Lockheed was in its heyday to build planes. You sensed a tremendous influx of people who were drawn in part because of the job opportunities that they saw and in part because of the good climate that we enjoyed in Southern California and in part because they were trying to find a new way to make ends meet. So I certainly experienced, as we would drive periodically as years went on to the beach for a weekend or whatever, the changes that was occurring, with subdivisions being built, orange groves being lost, freeways under construction to facilitate people moving from Los Angeles or Pasadena to even more suburban areas.

I recall vividly on South Lake Avenue in Pasadena one of the first shopping malls or suburban shopping areas. Places my mother used to take us to in Los Angeles were all of a sudden developing satellite complexes in Pasadena on South Lake Avenue. Bullock's was particularly prominent along those lines. I don't think there's a Bullock's anymore but that was the major department store of the time. The Nordstrom's of today, if you will.

01-00:20:12

Burnett:

Right. Can you talk about Pasadena a little bit and describe what it is as a city or what it was? How it got developed? I understand that the Huntington family was important to that area. Was it originally agricultural? Was it orange groves that then got developed into a kind of suburb, I guess, of Los Angeles? How would you characterize Pasadena when you were growing up there?

01-00:20:43

Samuelson:

Well, my recollection of the history is that it was a colony of Indiana, that a doctor and his colleagues decided for health reasons and climate reasons and whatever they needed to pick up and go somewhere and he already had some relationships in that Southern California area. Came out and just fell in love. Whether there were orange groves at the time I do not know. Southern California was really at the outset just a desert. So much was transplanted, from trees to water to ultimately people. So I don't know what it would have been in the 1800s when it was first formed. But obviously it is a town with tremendous civic pride and it started the Tournament of Roses—my dad wrote about that in his book—in the late 1800s. And then the first thing you know they start with rugby matches and that evolved eventually into football as we know it today and ultimately the Rose Bowl. So there's always been a lot of city pride and culture; the Pasadena Playhouse that I mentioned earlier and the art museum come to mind. And then it's just a beautiful city. Or at least was a beautiful setting until smog started to come in while I was still a student there. Of course, smog impacted my brother even more and ultimately led to my

brother's career that we alluded to before, because he became so concerned about air pollution and wanted to do something about it. You should be doing my brother's oral history and not mine, Paul.

01-00:22:56

Burnett:

We'll be gunning for him, definitely. [laughter] It's an interesting place and it's beautiful. My first visit to it was just a couple of years ago. I'm trying to imagine. You can get there from LA, downtown LA, if the traffic is good, in about twenty minutes or something like that. Really good traffic. And in the time, how is it connected to the greater Los Angeles, if you could call it a greater Los Angeles in the 1940s and fifties?

01-00:23:41

Samuelsen:

Well, I have a feeling that they grew up together and it was two cities interacting, although Los Angeles, of course, was much bigger. I very much recall the two cities being connected by the Pacific Railway. Kind of an early effort at commuter trains. But unfortunately when there was the potential to expand that, and it did expand to a certain extent, but ultimately it did not make it. It was replaced by what is called the Arroyo Seco Freeway, which had to be one of the first freeways in the country, between Los Angeles and Pasadena. The Pacific Electric Railroad was abandoned. And they gave up all the right of ways, which was a shame. They've had to make up for that ever since.

But I did sense a connectedness by train and then by car between the two cities. Maybe that's because my folks would take us to Los Angeles for shopping at the beginning of every school year. My dad, being in sports, would take us to a lot of football and baseball games. That was just a regular part of our growing up. There were times when my brother and I would go to three football games a weekend, Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday, not only for the enjoyment of the game, but it was a way my dad, our dad, had a chance to relate to us.

01-00:25:20

Burnett:

Were the other kids envious that you had a dad who was a sportswriter?

01-00:25:26

Samuelsen:

Very much so.

01-00:25:27

Burnett:

Yeah. It sounds like a great dad occupation. The sportswriter gets to go to games and that kind of thing. It sounds pretty idyllic in some ways.

01-00:25:26

Samuelsen:

I was concerned at the time, though, that he was so involved with reporting on sporting events that he wasn't there that much for my brother and me in so far as our own sporting events or our Cub Scout meetings or our Boy Scout meetings or whatever, and was also concerned about his not interacting with our friends or being present. I've been pleased since that time to learn from

friends that I still have from those days that they felt they had more interaction with him than I remembered, that he did reach out to them and ask them questions as a good reporter would, or respond to questions that they would ask.

01-00:26:29

Burnett:

Right, right. That's important, the kind of modeling behavior of your parents and learning about how you go about things. So he was, I imagine, a charming man, right? Because he had to go out and talk to people, get them to tell him things and that kind of thing. So what were the kinds of things that you learned from him and from your mother? We can talk about that separately. We can talk about learning stuff from your parents, but these are two different people. What do you think you absorbed from them growing up?

01-00:27:08

Samuelson:

Let's start with dad. He was very charming but in reality he was an introvert and rather insecure. And so he could put on the charm when he was interviewing people or when he was the master of ceremonies for the kickoff luncheon before every Rose Bowl game or when he was entertaining dignitaries from around the country who came out for the Rose Bowl game. But the other side of him was kind of shy. I remember he did not go to church that often but when he did go to church for Easter Sunday or a Christmas pageant, he would always push me ahead to pave the way, to lead the way and greet people. He would follow behind. It was an interesting side of my dad and I think my brother experienced the same thing.

Gosh, so many lessons. I felt dad was a good listener, as you need to be in that field. And, as I mentioned, he would take us to a lot of games in the Memorial Stadium. It could be a USC, a UCLA game on Saturday, it could be an LA Rams or LA Dons game the next day. And then he would have me go out and wait in the car while he went to the dressing room to interview the athletes and the coaches. I would bring along a book and would wait for him. But then on the way home, inevitably he would say, "Well, what did you think of the game? What were the high points? What do you think made the difference?" And I think he taught me the importance of listening, of being curious. He showed me the respect that he had for my view. It was almost like whatever I had to say was as important as what he had just heard in the dressing room.

One of the things along those lines that dad would always emphasize to Scott and me was that dignitaries—and we had athletic directors and coaches and the like into our home on occasions—Jimmy Dykes, then the manager of the Chicago White Sox, is an example—he always emphasized that each of these people "put their pants on one leg at a time just like you and I do." And I think that was a very important lesson, that down deep each of us is first and foremost a person with dignity. And no matter what you may read in the newspaper, what is important is their values. These people, when they would come to the home, would follow suit. They were wonderful at asking my

brother and me questions and being interested in what we had to say. Mom and dad were gracious in letting us mingle. They didn't put us out to pasture. We would help serve hors d'oeuvres and that meant a great deal.

I do think that my dad had what I will call a promoter side to him. He certainly did a lot of promotion for the Rose Bowl and for various causes in Pasadena. But I guess I'm talking about my brother and me, and I can only speak for myself. I think he maybe overdid a little bit in promoting us in a variety of ways, and encouraged us to run for student body president or encourage us to become an Eagle Scout. Then when we succeeded we would open the newspaper and there would be an article and a picture, that somehow my dad had placed. While I know he was very proud of me I sometimes felt he was also doing that in part to help overcome some of his own insecurity, some of his inferiority complex.

01-00:32:02

Burnett:

Living vicariously a little bit?

01-00:32:04

Samuelson:

Living vicariously. My gosh, my dad was highly respected, very well-known, was in the newspaper every day. Maybe it goes back to his name. He always felt he was a rube in the sticks because of his name. Being in Pasadena rather than Los Angeles, having to work extra hard to live up to the big boys. And it probably goes back to his upbringing, which was very humble and who knows what he experienced. You lose your mother when you're five and you're basically raised for six years by a fifteen-year-old sister and a father who I believe was rather distant. I never knew my grandfather. There are pictures of his holding me but I didn't know him. I don't think he and my dad had a very good relationship. So he had a lot to overcome.

01-00:33:02

Burnett:

I think that key piece was his asking you what you thought. It's not always all that common, I think especially for men when they're raising their kids. They love their kids and they treat them especially well but in terms of setting them up to be a kind of peer, like knowing they're going to grow into being a man later, that's something that is cultivated. He seems to have understood that in his approach to raising you.

01-00:33:46

Samuelson:

Yes.

01-00:33:48

Burnett:

And as far as your mother's influence. You talked about how she had this tremendous influence far beyond your family, to all these other people that she taught. Can you talk about what she was like and what you learned from how she behaved and what kinds of lessons she tried to teach you?

01-00:34:17

Samuelsen:

Mom was a very loving person and I think she taught me a lot of just very basic, basic lessons and attributes. Kindness. Integrity. Responsibility. She held the house together. My dad was always out weekends, evenings, and so forth. Mom was always there, somehow balancing her teaching life with a home life. And, again, I think was just a wonderful listener. Dinners were very, very important. And as busy as my dad was he would always come home and we'd have a regular dinner and the four of us would sit there and mom and dad, but mom in particular, would really ask us how the day went and listen and be supportive. She was just a beautiful woman outside, a beautiful woman inside. So the teaching skills came home big time and I am very, very indebted to her.

01-00:35:45

Burnett:

It sounds like over the years it's gotten harder and harder for families to do that, to establish a set time. Do you think that that's important for people to, almost irrespective of the context? It could be a family dinner or it could be a scouting meetup, but there's the importance of regular social contact that is not totally formalized, but it's just something that's regular. Do you think that we're losing that a little bit?

01-00:36:21

Samuelsen:

I do. And I'm afraid the Internet and iPhones are contributing to that. I find that with my grandkids and their parents, as I watch the interactions. No, I think we were very fortunate along those lines. But there were other little touches. Mother would always pack a brown bag lunch for us. This will sound strange but she would take a bite out of the sandwich just to remind me when it came time for lunch that she was there with me and for me and sharing that.

01-00:37:05

Burnett:

That is fantastic.

01-00:37:12

Samuelsen:

But over and beyond that, my mom was a very gracious hostess. These gatherings in connection with my dad's work required a lot of preparation, particularly around New Years' time. Mom would ask me to help prepare. My job was always to decorate the goal posts that sat on the dining room table, one with the colors of the Big Ten team and the other with the colors of what was then the Pacific Coast Conference team, and otherwise help her prepare. That sense of responsibility I think runs deep for both my brother and me. I've often wondered about going not only into the University of California administration for me and academic faculty world for my brother, but taking leadership positions throughout our lives, in the community, in the church. I think it goes back largely to our mother, who really exemplified the importance of taking responsibility to make this a better world, to reach out to others, to help others. So dad on the one hand was promoting and helping me write speeches and the like as I ran for office for all the reasons we were talking about earlier, but I think it was mom who was helping us realize this is

not for political sake or to run for a future political office or to get your name out in front but because we have a responsibility to give back if we're able. And I just found myself in a position over a period of time to exercise that and I thank her for it.

01-00:39:18

Burnett:

So in parenting it's not, "My child needs to reach this level by this age or needs to be in the yearbook," or that kind of thing, but helping them see, in a sense, that they're called to the greater community. It's not just about them. It's an interesting thing. We're so concerned with building up the self-esteem of children. We think this is a huge problem and we build their self-esteem but how do we do it? And it sounds almost like your mother was teaching, "I value you enough to be of service to someone else, to help *them*. The position that you're seeking is not for your own aggrandizement, it's for some larger purpose."

Perhaps that's a good segue to talk about another facet of your upbringing, and that was faith. Well, I'll let you talk about how membership in the church—and it's the Presbyterian church at the time, right?

01-00:40:41

Samuelson:

Yes.

01-00:40:41

Burnett:

—how that runs through the family and how that impacted you when you were growing up?

01-00:40:51

Samuelson:

We, my brother and I, became very active in Pasadena Presbyterian Church. It was located just a few doors from the *Pasadena Independent Star News*. I can recall my dad driving us down on Sunday morning, dropping us off for Sunday school, and going next door, going to work, and then after church we would knock on the door of the newspaper and he would drive us home. So while I think my folks had a basic faith they were not active, in my recollection, in church. But they were very supportive of Scott and my becoming active. I mean in a big way. It was just the center of my life in so many ways, starting with Sunday school, then going to Sunday evening fellowship gatherings, where we would have time for a lesson of the day and prayer and singing and the like, and then we would adjourn down to the basement and go roller skating. Then we'd go home. That was Sunday after Sunday. And then it evolved into Youth Sunday, where we would participate in giving the service. I still have a copy of the sermon I gave, I think when I was in the eleventh grade or something like that.

01-00:42:24

Burnett:

You gave a sermon?

01-00:42:25

Samuelson:

Yes, I gave the sermon.

01-00:42:25

Burnett:

Wow.

01-00:42:28

Samuelsen:

Which was an interesting endeavor. And then the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, because of the generosity of a member of the Gamble family, of Procter & Gamble, had an amazing summer house down on Balboa Island, a two-story house. During the summer young students would be able to go down there for a week at a time for an encampment. So my brother and I both had a chance to be campers and then we both evolved into counselors. I can't speak for him but I know that in my time, for the last two or three years, we would end up with one additional week for just the older students who were there still in Pasadena for what they called leadership camp, for more in-depth bible study and worship and fun and games out on the water. This camp was located at what now is prime real estate on Balboa Island and has long since been sold by the church. At the time it was in quite a location. So in terms of developing my faith, of interacting with ministers and counselors who were really mentors for me, and then in developing some very, very good friendships that are still with me today, that was terribly, terribly important to me.

01-00:44:17

Burnett:

I'm straining my memory right now. But something about the Presbyterian faith where governance and taking responsibility for church governance is kind of the responsibility of the congregation, is that a feature? I suppose that's a bland—you could apply that to so many churches, right? But especially for Presbyterianism, that there is a real emphasis on participatory governance. And you mentioned leadership training. Do you think that that was a feature or is that too much of a stretch?

01-00:44:54

Samuelsen:

Well, I think that was a feature. Frankly I can't speak definitively to that because I have long since become a member of the United Church of Christ, which formerly was congregational. And you have described perfectly our governance pattern and it's one of several reasons that I've been attracted to this particular denomination and have been active in our local church here in the Bay Area. But that came a number of years later. I was active in the Presbyterian Church when I was an undergraduate at Berkeley, First Presbyterian Church. But I was not involved in the governance to really be able to respond to your question.

01-00:45:41

Burnett:

Well, we'll pick up the thread as we get to that phase in your life and we can talk about that shift, which is an interesting one.

01-00:45:49

Samuelsen:

Incidentally, the reason my face is a little bit splotchy today is that—first, I'm light-complected anyway. But down on Balboa Island we didn't have sunscreen in those days and I spent a lot of time on the beach and I'm paying

the price. So yesterday my dermatologist took care of me. That's why you see a few little spots of red here and there.

01-00:46:12

Burnett:

Oh, I see. I see. Wow. Well, yes, definitely take care of that. I cringe when I think of my father just sunning himself to a beet red and just not thinking about the possible consequences. But when you don't have sunscreen you don't have sunscreen. What are you going to do as a child, right?

So, it's multiple things. You're being taken out by your father to go to sporting events, maybe just to put a cap on that. I'm from Canada and so I don't know about American football except as an outsider. We have Canadian football but can't call it the same. But American football is something special in American culture. Can you tell me a little bit about your interest in sports? Was it kind of part of life that you just sort of grew up with? Can you tell me about what it's like or what it was like to go to one of those big games? Were people just through the rafters with excitement? What was it like?

01-00:47:30

Samuelsen:

Well, obviously I grew up with sports in my portfolio and I think largely through my dad but also because it was the way of life in elementary school and junior high and high school, that you would participate in as many sports as possible. My neighborhood buddies and I would gather after school every day and play some form of sports. During the summer we went to what was called baseball school down near the Rose Bowl and had formal training, had leagues that we played in. Summer after summer we did that. So it was just part of my upbringing. Yes in so far as going to sporting events, it was not only wonderful athletically but wonderful entertainment wise. As I said, we would go to a UCLA or USC game on Saturdays. My mother went to USC, as I said before, so I would often sit in the stands with her and have to root for USC, which is ironic since I now root very much against USC. But I was loyal. Or we would root for UCLA, the home team. And likewise, the Rams or the Dons, who were professional teams, on Sunday. We would root very hard and I would become acquainted with all of the players and follow the statistics and follow their records.

But the whole ambience, including the bands and the traditions and the mascots was part of it. If that wasn't enough in spades, then you have the Rose Bowl, which itself, is the granddaddy of them all. Talk about pageantry! And followed by the Tournament of Roses, with dad being so much a part of that as well. It would start a week before the game when we would go down to the hotel where the visiting team was staying and meet players and meet coaches and meet sports writers through my dad. The kick-off luncheon—dad would make sure that we sat in the front row while he emceed and interviewed coaches and sports writers and sportscasters from around the country. It was just very much part of our lives. And then the game itself. I think I attended something like fifteen consecutive Rose Bowl games until I was in the Army

in Kentucky. In those days you just didn't jump on a plane and fly back. So I missed my first game in fifteen years. But it was just part and parcel of growing up.

01-00:50:51

Burnett:

One of the things that astonishes me in my time in the United States is the way in which football in particular, although other games could be a close second, it seems to be this way, it allows people who would otherwise disagree about a lot of different things, come from very different backgrounds, very different places in the United States, they can share a cab together or they can walk by one another on the street and a comment can be uttered about how well this player is doing or something and it's this instant glue. Football seems to be almost a national surrogate. Even though people obviously have rivalries, but their love of the game is a way for people to break the ice. I don't know if that's something that helped you, because you had it in your blood. Whether you wanted it or not, you had this kind of armature of sports knowledge. Did that help you at all when you would talk to people or was it not necessarily the way you went about breaking the ice with folks? [laughter]

01-00:52:03

Samuelson:

Oh, sure. Particularly with your contemporaries you would talk along those lines. But I think also, and here we were following our dad's lead, we found in sports a way to get beyond the plays to the people involved. And it goes to what we were saying earlier. These were interesting lives. How did they get to this point? What were they thinking at a particular time? What drove them? And dad in his writing would generally emphasize that more than trying to describe the sequence of plays that may have led to a touchdown or led to a home run or the like. The human interest side, he would write at length about that. When Babe Ruth died in 1946 I opened up the newspaper on my birthday and there was my dad's column and it was addressed, "Dear Son, happy birthday." Well, he wanted me to know about Babe Ruth not as the baseball great that he was but as the person whom my dad had been privileged to know. And here's a full article about the human being and his reaching out to other people and all of his acts of charity, what he meant to the scene. So I think even today, and I still maintain quite an interest in sports, I'm more interested in reading the background about players and how they reflect than on something that may have occurred in the game itself. And later on when we talk about my family, my son Jamie, my youngest son Jamie, is a sportscaster in Detroit, Michigan, and following exactly the same pattern that I just described.

01-00:54:27

Burnett:

Well, one other facet of childhood that seemed to be important to you was scouting. And, of course, that's important for I don't know how many millions of boys and Girl Guides for girls. It seems to be still a really important force in people's lives. Can you talk about how that started? And I'm trying to think about how you had time between the sports and the church activities and the

scouting. Can you tell me how you first got interested in it or do you remember how that started? Did your parents just sign you up one day?

01-00:55:07

Samuelson:

Well, it started with the Cub Scouts and again I attribute that to my mother and to the mothers of some of my buddies who obviously got together and said, "Let's encourage them to form a den and become active in Cub Scouts." It was just natural to go from there on into Boy Scouts and I just really enjoyed every aspect of scouting, but particularly enjoyed the once-a-month encampments somewhere in the San Gabriel mountains or out in the desert or wherever we would go where we would camp out, pitch our tents, cook our dinners and the like. We were blessed to live in one of the most beautiful parts of the country and to have good weather, generally speaking, year round so you could easily do that without having to drive that far. So I got involved with Scouts and then I had several just amazing opportunities through Scouts. One was the National Jamboree in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in 1950 and some enterprising parents from our area put together a private train that had representatives from a number of troops, not only from Pasadena but from the San Gabriel Valley. And they worked out an itinerary that involved about three weeks, going around the perimeter of the United States, first up through San Francisco and Seattle and then across the country through Glacier National Park, Chicago, Detroit, ultimately to Valley Forge where we spent a week encampment. We then returned home via Washington, DC, Atlanta, New Orleans, and San Antonio. It was just an amazing experience. So in 1950 I was all of, what, thirteen, fourteen years old, and what an indelible impression that left. At Valley Forge our speakers included President Truman, who gave the opening talk. And I still remember that this was just after the outbreak of the Korean War and he had a few things on his mind. I can't tell you exactly what he said but he obviously was very concerned and talked about the need to be steadfast. Several days later, on the Fourth of July, the speaker was General Dwight Eisenhower. Absolutely incredible. There I am with 50,000 Scouts, all in Scout uniforms. During the day, of course, we were trading patches and having all sorts of interesting activities, but that was an amazing opportunity.

01-00:58:38

Burnett:

It must have had an impact. I think sort of interpreting what the significance of the jamboree. I don't imagine that president and the general of the forces during World War II go to every Scout jamboree. So this was a particular moment that they chose to do this and it was a particularly special event, and in the context of a Cold War that was emerging.

01-00:59:12

Samuelson:

That's right. And at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, with its own historic significance.

01-00:59:20

Burnett:

Right. Exactly. And so I think they were speaking to the youth, the leaders of tomorrow. I think that's probably what they were framing it as. And so did you have a sense of that at thirteen? Were you just gobsmacked by everything you'd just seen over the last few weeks? You went around the United States, quite literally.

01-01:59:47

Samuelsen:

Well, yes, and we saw all of the important historic sites along the way. I still remember bits and pieces of that vividly. And it was part of my attraction to trains, too, which we can get into at another time. But it was quite an experience to be on a steam driven train and be with what were really a good group of guys and share that experience. So then I came back and went on to become an Eagle Scout, which has always been a source of satisfaction and pride. I even had an opportunity the following New Year's to ride on the Boy Scout float in the Tournament of Roses, if you can believe it. So I have a picture of being there and waving to the crowd.

01-01:01:02

Burnett:

So this was just yet one more opportunity to interact with kids your own age but also to learn about leadership. And I went as far as Cub Scout. I was never a scout. But I remember the emphasis on teaching values, and not just how to light a fire in the desert but very much how you treat people and building character is, of course, kind of at the basis of the whole movement, isn't it?

01-01:01:37

Samuelsen:

That's right. And then to assume leadership positions and work with younger scouts, care for them to the extent you can. It's a wonderful program. And then just earning the twenty-one merit badges required for an Eagle Scout. That was a learning experience and one that, I'm sure, benefited me in many ways.

01-01:02:04

Burnett:

On the school side of things—I understand in Pasadena there's a junior high school and that serves as the high school. It goes up to grade eleven. Is that right?

01-01:02:17

Samuelsen:

Well, at that time, and it was the last year. It no longer exists. But it was called the six/four/four system. Very unique. Six years of elementary school, four years of junior high school, and then four years of junior college. The four years of junior college being the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth grades. It was recognized that some would leave after the twelfth grade from junior college and go on to a four-year college or university and that's what I did. So really my best experience in Pasadena school-wise was in junior high school, because that was a four-year school. I could become a senior, and I was fortunate to become student body president my senior year. But you had the senior dance. You had all sorts of wonderful activities that most students don't have until high school. On the other hand, I think one of the benefits of

this system, was, when you were at the junior college, Pasadena City College by name at the time, you could interact with some older students. You could have an opportunity to take some upper-division classes. You were on the same campus as older kids. There was quite a bit of freedom and flexibility coming and going. Probably wouldn't be able to do that today.

01-01:04:05

Burnett: No, no.

01-01:04:08

Samuelson: But that was the last year. They stopped it and then evolved into the more traditional system whatever it is. I'm not sure what it is now. But it does have a high school. So there now is Pasadena High School and Muir High School, which I believe are four-year high schools. So my brother, six-and-a-half years younger, went to Pasadena High School and not to Pasadena City College.

01-01:04:32

Burnett: And this is, of course, pre-Sputnik, so it's a different emphasis on education. Were you interested in school? Were you engaged? What did you like most? What did you like least?

01-01:04:48

Samuelson: I loved school and I think I did well academically. But I also was becoming more and more involved in student activities, student government, and the like. And if I have any regret I think I struck somewhat of an imbalance. It was almost too easy for me to do both. I didn't have to work that hard academically, at least at that time. I'm sure today they'd have to work much harder. I think that carried over to Cal, particularly as I became more and more involved with activities at Cal, that I didn't concentrate as much on the academics as I wish I had. My brother went just the opposite way. I think he struck a much better balance and I'm very proud of the fact that he became a true academic, a true scholar, and still is today.

01-01:05:49

Burnett: Did you like to read? Did your parents read a lot? What were the reading habits?

01-01:05:56

Samuelson: My mother read a lot. I don't think my dad read anything beyond the sports pages, in order to keep up. Producing as many columns as he did, he had to be knowledgeable around the country. So I recall doing a lot of reading in elementary school, in the first part of junior high, not so much later on. Again, I think that would be a regret.

01-01:06:25

Burnett: You mentioned when we were talking about scouts the lay of the land. California is so beautiful in terms of the extent of the beauty of the wilderness but also the range. In close proximity, you've got mountains and oceans and

the desert. Can you talk a little bit about how you became interested in the less-developed places? We can't really call it wilderness necessarily but the less-developed parts of California? Is that through scouting that you learned about going out on your own and did you start to do it on your own or with friends, to go backpacking, for example?

01-01:07:17

Samuelson:

I think while growing up it was through scouting. And I was fortunate not only to have these weekend encampments that I mentioned but also to have excursions to Arizona, New Mexico, and experience the drive through the Mojave Desert and into the Grand Canyon and some of the national monuments in those parts of the country. So I think I gained quite an appreciation for the natural environment. But my backpacking didn't really occur until much later and was stimulated by my brother. We still do backpacking of a sort, forty, fifty years later after we started in earnest. But I don't think I had other opportunities, experiences along the lines you are suggesting. It is ironic, as we will get into later on, that I became director of the Natural Reserve System because that was more because of my background as an attorney and as a negotiator than as a natural scientist. I don't recall having that many natural science courses during the course of my life. I regret that now. But I also had an ability, and think I still have the ability, to rely on others who did have that background and to let them lead the way.

01-01:09:02

Burnett:

Yeah. We'll talk about this much later but I imagine you developed a kind of interactional expertise, is the phrase that people use. That you had to talk to scientists all the time, I imagine, and you had to know what mattered to them. And I can only ask this question by telling you a little bit about one of the few times I did backcountry canoeing in Canada, for example, that involved several portages over hills into a sequence of lakes. And the further in you got the further away you got from people, the fewer people you saw, until you didn't see any people, and the only "people" you saw were moose and birds. The trees, the leaves got greener and darker, the sounds got louder from these non-human sources. It was so impressive to me. It is a different universe completely from the city. When you went out into the country, one of the things I also know from camping is you're just kind of surrounded by people. You're surrounded by more, like other Cub Scouts or other Eagle Scouts. Can you talk a little bit about encounters, early encounters, with nature, ecosystems, however we want to call it, when you were growing up? Was there anything that stood out for you that was really impressive in that way, in the way that kind of impressed me, that kind of made me realize there was a different way of being in the world?

01-01:10:56

Samuelson:

What comes to mind would be trips out to the desert where my parents had friends. And it was the time when Palm Springs and Palm Desert and Yucca Valley had not developed that much. And on those occasions I definitely recall walking out on my own, exploring, and having the types of experiences

that you are describing. So I think that, plus sometimes wandering off the course with my scouting groups on my own. There's something about being alone that is very special. I think my brother and I, being as close as we are, can be out, just the two of us, and not say a word between us, but experience that. But you're absolutely right. When you're with a large group of people, the interaction, the social interaction dominates.

I do recall one experience with my brother which illustrates what I'm trying to say. And that was taking a long all-day trip from an adjacent town from Pasadena to what is called Mount Wilson. And it was a long, long day for just the two of us but we decided we wanted to do it. It was supposed to be a round trip but it started to rain at the end so we had to call our parents to drive up to Mount Wilson, which was not an easy trek. Probably a two-hour drive to get us and bring us home. But that is an experience that I remember, in part because we were sharing it and in part because we were not that far from population and yet we were on our own. Again, the advantage of having the San Gabriel Mountains right there at our beck and call.

01-01:13:11

Burnett:

Yeah. I imagine that what scouting does, too, is it builds confidence to go out into these places where you have to be kind of self-sufficient, you have to plan. You have to plan for your own bodily safety and sustenance. And you have to do that together as a group. And I think that has an impact on kids that you're not used to. Because school doesn't really give you that. You have the option to join this or that club but because of the nature of the separation between family and state you're not in those kinds of interdependent relationships. And scouting can give you that. Absolutely. And so you've got essentially a set of models for interacting with people, for working with people in a fairly organized fashion, right? And it's scouting. It's the experiences with your father in the sports world. And it's the church, as well. And I think one other facet, I think there's one thing we're missing here, too, is the early childhood business ventures. And this was something that has been raised. Can you talk a little bit about those activities and some of the things that you undertook when you were younger?

01-01:15:03

Samuelson:

I think the first so-called business that I decided to establish was during World War II, when the local garbage company had to really cut back on its service because so many of its employees were off serving in the armed forces. And prior to that time they would come down the street in their garbage trucks and they would go out into the backyards and bring the garbage cans out to the front, dump them, and put them back in the backyard. Well, they said, "We really need to have you put the garbage cans out on the curb. We just can't provide that level of service." I don't know what motivated me or how this became initiated but I decided to establish what became known as the Samuelson Brothers Garbage Service. We lived on a little dead end street with eight houses. So I went to each of the neighbors, knocked on their doors, and

said, "I will put your garbage cans out on the curb and return them at the end of the school day for ten cents a week." And I signed them up.

We had a wonderful neighbor by the name of Bob Lipscomb who repaired cash registers in his garage. And I used to go over there and spend hours just watching him do this and talking to Uncle Bob about all the affairs of state. So when I told him about my garbage service he said, "Well, I tell you what. I will build you a wagon." So it basically was a piece of plywood and it had a little seat on the back. I'm not quite sure what led me to suggest that a little seat on the back might be a place where my little baby brother could sit. I'm not sure how often I literally went up the street and back with this cart with my brother. He likes to think all the time, but I don't know. We have a wonderful picture of my pulling this cart with my brother sitting there with a garbage can in the front. In any event, I used this to haul the garbage cans, and they were full, from the backyard to the front. And then once a month I would go around and I had a little invoice that I would give each of the neighbors and I would collect my forty, fifty cents. Now, whether I shared any of that with my brother, I don't know. I kind of doubt it. I'll let him recall. But he was too young to remember. He was born in '42, a year after Pearl Harbor, so he was just a tyke.

01-01:18:14

Samuelsen:

But the other job that I remember, and I still have an invoice from this, is with another uncle. This was Uncle Bill Rice, who was a bricklayer. At some stage, it had to be when I was six, seven, or eight years old, he hired me. I think he paid me all of three dollars for probably twenty hours of work. I don't even know what I did for him. But I still have the invoice. The significance of that is that in later years, I think starting in high school but into college, both my brother and I would work for Uncle Bill as a hod carrier during the summers. First I did it, and then in later years my brother did it. And for pretty good pay. And those were our summer jobs that helped us to save money for a car and college expenses. I doubt that I've ever been in better shape than I was in carrying hod around and being at his beck and call. It was a long day of hard labor.

01-01:19:35

Burnett:

Right, right. You earned that money.

01-01:19:38

Samuelsen:

That's right.

01-01:19:37

Burnett:

It's interesting. You talk about your uncles. These are next door neighbors, right?

01-01:19:42

Samuelsen:

Well, the first one is a next door neighbor. The other is literally a great-uncle, I think.

01-01:19:47

Burnett: Oh, okay, okay.

01-01:19:52

Samuelson: He was married to one of my dad's sisters. So I guess that would make him an uncle. Yeah. He was an uncle.

01-01:20:00

Burnett: And so there's a community feel. When you can call a next door neighbor Uncle Bob, right?

01-01:20:07

Samuelson: Oh, yes. And I called his wife Auntie Bee.

01-01:20:12

Burnett: Yeah, yeah. It sounds kind of idyllic growing up in this neighborhood, in the city itself. It sounds like a lovely childhood, in a sense.

01-01:20:27

Samuelson: Well, it really was. And several years ago, there was a reunion for my junior high school and we gathered. The buildings, the campus have not changed that much. We spent a full day, had a wonderful turnout. And two things stand out from that. Number one was the common reaction of everybody of how lucky we were to have a safe community, to have a wonderful education system, to have a number of very fine personal relationships. As I said, many of those still continue. It was rather amazing that we could have these opportunities. (JRS: The second recollection is the number of attendees – over half – who had pursued careers as teachers and/or administrators in education.)

01-01:21:23

Burnett: And you also had some other roles, as well? And, of course, you mentioned that you were your student body president of your junior high school. But in addition to really being kind of inspired by the community relationships you had, you were also being recognized by the community. Can you talk a little bit about the ways in which you were celebrated and awarded?

01-01:22:03

Samuelson: I think the most significant award was when I was in my twelfth year, which would have been a senior in high school for those who had a different system. This is, of course, the year before I went to Berkeley. Exchange Club of Pasadena and I guess of the greater area had a "youth of the year"-type of competition. You wrote some kind of an essay and then you were judged on the basis of scholarship and leadership and activities and the like. So I was Pasadena Youth of the Year of 19, whatever the year was, '54, I guess. And that afforded me an opportunity to go to Washington, DC with two people who were recognized in surrounding communities, the three of us, for a week.

And, oh, my gosh. It was somewhat like the jamboree trip but even at another level. We not only toured all of the sights of Washington, we went to not one but two opening baseball games of that season, one of which my dad

arranged, the other the exchange club arranged. We went to a talk given by then Vice President Richard Nixon and had a chance to meet him afterward—have a picture taken with him. Had a chance to meet with then Chief Justice Earl Warren. Had a chance to meet with the two senators from California, Thomas Kuchel and Bill Knowland. I have a letter from J. Edgar Hoover, who was head of the FBI, expressing regret that he could not see me but enclosing a picture. This is unbelievable. I'm dressed in a suit and a tie and one of his FBI folks had me down at the shooting range in the basement of the FBI building shooting a rifle, firing a rifle at targets. Amazing. So I would say that honor stands out.

01-01:24:43

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. Well, it also makes me think about the times, too. That you're coming of age in post-war, Cold War United States. And in your high school years it's the Korean War. I mean junior high. And Los Angeles is changing. There's the Great Migration. There's African Americans moved into the Los Angeles area to do the war work and then staying on. So the LA basin is becoming a busier place, is becoming a more culturally and racially diverse place. And there's the threat of communism and there's an active police action in Korea. What did that all look like to a young Roger Samuelson? Let's start with the specter of communism. What did that look like and what were people saying and what were people doing around the threat of communism in Pasadena in the early 1950s?

01-01:26:06

Samuelson:

I think we might have been somewhat oblivious to what was really transpiring. Unlike today with the Internet and twenty-four-hour news broadcasts and the like, we were pretty much in a cocoon. I think we were so involved with our student activities, our church activities, sports activities that there wasn't that much attention being given to that. I regret saying that today. I wish I had been more aware. For whatever reason, I don't recall dinnertime conversations with my folks. I don't recall my folks talking about that with friends. They might have been. Whether they were well aware and were just protecting us I don't know. But it just was far away and so I didn't experience it that much.

01-01:27:22

Burnett:

But it would be something in the newsreels and it was part of the general culture. And there was obviously the conflict overseas and there were reports of it.

01-01:27:32

Samuelson:

Well, certainly in going to movies you would have the newsreels and they would certainly be reporting, particularly during World War II, and later in the Korean War, on what was happening. And it was frightening. Or you open the newspaper and the front page would show overlays of the latest battle, but again, it was pretty far away for a young innocent kid who thought everything was going to be okay.

01-01:28:07

Burnett:

I think that was probably fairly typical of the time. People were trying to get on with their lives and they were doing the best they could. This was something kind of abstract. I think World War II, even though it was also taking place overseas, it was much more visceral and there was much more of a complete engagement. There were, however many, ten million Americans involved directly. And then there's that whole transformation of the home front. And Korea was a smaller, but substantial, but a smaller operation and maybe it didn't have as much of an impact.

01-01:28:58

Samuelsen:

Well, if my dad or a relative had been more involved with one of those conflicts, obviously that would have brought it home in spades.

01-01:29:10

Burnett:

Right, exactly. Yeah, yeah. I don't quite know how it works with the junior high system yet. By the end of this, I will have it down.

01-01:00:23

Samuelsen:

No, I was graduating from the lower division of Pasadena City College.

01-01:29:29

Burnett:

Okay. So you've graduated. Now, before that, were you thinking about what you wanted to do next? What was next for you when you're thinking about stages in life and what was going to happen?

01-01:29:47

Samuelsen:

It was clear that I was going to go to college. The question was whether I was going to go to Stanford or Cal. I grew up with what was then the *California Monthly*, the alumni magazine, on the coffee table thanks to my dad. Mom never encouraged me about USC because they felt both my brother and I should go away from home, have some distance from Pasadena, although I think down deep they hoped we would return to Pasadena someday. So I was weighing which of those institutions I wanted to attend, I was admitted to both of them, but weighing pro and con along with some of my good friends who were also weighing pro and con. It was a very common point of discussion. And so then the question was how to process this. I had an opportunity when I was in the twelfth grade to accept an invitation from a good friend of mine who was at Stanford to take a train to Palo Alto for the Big Game against California. We sat in the Stanford rooting section and I was neutral. And fortunately the game turned out to be a twenty-twenty tie so I didn't have to favor one team over the other. But I was checking my emotions.

A little sidebar to that which is of interest is that my good friend set me up with a date on the night of the game. And her name was Yvonne Goldman. It's now Yvonne Goldman Banks. Well, her sister, who was at Stanford at the time, is now better known as Dianne Feinstein, Senator Dianne Feinstein. Yvonne and I maintained a friendship because she ended up going to Cal, as

did I, the following fall, and was one of the first women I dated when we were freshmen. So we were classmates.

I thought very highly of Stanford. Had a good visit there. As time went on some of my very, very best friends decided to go to Stanford and so there was a pull to go there myself. But sometime in the spring my dad was invited to Berkeley to help dedicate what is known as the Clint Evans Baseball Diamond here on the Berkeley campus. He had known Clint over the years. They'd become good friends and it was an example of my dad's outreach to sports personalities. He just had a way of becoming close. So my mom and dad and I drove up to Berkeley. I don't recall whether Scott came or not. But in any event we were met just a few steps from where we are right now, on the steps of Stephens Union, by the then-athletic director Brutus Hamilton, another friend of my dad's. Brutus Hamilton was a beloved director of athletics—and a beloved track coach. He was coach of one of the Olympic track teams. He went on to become associate dean of students. Everyone revered Brutus Hamilton.

Well, that was the person who greeted me on the Berkeley campus and it made quite an impression. So I spent the day walking around the campus. And I recall spending the night with my folks in San Francisco. This is why I'm not sure Scott was with me, because I remember saying that I would just like to take a walk on my own around San Francisco. I don't recall ever having been to San Francisco before. I took a long, long walk and believe it was during that walk that I decided that I could be just as happy at Berkeley as I would be at Stanford. It would cost my folks far less, even though tuition then at Stanford wasn't anywhere near what it is today. Nevertheless, with my folks' rather limited income and knowing my brother was coming along, it just didn't seem to be in the cards that I should go there, although I'm sure, knowing my folks, they would have found a way had I decided on Stanford. And so literally I came here knowing one person. I didn't know Yvonne was coming at the time. But when I made the decision, a neighbor who was a senior at the time drove me up to Berkeley the following fall. He was really the only one I knew. I wasn't at all close to him. So I arrived at Berkeley not knowing anybody. All my best friends were at Stanford. And the rest is history. Berkeley became part and parcel to my life.

01-01:35:33

Burnett:

Well, there is the issue of cost, of course. And I think one of our other interviewees said that his tuition, a little bit later when you were there, was around fifty dollars a semester.

01-01:35:48

Samuelson:

I remember fifty-two.

01-01:35:49

Burnett:

Fifty-two dollars.

01-01:35:50

Samuelson: And it wasn't tuition, it was a fee.

01-01:35:52

Burnett: It was a fee. Right. Because I think Reagan introduced tuition in the late sixties. So right. So a fee, a fifty-dollar fee to attend this institution. And I think around the same time Harvard's tuition was about 400, 400 for the year. But usually you could also get scholarships. You could maybe knock a hundred or maybe two hundred off of that. But still you're paying four times as much at the very best case scenario, unless you get a complete free ride. And I imagine Stanford was comparable to Harvard's tuition. So that's a hefty expense. But I think there might have also been something at play there, too. Clearly your father was a Cal grad and had friends who were part of that institution and part of that world. It seems like that was something he wanted for you.

01-01:36:58

Samuelson: We would attend basketball games and football games when Cal was playing UCLA or USC. I could clearly see the rooster coming out in my dad. Those were very important times, I think. And then I was fortunate to receive what was called an alumni scholarship. I was an alumni scholar. I think it may have paid the grand total of a hundred dollars. But at that time that was big and it gave me not only a sense of recognition but a sense of belonging to this place, that somehow they really wanted me. And as I'm sure we will discuss further on, later on, that involvement with the alumni association became very, very important to me.

01-01:37:55

Burnett: We're going to have another session all on your Berkeley years. But I did want to ask about first impressions and maybe by a point of comparison to what Berkeley looks like now. What was the feeling on campus? What was it like? Obviously Telegraph came in further in to what is now the campus. But when you were comparing it in your mind to Stanford what were some of the things that struck you?

01-01:38:37

Samuelson: Certainly the beauty of the setting, the beauty of the campus. I think I was pleasantly surprised with how beautiful this campus is. Somehow I think I had an image of a more urban setting rather than one with a lot of open space, a lot of trees. Beautiful buildings well laid out and the like. Dad took me up to Memorial Stadium to watch spring practice and so I saw the beauty of that location as well. You can't be in Memorial Stadium and not be taken by it. Stanford has a beautiful campus, too, but it's flatter, it's larger acreage wise, it's more spread out. I didn't feel quite the focus there that I did here. And then meeting Clint Evans and Bruce Hamilton. Those names stand out on that particular visit. And having known other sports personalities like Pappy Waldorf since they had visited our home and I had met them through my dad. (JRS: One of my dad's friends was Charley Erb, quarterback of the Cal

Wonder Teams of the 1920s; on at least one occasion, dad and Erb played ping pong in the driveway of our home.) I felt a very personal connection and could identify in that way, together with the beauty of the campus.

01-01:40:14

Burnett: So it was the human relationships that kind of initially sort of brokered your passage into Cal?

01-01:40:22

Samuelsen: Yes.

01-01:40:25

Burnett: In terms of what you wanted to study, was it not much more than “I want to go to college?”

01-01:40:32

Samuelsen: That’s correct.

01-01:40:32

Burnett: And then you would figure it out once you got there, be stimulated by the environment. Was that something you were looking forward to?

01-01:40:41

Samuelsen: Yes, yes. I was curious. Wasn’t sure what that might lead to. I know at various stages I had thought about law but didn’t have a particular direction along those lines. And it is interesting, again, compared with my brother, because I think when he attended Cal he did start to think very early about engineering and he came more with that as a game plan than I did.

01-01:41:09

Burnett: And so you were thinking of a Bachelor of Arts degree?

01-01:41:12

Samuelsen: Yes.

01-01:41:12

Burnett: That’s what you were oriented towards. And then possibly in terms of vocation, possibly the law.

01-01:41:18

Samuelsen: I do want to talk a little bit about my brother because, it probably goes without saying, I’m very proud of him and what he has accomplished and done. I like to tell him and remind him that I taught him everything he knows. But he has gone so far beyond anything I could have ever taught him. And it’s fun to look back over a relationship, when you think about six-and-a-half years. That’s a lot of years. But I have nothing but warm feelings about our childhood. And I think it goes back to our mother. She put us in a bedroom with bunk beds and I think that was a chance for us to bond. We’d go to bed about the same time. We would talk and get ready for bed together and that type of thing. I think that was terribly important. And then we just had so many shared experiences

over the years. What really bonded us, and again, we can probably talk about this later, but when he was a doctoral student here at Berkeley and I was just starting the practice of law, my first wife and I were separated. Scott and Sharon, his wife, lived in Orinda at the time. They took me in. I think I must have been there at least three months. It's just hard for me to fathom that they would put up with me that long. So no matter what our age difference, that was the equalizer. Up until that point my life had been pretty idyllic. But there I was facing a huge setback in my life, not knowing what that was going to open up. But they could not have been more accommodating. I think that was the beginning of an even closer relationship which we continue to enjoy together. And then the icing on the cake, a year later Sharon, my sister-in-law, introduced me to Jeane. And I've now been married to Jeane for forty-six years.

01-01:43:53

Burnett:

Wow.

01-01:43:55

Samuelsen:

But we'll talk about that more later.

01-01:43:57

Burnett:

Yes, yes. Absolutely. There is a six-and-a-half-year age gap. When I think about that kind of age gap in an upbringing, if there's just two, I think there's sometimes a potential for the older brother or older sibling to be a kind of second parent because of that gap. Because you're eighteen and he's eleven. And also, as he's entering his formative years, you're away at Cal. When you were growing up, was it a big-brotherly relationship or was it more like a quasi-parental relationship?

01-01:44:50

Samuelsen:

Oh, I think it was more big brother. Scott may feel differently about that. But he likes to tell the tale that I threatened him once with a paddle that had nails in it and that I hid the paddle in the garage and threatened to use it if he didn't behave. True or not, there might have been a representation of a paddle but there wasn't really a paddle. But if there were, I'm sure he deserved the threat of my using it. [laughter] No, I think it was big brother. But one thing I admire in Scott, and this is just from my vantage point, I did have a wonderful upbringing in Pasadena and I was a student body president. I was Pasadena Youth of the Year. I've got to believe that was hard on a younger brother and that he may have felt expectations from my parents to follow suit. I know he ran for student body president of Marshall Junior High School and came in second. That had to be hard at the time. Now, he went on to wonderful leadership positions, both in Pasadena and at Cal, and obviously he has gone on to a very distinguished career as a professor of mechanical, aeronautical, and environmental engineering at [University of California] Irvine. And so whatever difficulties he may have had by being my younger brother he has overcome those in many, many respects. In all respects. And I admire that. I just imagine it was a little bit difficult.

He also, after I left for college, experienced some real difficulties our mom and dad were having. I knew they were having some difficulties but nothing like my brother experienced. There were times he had to escape from home and go to friends' houses. And that was too bad. As years went on he and I had to deal with that together and that was part of our closeness, that we could confer with one another and figure out how to be the most helpful.

And then, as you may know, and I don't think we've touched upon this, in 1961, I believe, our dad lost his sight. He suffered a massive thrombosis and the infection took his optic cord. And so for the last ten, eleven, twelve years of his life he was blind. My mother had to adjust to that. She did for the first part. It in many ways brought them together in ways they had not been for a while. She became his eyes and ears, would go to press boxes with him and type out his columns as he would dictate them. At one point the Football Writers of America named her an honorary member.

01-01:48:47

Burnett:

That's amazing.

01-01:48:49

Samuelsen:

And another group of writers named her one of the boys or something like that. So she was recognized for pitching in. That was when my mother's nurturing side came out big time. As time went on, unfortunately, again the relationship deteriorated. Going back to my brother, I think our parents' struggles was the other thing growing up he had to overcome. There were some tough times there in the home.

01-01:49:29

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. What's clear is that both offspring have these incredibly accomplished lives, very different, growing up in different times. The common denominator is the parents, right?

01-01:49:53

Samuelsen:

That's right.

01-01:49:52

Burnett:

And your support of each other. We always want to claim that we did some stuff ourselves, and of course we do. But without that base, without that support, that seems to be something that's so clear in your family's case, and it's something that I think has impressed you, by the way that you and by the way your brother described your parents, that they were pretty dedicated to forming you and not telling you how to be but just modeling what they would like you to be in the world, to be called to help others. That that was an emphasis, right? That sounds like that was a refrain and that seems to be a refrain in your life. But we're going to come to that as we talk about the ways in which you're called. You're called again and again, right, as we go through your life history, and the story is how you respond to those challenges and how you meet them. So let's maybe leave that for another time.

01-01:51:07

Samuelson: Wonderful.

01-01:51:09

Burnett: Okay, thank you.

[End of Interview]

Interview 2: June 7, 2016

02-00:00:13

Burnett:

This is Paul Burnett, interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series, and this is our second session, and it's June 7, 2016. So the last time we left off, we had just begun to talk about your arrival at UC Berkeley, and choosing the campus over Stanford. And when I think of a very young man moving to a new city, I think about the Maslow hierarchy, right? You need food, water, shelter to start with. So there's a lot of new happening for you for the very first time away from home. Can you talk a little bit about that experience of being a new student at Cal, and what you experienced, and what you did?

02-00:01:16

Samuelsen:

Well, fortunately, because of my dad's connections with the Athletic Department here, and Brutus Hamilton, Brutus arranged for a rooming house on Durant Avenue, right across from Durant Hotel, for me to stay as a freshman. I did not know anybody in that house, or who my roommates were going to be, and the like. My two roommates turned out to be athletes. One was a basketball player by the name of Duane Asplund who went on to become the starting center on the basketball team a year or so after we roomed together. The other was a fellow by the name of Carl Klenk who was a baseball player. Unfortunately, he did not do well academically, and subsequently left Cal. But these were my initial roommates, and my friends, and I developed other friends in that rooming house. They provided room and board, and that was kind of my beginning. I mean, I just recall wandering the streets on, say, a Sunday when the rooming house wasn't providing food, and going to cafeterias or cafes or wherever I could find a place to have a bite to eat. But so it was somewhat of a lonely beginning, but you started as others were going through the same thing, with friends with whom you found things in common.

02-00:02:55

Burnett:

And what year was this again, for the record?

02-00:02:58

Samuelsen:

That would've been in the fall of 1954.

02-00:03:02

Burnett:

And where would you go? Where would a young student wander at that time? What was the great street to go to?

02-00:03:10

Samuelsen:

Well, Telegraph Avenue, or Durant Avenue, or downtown to Shattuck. There was one café in particular, and I forget the exact name. It had Blue in it, and I don't know whether it was Blue Moon, that was kind of a favorite place to go. But during the week our meals were provided there in the rooming house, and that worked out well. Kip's was there at the time. Kip's is still with us, I believe, and that was a wonderful place to go to get a hamburger and a beer

and a milkshake. But so that was kind of my beginning. But there were other baseball players in the house, freshman baseball players, and somehow I decided to try out for the freshman baseball team.

02-00:04:07

Burnett:

You did?

02-00:04:07

Samuelsen:

And that was kind of strange. While I'd played a lot of baseball growing up in Pasadena, I had not played baseball during my eleventh and twelfth years. I played tennis, instead. But somehow I thought, well, these are good guys; I'll just go along for the ride. I think I made the team for one reason, and that was because of my dad. I think the coaches of the Athletic Department were hoping my dad would continue to report favorably on Berkeley. I mean, I was at the bottom of the totem pole. But it gave me a group of guys, a place to feel more comfortable about being at Berkeley, and I think with a large institution you need to find your niche, wherever it may be, and that happened to be mine.

The best part was this was an outstanding team, and was a nucleus of a team that went on to win the National Championship in 1957. And the star of that team was a fellow by the name of Earl Robinson. Earl was the only African American on the team, but he was so good that he went on to play a few years in the Major Leagues. He also was an outstanding basketball player, was captain of the basketball team our senior year, and while he did not play on the NCAA Championship team in 1959 because he had graduated, he had a lot to do with paving the way for the championship that followed. And I mention that because for some reason Earl and I became very good friends. I mean, here was a lonely freshman, and here was this big star. He had come to Berkeley from Berkeley High School. And we would sit together on the bus. We would play catch on the side, and then I would sit on the bench while he was out starring. But we remained friends throughout his life. Unfortunately, he died several years ago.

But what was really meaningful was that in our senior year he volunteered to be the assistant yell leader at football games, because he thought that was a way of giving back, of demonstrating to his fellow students that he really appreciated their support.

02-00:06:50

Burnett:

And what is that position, the assistant yell—?

02-00:06:52

Samuelsen:

He was assistant yell leader. So here he is, the captain of the basketball team, star baseball player, but during the football season he was the assistant yell leader. And I think that was just an important part of learning, for me and for others, that there was something to be said about the integration of cultures and races, and he was right in the forefront of that, as he was the only African

American on that baseball team as freshman and as a basketball player. But he was a leader.

02-00:07:34

Burnett: Right, right. We can get into this at any time, we can maybe come back to it, but 1954 is also *Brown v The Board of Education*.

02-00:07:48

Samuelson: That's right.

02-00:07:49

Burnett: And then there's the subsequent reaction, in the South especially, to this. How did that percolate through to your time there at Berkeley? We'll talk about all of its ramifications, but early on in, say, your first, second years, what were the radio waves coming through onto campus about what was going on?

02-00:08:21

Samuelson: Well, we were certainly aware what was happening in the South, certainly aware of the *Brown v Board of Education* decision, but my sense was that we were doing a pretty good job of socializing and interacting with people of different cultures and different races. I'm sure that there was a lot more going on in their lives, and talking to Earl over the years I know there was more, and tough steps they had to take. But I had the advantage of being in athletics with these people, and that's a common denominator. So I didn't sense the discrimination that I know they were probably experiencing and the like. And I think we touched upon this earlier: I also was raised in Pasadena, which was ahead of its time insofar as immigration, and had Jackie Robinson as one of its favorite sons. Again, we were aware of what people like Jackie Robinson and Earl were facing in their own communities, and in becoming accepted, but my own personal interaction was very positive, and I was a beneficiary of some very close relationships, and I'm grateful for that.

02-00:09:54

Burnett: I was thinking back to your nationwide tour on the train as part of the National Jamboree, and there's a sense of national unity, patriotism, the sense of the history of the nation. And I watched a video; there was a film that was made of that time. I don't know if you got a chance to look at it, but it was—

02-00:10:16

Samuelson: I did look at it.

02-00:10:17

Burnett: —absolutely fascinating.

02-00:10:18

Samuelson: Yes.

02-00:10:19

Burnett: And so early on you got a sense of the nation by physically moving through it and having these conversations about what it meant to be an American. When

you heard news about these sectional differences about the South, how did that strike you, when you were hearing about the reactions in the South and the Southern Manifesto and all that kind of stuff? You're living in a different world, it seems.

02-00:10:54

Samuelsen:

That's exactly what I was going to say: it was a different world. And obviously there was concern, almost disbelief, particularly, as you saw, TV coverage, or coverage of the movie screen, of what was going on. It was just hard to believe, and hard to fathom. So I'm concerned that many of us were not as involved in overcoming that as we should've been. It was like it was the other side of the country, or another part of the world, and others of my time became more active and did something about it, went down to the South as years went on. I was not one of them. And I regret that. I think it was a little bit thinking that was someone else's problem, concern, and that probably came back into play as we get into my ASUC presidency, and my senior year, the extent to which those issues perked up again, and how I reacted to them. But we can get to that later.

02-00:12:05

Burnett:

We shall, we shall. One other thing that just popped into my head at this moment. You mentioned seeing coverage on TV, and of course there were newsreels, but television during the time that you're in college becomes more widespread, so what was your experience of TV and TV news? How did that become a part of your world in the 1950s? Was it something you had in the dorms, or in cafes? How did television change your perspective on the United States, for example?

02-00:12:42

Samuelsen:

Well, hard to believe, there was a TV in the common room of my fraternity, but not TV in our private rooms, so there were certainly people who would gather for the nightly news or the like. I don't recall doing that much of it, for whatever reason. There certainly was not a TV in the boarding house during my freshman year, and so that was something that was available for a few but not for the masses as it is now. And, of course, there wasn't the internet, so you didn't have the opportunity on your computer—we didn't have computers—to see what was going on. So whether that was an intentional removal or just because I was involved with baseball practice or with other activities, I really don't know. I think my main source of news would've been the morning paper, where you could certainly read the headlines and digest what was going on in the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

02-00:13:54

Burnett:

Did you have your own subscription, or was there a house subscription and the paper would move from—?

02-00:13:58

Samuelsen:

House subscription.

02-00:13:59

Burnett:

Right, right. So the impression that I get is that there are these big national, historic events unfolding, and Berkeley, like many campuses, is a kind of enclosed garden at the same time. Your life is full. I get a sense that when you're eighteen, nineteen, it's athletics, it's academics, it's social life, all of these things. You're growing as a person still at that time, I think.

02-00:14:35

Samuelsen:

That's right.

02-00:14:37

Burnett:

When it came to the courses themselves, you've mentioned you didn't have a particular direction in mind. Do you remember courses or professors that stood out for you at Cal at the time?

02-00:14:54

Samuelsen:

Oh, yes, and I think all of us at that time were trying to get as broad a spectrum of courses as we could, and that may be different than it is today. It wasn't with the thought of preparing for a particular career or a particular job. Things were going well in the fifties, and you just assumed that there would be a job out there, and you'd be able to find, you know, whatever passion there might be. So I just recall very broad courses, be they in the natural sciences or in political sciences, or the humanities. And in part, I think we were trying to fulfill certain requirements that we all had, but in part I think we just felt the need to get as broad an education as we could so that that would help us throughout our entire lives.

02-00:15:57

Burnett:

What was the course that was the furthest outside your comfort zone, furthest away from what you were interested in, or maybe surprised you somewhat?

02-00:16:07

Samuelsen:

Well, it might've been German, although I had a pretty good grasp of languages. But that was certainly one that comes to mind.

02-00:16:25

Burnett:

And it was like an intro to German?

02-00:16:27

Samuelsen:

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

02-00:16:28

Burnett:

Okay. That will stretch you a bit, I think.

02-00:16:31

Samuelsen:

That's right, that's right. Took a lot of study.

02-00:16:33

Burnett:

I bet, I bet. It's not an easy language to learn. And so you're involved in athletics, and you're in your rooming house for your first year. Again, on the theme of shelter, and social life, there's a large, significant Greek life still on

campus, and then I think it was probably even more important. Can you talk a little bit about Greek life at Cal, and how you became involved in that? How did that unfold for you?

02-00:17:13

Samuelson:

Yes, the Greek life was very big, and my dad, having been to Berkeley in the twenties, was well aware of that Greek life, because it was big then, as well. And so over the years he and I had talked about that, and he encouraged me to eventually get into a fraternity, but we agreed that I shouldn't do that right away, and that's why I ended up with a boarding house. But I did rush for a fraternity at the beginning of my second semester, and was fortunate to have, as I recall, bids to two houses. And I had a hard choice to make between those two houses.

02-00:18:07

Burnett:

Which houses were they?

02-00:18:08

Samuelson:

You know, I'd rather not say, for the reason I will now explain. [laughs] And so I had to make a decision, and so I told one house that I had decided to go to the other house. Within about an hour or two of my telling that house that I was turning down their bid, representatives at the second house made a call on me, and for reasons I've never understood said that they were withdrawing their bid, and they were very sorry. Well, as you can probably tell from what I have shared so far, I had lived a pretty charmed life up to that point, and everything had gone very well for me. This was the first, I think, major setback that I had had. And so I was devastated. I called my dad and told him what had happened, and he was, of course, devastated, as well. But he called Stan McCaffrey, who was then the executive manager of the California Alumni Association. I had been an alumni scholar, so Stan knew a little bit about my background, although I was just one of a number of alumni scholars. And that started a relationship that was terribly important to me, not only then but in later life. The name Stan McCaffrey is going to come up a number of times as you talk to me.

Stan immediately called me and invited me to his home for dinner, and then we went to a Cal-USC basketball game. Somehow, he and I just connected. He subsequently invited me to give a talk to an alumni group, along with three others, and I think the talk was something like "What does Berkeley look like?" Next thing I know, I'm on the cover of *California Monthly*, the publication, along with these three others, and my remarks are transcribed in the *Cal Monthly*. Next thing I know, I'm invited to a reception with then Governor Goodwin Knight, and I still have a picture of standing there with Robert Gordon Sproul, the President of the University, Goodwin Knight, and Stan McCaffrey, and some other students who were invited. But I'm front and center. I mean, Stan took a liking to me, and was helping me.

But perhaps most importantly, he had connections with the fraternity Alpha Delta Phi, and particularly with a fellow by the name of Tom Morrish. Tom was a son of a member of the Alumni Council, and so therefore Stan knew Ken Morrish very well. So Stan suggested, "Tom, might you be interested in this young guy from Pasadena." I don't think he told him all the details of why I was available, but the next thing I know—and Stan must've said something about my dad and my background with sports—the fraternity did a very wise thing: they took me to a baseball game to cultivate my interest in joining the fraternity. The Oakland Oaks was a Minor League team playing in Emeryville, and one thing led to another, and they offered me a bid to join the house, and there I was.

Well, my gosh, not only did Tom Morrish become a very close friend, but Don Martin became a close friend. Both of them were very much involved with student government. Don was a rep-at-large on the executive committee [Associated Students of University of California]. He later became president of Interfraternity Council. Tom was chairman of Cal Club. He was very active in a number of ways. They were well connected. But this is an example of doors closing and doors opening. I mean, had that fraternity not withdrawn their bid, what transpired would not have occurred, or might've occurred a different way, who knows, but from being thrown out in the street one day, my opportunities to become even further involved with the University were opened on that occasion.

02-00:23:17

Burnett:

And I suppose the disappointment is twofold: one is just a kind of underhanded rejection, right? And you had done the honorable thing. You had two options, and you had done the honorable thing and had turned down, said, "Thank you very much, but I'm not interested." And then the place that you had chosen withdrew. So there's a betrayal in that sense. But I guess tell me what it means not to be in a fraternity at all in 1954 at Cal. What did that feel like, or what did that mean for a young student there?

02-00:24:06

Samuelson:

Well, there were certainly a number of students who were not in fraternities or sororities, but at that time there weren't that many options on the campus. There were several privately funded dormitories, like Bowles Hall and Stern Hall, Stern Hall being for women. There were the cooperative houses. And so there were other places for people to live, but a number of students were commuting, and therefore had a distant relationship with the campus, and I can't speak for them, but I can imagine how hard that must've been to come in from wherever they were living, an apartment, spend some time here on the campus, and then go home. And so I can't imagine that they would've had the full benefit of the social and cultural and recreational options that were available at the university. And when we talk more about the evolution of the university at that time, Clark Kerr, who was the chancellor, took the lead in addressing some of the needs of those who were not part of fraternities and

sororities by encouraging the development of what we now know is this magnificent student union and student center down at the Bancroft and Telegraph intersection, promoting the idea of more student dormitories, promoting the recreational facilities, be they playing fields or the swimming arena up at Strawberry Canyon. And so he addressed that during his tenure as chancellor during the fifties, but when I first started in '54 the facilities were not there, and so you didn't have places for the student who was not affiliated with a fraternity or sorority to actually hang out when they weren't in the classroom.

02-00:26:35

Burnett:

Do you think it's important—and I apologize for getting philosophical so early—do you think it's really important for young people to be physically on campus? In our day of the Internet and online courses and things like that, how important is the physical attachment to the campus for the cultivation of young minds?

02-00:27:02

Samuelson:

My gosh, you could argue that either way. I think that would be ideal if they could, because there's so much going on outside the classroom, interacting with other students, getting involved with clubs and activities and sports and whatever it may be. But on the other hand, students are pretty self-sufficient, and they can find their way in other ways, maybe in their own community, or maybe more just through individual relationships and friendships that they form.

02-00:27:43

Burnett:

Yeah, I think there's something to be said for also living in the, quote-unquote, "real world," perhaps living in a neighborhood and getting a sense of that, of that independence, but perhaps that comes later. Perhaps there is a nice sort of ideal transition to adulthood that takes place when people live on campus and become part of a community. I can only reflect on—I stayed at home when I went to college, and I was very fortunate in that my parents supported me in that way, and I had friends who went away, went to a different city far away. And I think there's some kind of advantage that those students had, not in terms of getting a better career or anything like that, but in terms of making meaning out of their lives early on, I think there's something about going and staying on campus, that you're surrounded by people your age, trying to figure out who you are in a concentrated way that helps them for the rest of their lives. And I look at your story, and that you have the people you met, and had those experiences with, you still know them, and that's not true of a lot of people who lived on campus, right? But these are powerful relationships with these people. And so I do want to explore that a little bit, and talk about some of the people. Stan McCaffrey was a friend, mentor. And Tom Morrish helped you get exposed to Alpha Delta Phi, and so you joined that fraternity. Who else did you meet at Alpha Delta Phi as part of that process?

02-00:29:42

Samuelsen:

Well, a number of wonderful fraternity brothers, and I maintained relationships with several of them, and particularly John Cox, who was my roommate my senior year. He and I, in fact, moved out of the fraternity our last semester, just because it was becoming too much to live a fraternity life, and also for me to carry on my responsibilities as ASUC president. But John continues to be one of my very closest friends, and he and I are in touch probably at least monthly, if not more often. We go to Ashland together to see the Shakespeare Festival, and share a lot of other interests. And I could name others, but I would say that of all my fraternity brothers—I've mentioned Don Martin and Tom Morrish because of their influence, and John Cox would be three of my closest. Later this year those of us who are celebrating our eightieth birthdays will gather and I will undoubtedly take the lead in bringing people together for that reason. (JRS: John Cox, John Merchant, Dick Morrison, and Tom Ross did in fact join me.)

02-00:31:09

Burnett:

That's great. You mentioned going to Shakespeare plays. Did you have an interest in the arts and literature when you were—were you exploring that? Were you studying Shakespeare in the undergraduate level?

02-00:31:25

Samuelsen:

No, that came later.

02-00:31:27

Burnett:

That came later. That's great.

02-00:31:28

Samuelsen:

Although we now have gone well over twenty years on an annual basis to Ashland, and my wife and I are very involved with Berkeley Rep here locally. But I give my wife a lot of credit for that.

02-00:31:42

Burnett:

At this stage you must have seen all of the Bard's plays at this point, right?

02-00:31:44

Samuelsen:

Oh, yes, indoors and out. [laughter]

02-00:31:49

Burnett:

So at the same time that you're part of Alpha Delta Phi, through these personal relationships, you get involved in student government. Can you talk about when and how that starts and what that's like?

02-00:32:10

Samuelsen:

Well, Don Martin was serving as a rep-at-large my sophomore year, and he and I were close, and he encouraged me to run for one of the seven rep-at-large positions that he held. And I think he and Tom Morrish, because of their connections, started to put together a campaign plan, and give me some ideas as to how I might go about this. And then you just, for whatever reason, you started dropping by fraternities and sororities during the dinner hour, and

giving a little two-minute spiel, and trying to put together promotional material, posters and the like. And somehow I was elected, [laughter] probably by the skin of my teeth, as I remember.

02-00:33:10

Burnett:

Did you have specific things you wanted to accomplish, or was that more of a senior type position? If you're rep-at-large, what do you need to prove to people at that point?

02-00:33:22

Samuelsen:

It's interesting: I think it's largely name recognition, and demonstrating that you hopefully have the leadership skills that are required. It was not at that time an issue-based campaign. We didn't have a platform. That was one of the reasons that some folks started to take issues with the ASUC in later years, feeling that it ought to become more issue-oriented, and we can talk about that when we talk about my senior year as ASUC president, and how that evolved. So it was, I think, important to have friends like Don and Tom. I've often thought in my later campaign to run for ASUC president I had some people who were out there plugging for me, and that probably meant more than any name recognition I had. My predecessor was ASUC president. Jim Kidder was very quietly behind the scenes, my mentor and my example, and he, I'm sure, was talking to people. Tom Morrish, I have mentioned. I had the good fortune to have a very close friend by the name of Monte Upshaw—he's still one of my closest friends—who was a star athlete, and everyone knew Monte. Nobody knew Roger. And so Monte would often go around to the fraternities and sororities and the rooming houses and introduce me. His name meant more than mine. Just the fact that he would support me meant a great deal. I think I also took with me on occasion a very close friend who was a popular yell leader by the name of Larry Stewart. Everyone knew Larry, and so he would introduce me.

02-00:35:22

Burnett:

So athletics is kind of a glue, as well, a social glue. I mean, there are these different layers of—there's fraternity life, there's student government, and there's athletics, and you seem to bridge, or you needed to bridge all three in order to maximize your promotional potential.

02-00:35:45

Samuelsen:

That's right.

02-00:35:45

Burnett:

And so you got that position, and then you're in student government. What does that look like? And as I understand it, it's a structure that changes while you're at Cal, is that right? That the executive structure changes, or is that a different—?

02-00:36:00

Samuelsen:

Well, I think the changes occurred shortly after my time. We were in the heyday of student government in many respects. The ASUC had quite a bit of

independence, had quite a bit of responsibility, and quite a bit of authority. And I might just digress a bit and reflect on that a little bit, and I even brought along some material that might be helpful, because I think it's in the context of not only what transpired, or what I experienced, but what transpired later on. So as I look back in the record, the ASUC was established in 1887. But it really took on much of its power during the presidency of Benjamin Ide Wheeler. And I'm just going to read what Wheeler said in 1919: "Gradually, and imperceptibly, the usages of student self-government have come to be accepted by the students without question. They know that student affairs have been turned over wholly and honestly to the students, and they therefore take the institution at full force." That's a pretty powerful statement. And then Robert Gordon Sproul, in 1939, said this: "It may not be remiss for me to remind you that student self-government in this university is the gift of a president, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, and the unwritten constitution of that government which he laid down has been followed loyally to this day by his successors in office."

Subsequently, President Sproul wrote: "The writings of President Wheeler clearly indicate student self-government as a supplement to the educational activities of the University, and to prepare students for the citizenship in a democracy which is their eventual responsibility. The objective was to extend to students not complete freedom of action but such freedom of action within prescribed limits as they might provide capable of using with intelligence and discretion." So as I say, the ASUC that I experienced had been granted, albeit on a delegated basis, quite a bit of say. And I might go back for a moment to Clark Kerr, because as I've read Clark's memoirs, and the emphasis that he placed in the fifties in meeting some of the student needs that you and I talked about a few minutes ago, he pointed out that going back to Wheeler and Sproul, the University of California was largely developed on what he called the German model, which was that the institution was responsible for the classroom and the library, but everything outside the classroom and the library was really up to the students to manage in their own way. And so that was part of his feeling that it was time to move to an American style, as had Harvard and others, where you did provide some of the amenities outside the classroom, be they a student center, or be they cultural events, or be they recreational facilities.

So the fifties really represented a kind of a change in that regard. But Kerr, as with Sproul and Wheeler, was very supportive of student government. But I would picture it in hindsight as a collaboration, kind of a shared government, if you will, where there was a lot of mutual respect. And so Kerr and his people would look to the students, and work with us, but we would look to them, too. And so going back to the structure of the ASUC at the time, it was headed by what was called an executive committee, and there were three officers: the president, the executive vice president, and the second vice president. There were, as I said before, seven reps-at-large, representatives-at-large. There was a men's representative and a women's representative. But

there also were ex officio positions. There was a representative from the administration, there was a faculty representative, and there was an alumni representative. And then there were some nonvoting members who were heads of boards. But any actions we were taking were with the faculty, the administration, and the alumni present. And obviously in making decisions you tried to listen to each and every one of the opinions that were there and come to a meaningful decision.

This was even more important at the Finance Committee level, and it was a compromise that I think had been reached at the time between the University and the ASUC. But the Finance Committee also had representatives of the faculty and the administration and the alumni. I'm pretty sure it was dominated, number-wise, by students. But the constitution of the ASUC provided that budget matters and any changes in budget matters all had to be with the advice and consent of the Finance Committee. So they would make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, and only if they had made a recommendation would the Executive Committee be able to do something from a budgetary standpoint. So it was a way for the University to maintain some checks and balances, even though there was a lot of independence on the part of the students.

And then let me speak briefly to the staffing, which is kind of interesting, and this was to change, too. So we had an executive director, who was an ASUC employee. Reporting to him was the director of Intercollegiate Athletics, an ASUC employee. And the director of Intercollegiate Athletics, of course, had the coaches and athletic staff all reporting to him. So Intercollegiate Athletics at that time—and that was to change just a few years after—was under the ASUC. When Pappy Waldorf resigned as football coach in 1956, he sent his letter of resignation to my predecessor, Jim Kidder, not to the chancellor, and Jim still has a copy of that letter.

02-00:43:40

Burnett:

And that's not just an institutional tic. As I understand it, the student body owns, or owned, a lot of the land for the athletic fields and things like that. They had sunk capital, as it were, in the university system. And so that makes sense, or there's a reason why there's that reporting structure, is because that student body actually owns these kinds of things, and there's a lot of money involved in that.

02-00:44:21

Samuelson:

And just to take that another step, a very important committee—and I served on this committee in my junior year—was the Athletics Advisory Committee. And, again, it was based upon checks and balances and mutual respect, but the Athletics Advisory Committee at that time was made up of three faculty members, three alumni, and three students. During my time on the committee, Pappy Waldorf had resigned, so it was time to recruit a new football coach, and that was largely done under the auspices of that Athletics Advisory

Committee. Their recommendation was then made to the Executive Committee of the ASUC, “We should hire Pete Elliott as the next coach.” Now, obviously, because of the relationship with the university, that recommendation was also made to Chancellor Clark Kerr, and so he concurred, as well. So there was independence, but respectful independence, realizing it’s delegated authority, and you needed to maintain that, and maintain the confidence of the administration as you were making these decisions.

02-00:45:37

Burnett:

And was there some question around—? Pappy Waldorf had resigned because he hit a bit of a losing streak, is that right?

02-00:45:47

Samuelson:

Yes, after the three Rose Bowl years when he did extremely well, he started to have some losing streaks, and there was just a call from alumni and others for his resignation, and so he did resign.

02-00:46:07

Burnett:

Did you feel that there was a balance of influence among the three parts of the university structure in making that call, or making that decision to hire the new person?

02-00:46:22

Samuelson:

Well, I can’t speak to Pappy’s resignation, because he did that on his own, and he obviously was influenced by whatever pressures or personal considerations he may have had, but definitely the search for a new director and the hiring Pete Elliott, that was a unanimous recommendation of the Advisory Board, including myself.

02-00:46:48

Burnett:

Well, let’s maybe dive in, if it’s the right time. You started to talk about Clark Kerr and his influence, and this transition to more amenities for students. I understand that there was a new plan put in place for what student government was going to do, what student government was going to achieve. And I’m wondering if you could talk about what some of the longstanding problems or grievances were for students. What was lacking about student life there? What could be done to change things and improve things, and how did that unfold for you when you were in your position at rep-at-large, and then later when you become president?

02-00:47:43

Samuelson:

Well, I’ve spoken about the student center, and that was a huge need for not only students to hang out and socialize and the like, but to replace the cramped quarters where we were not too far from here, Stephens Union and Eshleman Hall, with a new student office building. I think there also was a feeling that there was a lack of cultural events and activities on the campus. We had the Greek Theater, thank goodness, and we had Wheeler Hall, which is cramped, and so the concept of a student center that would have—what is

now Zellerbach Hall—and bring speakers and performers and other cultural events to the campus was huge. And the fourth component at the time was a new dining complex, not for fraternities and sororities but for those who came in from off campus and needed a place to have lunch, or even dinner if they were going to spend the evening in the library. So that was a very important part, as well. I think those are some of the needs that were seen at the time.

02-00:49:13

Burnett:

And speaking of the Finance Committee, who paid for the new student union? How was that paid for? How did that happen?

02-00:49:23

Samuelson:

Well, I've mentioned Jim Kidder, and I will mention him several times more, because he was a very important student leader during his time. And early on, he was asked by the then student body president to head a committee to put together a proposal that would hopefully convince the student body on a two thirds vote to accept a compulsory fee to help fund a new student center. Now, mind you, this election was maybe in 1956, way before the student center was to be opened. And most, if not all, of the students who voted in favor, and voted immediately to pay the compulsory fees, would never be able to take advantage of the student center. Jim and his committee were successful. So that was the beginning.

And then the University contributed a good amount of the money by, in effect, buying what was then the Stephens Union and Eshleman Hall from the ASUC, and turning those facilities into campus office space. And then, finally, the Alumni Association took on a \$2 million campaign, and that occurred during my senior year. So much of my time was spent meeting with alumni groups, representing the students as to the need and importance of this facility, and encouraging them to contribute. And so they raised \$2 million. They were greatly helped by the then chairman of the board of PG&E, James Black, and by a very prominent alum, a former Wonder Team player by the name of Cort Majors, who was then president of the California Alumni Association. In any event, he played a major role, as well.

So it was a combination of sources that made possible the new student center. And I have a feeling that the Zellerbach Foundation chipped in at some stage. I don't know the details, but I think that's why the theater has the Zellerbach name.

02-00:52:04

Burnett:

Hm. Well, it's interesting: in one oral history we did we were talking about how the University was really new to the idea of external fundraising in the seventies. They weren't really raising much money at all. And then it took off in the 1980s, until the present day, with a lot of external funding for new buildings and so forth. But this is a story in the 1950s about the strength of alumni goodwill and material support for the institution. It was very heavily funded, of course, by the State of California, but there's things you can't get

appropriations for, and this is part of Clark Kerr's vision for this whole—it's almost like a whole-student [concept] before its time, right? He kind of set that mold.

02-00:53:05

Samuelson:

Well, that's right, and speaking of the alumni—and I'm sure Clark Kerr would be the first to say this—he was largely influenced by a report the Alumni Association put together shortly after World War II. I think it was called "Students at Berkeley." It advocated the very type of student amenities—student center, student recreational space, cultural halls—that we're talking about. It just sat on a shelf for a number of years, until Kerr became chancellor. But he picked that up, and made sure that it was implemented one way or the other. So the alumni support in '57 and '58, the \$2 million, was in part grounded by this report that a prominent group of alums put together early on.

02-00:54:03

Burnett:

That's interesting. And I guess it also fit well with his approach. I mean, his background is industrial relations, right? This kind of needing to talk across—looking at society as these component parts, that you need to develop these institutions and strategies for cooperation and collaboration. So that fits with his approach to how he looked at Cal, it seems.

02-00:54:31

Samuelson:

Absolutely. But he does deserve a lot of credit for meeting the needs of the students as he did, and I'm not sure people over the years have appreciated that much. In some cases, he was vilified because of the Free Speech Movement. They felt he was an egghead, very much into academics and so forth. But those of us who knew him as students appreciated how much he supported the concept you just described as the whole student, which goes well beyond the classroom and the library.

02-00:55:11

Burnett:

He's certainly well respected in the labor relations field, and there are even conservative folks like George Shultz who speak extremely highly of him, so he seemed to have this magnetism about him. When did you first meet him? Do you recall meeting him?

02-00:55:36

Samuelson:

You know, I don't, Paul. It had to be during my junior year, and there obviously were many opportunities for interaction, be they social or otherwise. I saw a lot of him my senior year, when I was ASUC president. And one of the highlights of my senior year was when he was named president. The Straw Hat Band and a group of us student leaders went out to his home, serenaded him, and I gave a little talk on behalf of the student body of gratitude for the regents' wisdom in selecting him as the president, and extended my congratulations.

02-00:56:28

Burnett: That's sweet. I don't know if you can do that now. I think they have a fence.
[laughter]

02-00:56:35

Samuelsen: No, that's right.

02-00:56:38

Burnett: So those were different times—

02-00:56:39

Samuelsen: Those were different times. But, as I think you know, I continue to meet every year with other ASUC presidents from the fifties. We call ourselves the Kerr Boys, and we get together for dinner. We reminisce. We raise a glass to Clark Kerr, who not only meant so much to us then, but for particularly Jim Kidder and me, he was just instrumental in the careers that we decided to pursue in higher education.

02-00:57:12

Burnett: Did you have a sense of his vision? It becomes more explicit, I think, in the late 1950s, early 1960s, when he's writing books about this, but did you get a sense of his vision for Cal and for the university system as a whole? Did he have an idea of what he wanted to achieve, about a unique California approach to higher education?

02-00:57:37

Samuelsen: Well, not while I was an undergraduate. That came later. But when I went to work for him in 1961, the Master Plan for Higher Education had then just recently been put together, largely due to his leadership and the help of Dean McHenry and others. So I became very much aware of it then, and the more I talked to him, or the more that I read about what he had in mind, the more inspired I was.

02-00:58:16

Burnett: Right, right. I've gotten ahead of ourselves a little bit here, but we do need to talk about becoming ASUC president. So you were a rep-at-large, and how does that come about? Again, it's a campaign, but more it's that top level, so there's obviously much more of a game plan in terms of what you want to achieve. What were the conversations like about what you wanted to achieve as ASUC president before you got started?

02-00:58:49

Samuelsen: Let me just back up quickly to the campaign, and then we can talk about the goals for the year. One of the major responsibilities I had as a junior when I was rep-at-large was to be the chairman of what was called the Rooting Section Committee. In Pappy's last year, in 1956, the men's Rooting Section—because the Rooting Sections were segregated for many, many years at Berkeley—just really got out of hand. There was a lot of drinking, a lot of misbehaving. So Jim Kidder put together fifteen or twenty students and faculty members and administrators to address this problem. So we worked, I

think met weekly, put together a report that ended up going way beyond the behavior of the Rooting Section, but talked about spirit on the campus in general.

And I had the good fortune—and I'm not quite sure how this evolved—to become close to a fellow by the name of Jay Bardwell, who was destined to be the editor of the *Daily Cal* our senior year, I think the only editor ever to be elected not for one semester but for two semesters. And he and I became close, and he became an unofficial advocate. And so about the time that the campaign for ASUC president was launched, he came out with an extensive summary of the Rooting Section Report, but he called it the Samuelsen Plan. So this was the Samuelsen Plan for resolving the Rooting Section problem, and for improving spirit on campus, to bring some of the support groups together, to involve living groups in some of the activities. Well, as I said earlier, name recognition means everything, so I think in addition to everything else I've said, the Samuelsen Plan had something to do with my becoming the ASUC president.

The other thing that I will say quickly about that election was that it also was the time that Scott Sherman was elected Executive Vice President, and Colette Morgan was elected Second Vice President. And each of those people was to play an influential role in my life. Scott became one of my very, very closest friends, and, ironically, today marks the fourth anniversary of his death. Tonight, his widow and daughter and I are going to a San Francisco Giants game—they're playing the Red Sox—and this is his widow's, Gretchen's, way of remembering Scott, because Scott was a big fan of the San Francisco Giants. So we're going to go to the AT&T Park and raise a glass to Scott.

Colette Morgan, the Second Vice President, was to become my first wife, and the mother of my now fifty-year-old daughter Thea. So, as I say, that election in the spring of 1957 had major consequences.

Well, going to our senior year, we put together what we called Projects For Progress, twenty-six different projects that we hoped we could either put in place or make good progress on during the course of the year. And again, I go back to Jim Kidder, because he's the one who modeled this for us. He put together, the year before, what came to be known as the Kidder Plan. But the Samuelsen Plan had been taken up with the rooting section. Moreover, I was rather anxious to make this way beyond Samuelsen, and to make sure that this was something that all of us could rally behind, and not just the ASUC President. So each of the twenty-six projects was assigned to an individual or to a committee for study, and either implementation or development of recommendations for the Executive Committee to consider. And I have a copy of it here, but I might just read off some of it to give you a flavor. One was certainly to advance the whole idea of the student center, and we've talked about that, another was to promote an academic dead week, so there would be no assignments or tests a week before finals.

02-01:04:44

Burnett: Like the reading days, basically.

02-01:04:45

Samuelsen: Reading days. Report out to the Board of Regents the referendum that had been passed by the student body a year before on voluntary ROTC, and we can come back to that insofar as issues I had to handle during my presidency. Promote a fair bear wage, and we ended up getting merchants to agree to \$1.35 an hour, big money in those times.

02-01:05:14

Burnett: Was that a significant raise?

02-01:05:16

Samuelsen: [laughter] I don't remember the details.

02-01:05:19

Burnett: That's a pretty good wage, I think, for nineteen fifty—

02-01:05:21

Samuelsen: Pretty good raise, that's right. Another project was to participate in developing nondiscrimination in policies and practices. Those were big, big issues. Expand activities on the campus. Implement a revised store board, because the ASUC had responsibility for not only a board but a café. And those were the types of things, the cornerstone for the entire year. The good part was that it set out a platform that we could follow and get behind, all with the idea of improving the student experience while at Cal.

The negative to it was that it gave my good friend Jay Bardwell, who was then editor of the *Daily Cal*, a way of sticking the needle in me rather frequently, in editorials and in little sideline commentary he would make. "Samuelsen, you're not progressing. We need a progress report. Why are you not doing thus and so?" I tend to be a very process-oriented type of guy, and so I tended to say, "Well, we're waiting for XYZ to report in," or "We're waiting for the reports," to the issue of voluntary ROTC particularly comes to mind, because I made a presentation to the Board of Regents, I think, in November of 1957 saying that the students at Berkeley had voted overwhelmingly to change compulsory ROTC in our freshman and sophomore years to voluntary. And I presented a report documenting that. Well, Jay wrote the next day, and was congratulating me for finally putting this before the Board of Regents, but pointing out that it had been forty-seven weeks since the student body had voted as they had. "Couldn't you have done it just a little faster than that?" he asked sarcastically. Well, part of me needed that type of needling, but also, behind the scenes, I had been waiting—well, first of all, the vote was taken prior to my time, but then I was waiting for a committee to put together a report that I could submit to the Board of Regents. When the report came in, I felt it was very poorly crafted, and this reflected the perfectionist in me. And so I felt it needed to be rewritten. So on top of everything else I was trying to do as ASUC president, I admit that I did take a little time, evenings or

whatever, to rewrite that report, and that was subsequently turned in to the Board of Regents. But I just could not put my name behind what was initially presented. Jay understood that. He and I talked, but he still had to give it to me.

02-01:08:57

Burnett: Well, there's this other estate [which] is the Cal newspaper, and so you knew him, but he was holding you accountable, and—

02-01:09:13

Samuelsen: Absolutely.

02-01:09:13

Burnett: —and so you had a friendly relationship with him, but you had a, not adversarial, but one of an independent voice for students that had to hold the ASUC accountable, and that was an important part of the—

02-01:09:32

Samuelsen: Oh, indeed. He also would send a reporter to my office once a week to interview me, and it was called "The Tight Spot." So once a week in the paper were Q&As. Usually they would ask four questions, and then I would respond on all sorts of issues that were before the ASUC at the time. It prepared me well for this oral history, I might say, Paul. [laughter] You're easy compared to the questions they used to ask.

02-01:10:02

Burnett: I hope I'm not putting you in a tight spot as we go along. But I'm fascinated by these issues, and so much is happening right at this time. And one of the things that people today would not be familiar with is compulsory ROTC. And I was doing background interviews, and I talked to this person about what a Cal student thought about the future, what they wanted to do with their lives, and one of the things they said was, "Well, the ROTC, the draft, was compulsory at that time, and what was in your immediate horizon was the military and your service, and then that would lead to other things, and that was the path that was before you." Can you talk a little bit about ROTC, and save your actual service for later, because we're going to finish up talking about being president. But what part did ROTC play in the life of a Cal student in the mid-1950s?

02-01:11:20

Samuelsen: Well, for the men it played a huge part. We had our ROTC classes, I think, a couple times a week. We would have once a week outdoor type of—what would be the word?

02-01:11:41

Burnett: Exercises?

02-01:11:41

Samuelsen: Exercises. We would wear our uniform for those exercises, wear the uniform all day. When I was campaigning for ASUC president, and there was a press

conference, I was there in my uniform, and we were asked about this issue, and next day there was a picture of the three candidates, and I was there in my ROTC outfit.

02-01:12:09

Burnett: In your dress uniform?

02-01:12:11

Samuelsen: In my dress, that's right. But it was a type of thing that we took for granted, that our first two years we would be in compulsory ROTC, and this was a potential hedge against being drafted later on. It was during peacetime. I mean, we were between the Korean War and the Vietnam War at this stage, but the Cold War was heating up, and you just never know what may stand ahead of you. So then we had to decide whether to go on and stay in ROTC our junior and senior years and graduate as an officer, so as to have a little better idea of how our service might evolve, and what branch of the service we might serve. Others decided not to do that, and they were subjecting themselves to a draft after they graduated and their educational deferment had passed. So it was subject to a lot of conversation, lot of consideration, as you started to think about the future. But I think for a whole variety of reasons the student body felt that the need for that had passed, and that in general, society should move to more of a voluntary service commitment, and not to impose that on students.

02-01:13:49

Burnett: Wow, what's coming to mind right now—and you said between Korean Conflict and Vietnam, and Korean Conflict is winding down 1953, so the year before you come to Cal.

02-01:14:02

Samuelsen: That's right.

02-01:14:04

Burnett: The invasion of Hungary is 1956. You're right, the Cold War is heating up. And at the same time, there was, I imagine, some criticism about the—and I'm completely putting words in the mouths of the people that you knew, but I imagine there might have been some conversation about the compulsory militarization of American life. And that certainly becomes an issue during the Vietnam War. Was that ever raised? Did you ever hear conversation about that, or read about it in the news, with respect to Cal and Cal students?

02-01:14:53

Samuelsen: Well, I think it was part of what we were experiencing with the advance of what I'll call student activism. And I think it was very important to this organization called TASC, Toward a More Active Student Community, which started in, oh, 1957 or thereabouts. They became very interested in issues, like you have raised, outside of our campus experience. And they were after the ASUC to take positions, to, in some way, protest what they were seeing with regard to some of these issues, including compulsory ROTC, be it nuclear test

issues, or what was happening in the South, and we talked about that before insofar as civil rights issues were concerned. And then TASC evolved into SLATE my senior year. In that regard, Mike Miller, who had been elected a rep-at-large on Executive Committee, decided in the fall of our senior year to resign from Executive Committee out of protest, because he could not get Executive Committee to take stands on some of the issues, or to involve the campus more on some of the issues you have suggested. And he decided to run as a part of a “slate” of candidates with some other people in the election of the fall of 1957. As luck would have it, none of those people succeeded, but they did increase the turnout to forty percent, as I recall, for the student election. And they kept at it as years went on, and not my successor but two after, Dave Armor, was the first ASUC president elected on the SLATE ticket. They wanted to run as a body, as a group, and, in effect, be a political party. So what we were grappling with on the Executive Committee during my time was how to handle this, and was it appropriate for a student government to speak ostensibly for all the students on some of these issues, these non-campus issues. And what about the name of the University of California? To what extent should the University of California name be used on some of these issues?

I think that’s a way of saying the ferment that was evolving behind the scenes on issues going beyond the classroom, beyond the library, beyond student activities, was becoming more and more apparent, and growing.

02-01:18:18

Burnett:

And at a certain point — the reaction of the University of California was because SLATE called itself a political party, because under the bylaws, if you will, of the student government, the student government is student government about student issues on campus, and if you want to be a member of a political party you could step off campus and you could organize off campus, and that was their position. And so SLATE had its designation as a campus organization taken away at a certain point because of that. So you’re watching this change taking place. I mean, that must have been—aspects of this, I imagine, were frustrating, but it must have been electric for you to see some of this stuff transpiring at that time.

02-01:19:25

Samuelson:

Well, it was, and we had to deal with such fundamental issues as how to conduct elections, and how to interpret election rules that were not designed for anything quite like this. I even had to make the decision at one stage unilaterally to throw out an election because of some violations that occurred, and the election had to be rescheduled. And we were trying to bend over backwards to be fair, to be consistent, to be responsive, but there were a lot of issues at play. And, of course, I was receiving a lot of advice, not only from students but from members of the faculty and administrators. I would meet weekly with the Dean of Students, Hurford Stone, and probably at least monthly with the special assistant to the chancellor, Alex Sherriffs. Alex

would take me to lunch somewhere. And looking back, it's fascinating. Because of everything we've been saying, you wanted to maintain your independence, you wanted to be as careful as you could be in representing your conscience, and you didn't want to be intimidated by people for whom you had a lot of respect, but who may have a different agenda than you did. So it was quite an experience, and I'm sure some of my predecessors and my successors would say the same thing.

02-01:21:06

Burnett:

Yeah. And a microcosm of everything that's happening in the world at the time, because some of these issues are—the idea of politics, period, on campus is controversial, at least certain kinds of politics, right? And so, for example, TASC's initial position against the House Un-American Activities Committee's activities, that may have put them in the sights of figures. So one story is—I don't know at one point this happens, but the FBI has a couple of staff members in the basement of the main administrative building, Sproul Hall—

02-01:21:55

Samuelson:

That's right.

02-01:21:57

Burnett:

—checking out what's going on, and monitoring it. And so there's that kind of national security concern layered over top of these political changes that are taking place.

02-01:22:15

Samuelson:

That's right. And, of course, a lot of that followed my time, but to what extent my generation was responsible for some of those developments, and/or I personally was—I'll let historians take care of that, but we did the best we could at the time. There also, Paul, was the whole issue of free speech, and speakers on the campus, and that evolved to a certain extent during my time, as well. But backing up, Jim Kidder, again, comes to the forefront, because he was active at Stiles Hall, which is the YMCA organization off campus. And he and Thelton Henderson, who has gone on to a very distinguished career as a district judge, and others felt that there ought to be some relaxation of the very harsh rule called Rule 17, which limited free speech on the campus. As I recall, Rule 17, when it was first conceived, said, first of all, that the only people who could speak on campus had to be invited by a recognized student organization, and secondly any speech on campus had to have both sides represented—a speaker for one side, a speaker for the other Jim and Thelton and their cohorts just felt, you know, this is not right. And so they researched other universities, what they had done, and found that the Berkeley approach was among the more conservative approaches. And they finally put together a proposal that they very quietly shared with Clark Kerr, with the ASUC Executive Committee, with the Academic Senate, and other parties, which relieved a little bit what was required. And as I recall, it was something like if you bring a speaker on campus then you should try within a reasonable period

of time, in a reasonable manner to bring counterinterviews so that controversies can have all views expressed, something like that, and that non-recognized organizations could sponsor a speaker as long as there was a faculty advisor. These were baby steps, but at least they were steps in the right direction.

Parenthetically, I might say that Adlai Stevenson, when he was campaigning for the presidency was not able to speak on campus. He literally spoke on a flatbed that was parked out on Oxford Avenue on the west end of the campus, and that's how he gave his talk.

02-01:25:37

Burnett:

It gives you some idea of the restrictions—

02-01:25:39

Samuelsen:

The restrictions that were in place at the time. But coming back to our Projects For Progress, what we tried to do our senior year, was to bring speakers onto the campus with different points of view—to sponsor them, to expose the student body to their views. We invited the leading socialist at the time, Norman Thomas. We had the King of Morocco. We had Eleanor Roosevelt. Billy Graham, the evangelist, filled the Greek Theater. And these were very well accepted and widely attended gatherings. So we were trying to do what we could. We didn't go far enough for SLATE. They wanted to go even further.

02-01:26:46

Burnett:

And that was exempt from Rule 17, because presumably—

02-01:26:50

Samuelsen:

This was after the relaxation of Rule 17.

02-01:26:52

Burnett:

Oh, I see, okay. So you'd worked out that, again, through a collaborative, processual approach, you're able to get buy-in from different stakeholders so that you can assuage the fears. Because behind Rule 17 is the fear of, ultimately, Communist infiltration, I think, right? Or is that too limiting, too narrow a view?

02-01:27:20

Samuelsen:

I think that's too limiting. I think it was the use of university facilities. These are public facilities for an educational purpose. I think there were concerns about the use of the University's name. I remember one of Clark Kerr's quotes, though—and, again, this is how he approached things—I think he said the university was not in the business to make ideas safe for students; it was to make students safe for ideas. [laughter] And that was his philosophy. Because he was a driving force. Admittedly, the university probably didn't go far enough insofar as relieving some of its rules, and that, one can say, contributing greatly to the Free Speech Movement in 1964, but that was later on. And again, Clark Kerr received a lot of criticism for how he handled that, but here was somebody who really believed in free speech, and was just trying

to find a happy medium as a negotiator and as an academic to meet all these conflicting needs.

02-01:28:38

Burnett:

Yeah. I mean, that must have been tough for the Kerr Boys to see that unfold in the 1960s.

02-01:28:45

Samuelson:

Oh, it was. In fact, we put together a letter to the editor that ran in the *Chronicle*. I forget how many of us signed it, but it was trying to say that Kerr and his people—everything I've been trying to say today—believed in students, were willing to work this out. Rather than take to the streets, we urged everyone to sit down and negotiate and find a common ground as the best way to go.

02-01:29:22

Burnett:

Right, and that's what he modeled his whole life, it seems. So there's a number of different things that are happening while you're president. Did you continue your involvement in sports and your support for athletics? Are there aspects of that where—? There's obviously the hiring of a new coach that take place during that time. Are there other things, innovations that were on the table for changing how athletics worked and changing how the administration of athletics were undertaken during your time as president?

02-01:30:12

Samuelson:

A major issue that we faced was the future of what was called the Pacific Coast Conference, and for several years, up to my senior year, there had been considerable controversy surrounding Pacific Coast Conference. And it really was the result of some abuses in terms of recruitment, under-table payments, some practices that just could not be tolerated, and it led to some of our friends, like UCLA and USC and Washington, being put on probation. I think they were denied the right to play in the Rose Bowl for a few years and had to forfeit games. Berkeley had some sanctions brought against them, but not as severe. And so during my senior year the question was should the PCC, Pacific Coast Conference, be broken up. I obviously had a lot of interest in this because of my dad and his background with the Rose Bowl and football and baseball and all the other sports under Pacific Coast Conference. Again, because of the position that the ASUC had, being responsible for intercollegiate athletics, people would come to the Athletic Advisory Committee, or come to the Executive Committee, or come to me personally and ask for our views. And at one point I received a phone call from one of the reporters for the *Oakland Tribune* asking for my views, and I opened up, and I said I felt the Pacific Coast Conference had outlived its usefulness, it ought to be broken up, and there should be a new organization to replace it. The account was on front page in the *Oakland Tribune* the next day. I woke up that morning and, because of my relationship with Clark Kerr, I called him at home, and I said, "Dr. Kerr, I don't know if you've read the paper yet." And he could not have been more supportive. He said, "I think that's exactly

what needed to happen. I think it's good for you to say that, get that out in the open," and the like. It was an interesting experience, given my background with my dad, and my own interest playing freshman baseball.

Well, subsequent to that time, the Athletic Advisory Committee did vote unanimously in favor of leaving the Pacific Coast Conference. The Academic Senate weighed in, did the same. At that stage it was largely because the Pacific Coast Conference leadership had rejected a plan that had been put together at the highest level by the Board of Regents. And, of course, the Board of Regents had not only Berkeley but UCLA, both with strong athletic programs, as part of its bailiwick. And so it was a plan to address eligibility requirements in an equitable way, to schedule teams that had similar academic backgrounds, to treat athletes as other students, that type of thing. So, subsequently, the Pacific Coast Conference was indeed shelved, and a new organization was brought into it. And, of course, that organization has evolved into what is now the Pac-12. I think at the time this was one of the several issues that led eventually to intercollegiate athletics being removed from the ASUC and brought under the campus administration. I wasn't part of that, but I think the NCAA, the national governing body, had something to do with that, decreeing that all intercollegiate athletic programs should be brought under the campus administrations and not under student governments. And at that stage we may have been one of the last student governments to have the control we did. I just don't know those details. That would be a history unto itself. But part of me is sad to think that athletics evolved in that way, given the wonderful experience I had. On the other hand, I can certainly understand, as we've gone more and more into big money in athletics, and big stadiums, and big TV contracts. Intercollegiate athletics has grown way beyond the capability of a student organization to handle. And there were other factors that led to the structure and portfolio of the ASUC changing. It's changed drastically from what I experienced to what it is today, largely with the university playing much, much more of a role for student affairs, for some of the reasons you and I have already talked about.

02-01:36:00

Burnett:

Yeah. Well, in some ways you can say that clearly things get outside of the purview of students. Do you have any reservations or lamentations about what might be lost by a smaller purview for student government in today's Cal?

02-01:36:28

Samuelsen:

Well, I do have certain reservations, but I'm a realist, too, and I have some sense of why things are as they are today. I had a briefing on student affairs this last fall in connection with the annual gathering of the Kerr Boys, the ASUC presidents of yesteryear. And I was very impressed with the presentation by the university official as to the breadth of involvement of the university, the resources they're putting into it, the care and feeding of students. And in some ways, students need even more today than we did back in the fifties, because of the job market and the financial burdens they're

having to carry, the need for working while they're students, the list goes on and on. But at one point we asked about the ASUC president, and either advisedly or not were told, "Well, I think the ASUC president today is almost a figurehead," and that kind of hurt. So in examining further about that, of course the Executive Committee has been replaced by a student senate. It's much more of a legislative body than it was in my time. It has far less executive or administrative responsibilities, or budgetary responsibilities. And I think they're much more involved in taking positions on off-campus issues, and probably on issues having to do with educational reform, and I am not familiar with what all they may not get into.

It's interesting that the senate of today is headed by the vice president of the ASUC, and the ASUC president comes in and makes a report and either leaves or sits in the back row. I mean, that's a far different role than Jim Kidder or I played in our time. So things have changed, and I appreciate that, but I just hope that the student leaders of today have at least some of the opportunities we did to interact with faculty and administrators and alumni, learn from them, benefit from them, grow from our relationships with them.

02-01:39:16

Burnett:

At this time there is all of this social interaction that is tied to this cultivation of Roger Samuelsen. And there's yet another layer, too, because I'm wondering what happens in your moving from one city to the next, and leaving your church community in Pasadena, what happens to your faith and your practice of your faith when you're at Cal.

02-01:39:54

Samuelsen:

I became a very active participant at First Presbyterian Church, attended their weekly youth programs, attended worship rather faithfully. I found a very strong connection there. Robert Boyd Munger and Ron Frase and Donn Moomaw are three names that come to mind. I would meet with them from time to time. I think that had a lot to do with our eventually inviting Billy Graham to the campus. I had the opportunity to have lunch with Reverend Graham, and I officiated over that Greek Theater presentation where he talked about the role of Christianity in a troubled world. We had to make sure this was an educational presentation and not a call for folks to come forward and affirm their faith—and he was very respectful of that. So my own faith was terribly important to my getting through that year. I would often just bow my head and pray before any of the Executive Committee meetings. It was that important to me.

02-01:41:26

Burnett:

What was it like meeting Billy Graham? You just had lunch with him, or—?

02-01:41:39

Samuelsen:

Well, I was not alone. There were other student leaders who were there. And I'm sure Dr. Munger and Ron Frase were there, Ron being on the staff of the First Presbyterian Church at Berkeley. I just remember it as a very warm, easy

conversation. I don't recall being intimidated. I think he was appreciative of the opportunity to be at Berkeley. I think he asked a lot of questions about student life at Berkeley, and we asked him about some of his travels and experiences.

02-01:42:22

Burnett:

There's one other figure that's important here, and that's Robert Gordon Sproul. And can you talk a little bit—because he's winding down as Clark Kerr is winding up—can you talk a little bit about him, and any encounters you had with him, and tell us a little bit about him?

02-01:42:55

Samuelson:

Well, Robert Gordon Sproul was bigger than life. Physically, he was a tall man. He had a loud voice, quite a presence, and the like. And I had the opportunity to meet with him on a number of occasions. I had a chance to speak at the picnic lunch we held here on the campus toward the end of his tenure, end of my tenure, speak on behalf of the students of gratitude for his long, long service. He lived with his wife Ida on the campus in University House and so they would have teas there from time to time. And then as luck would have it, Stan McCaffrey comes back into my life. During my junior year Robert Gordon Sproul asked Stan to leave the Alumni Association and become his vice president—executive assistant. So upon graduating from Cal in '58, and I had the summer before going into the service, Stan offered me a position on his staff, which meant I, in effect, had a chance to work for the first of eight University of California presidents during the course of my career. Parenthetically, I would add that, as years went on, I had a chance to get to know each of them rather intimately, and I am very fortunate in that regard. But Sproul certainly stood out. He served for twenty-eight years. And we had some other opportunities to thank him, as well. I've read quite a bit about his tenure. I just have a great deal of respect, because until the appointment of chancellors at Berkeley and UCLA and now on all the campuses, Robert Gordon Sproul was—

02-01:45:33

Burnett:

He was *it*. [laughs]

02-01:45:34

Samuelson:

He was *it*. But he had wonderful colleagues, wonderful vice presidents, wonderful people working with him, and he was very special. The other irony of my career is that—I'm getting ahead of myself here, but when I eventually practiced law in San Francisco, my first boss was Robert Gordon Sproul's son-in-law, Vern Goodin. I could not get that far away from the University of California, Sproul, or Kerr. [laughter]

02-01:46:15

Burnett:

Right. Well, and one other piece of personal life is that you became engaged at this time. Can you talk a little bit about Colette? And we'll get more of that, I think, in the subsequent session. You had met her. She was the Second—?

02-01:46:37

Samuelsen: Second Vice President.

02-01:46:38

Burnett: Second Vice President. How unusual was it for a woman to be in the senior executive positions?

02-01:46:45

Samuelsen: Well, I think it was just kind of customary, sad as it is in retrospect, that the ASUC President was always a man, the Executive Vice President was always a man, and the Second Vice President was always a woman. But that's how it was. But she also served as junior class president, so that was her stepping stone to become Second Vice President. Scott Sherman, who I mentioned earlier, was our sophomore class president. So I had known her through that circle. But once our senior year started, we were starting to attend all sorts of functions and gatherings, and slowly but surely, we found we had something in common. So, again, here's Stan McCaffrey. When we decided to become engaged, we called Stan and his wife, Beth, and asked if they would be willing to have a reception in their home to announce to the campus community that we were going to be married. And so that occurred. And that's not the last time the McCaffreys came into our life, but it was a significant time.

And then we both had to attend summer school to finish our classes. I think we were six units short, because I think we both took a lighter load our senior year because of all the activities and time commitments we had. So we were going to class during the summer, and I was working for Stan McCaffrey when I wasn't in class. And then we were married in September and immediately headed off to Fort Knox, Kentucky for two years of military service.

02-01:49:08

Burnett: That was your honeymoon, Fort Knox. [laughter]

02-01:49:09

Samuelsen: That was our honeymoon. Which probably in retrospect was the very best thing that could've occurred, because while we were here, for better or worse, we were in the limelight all the time. We were trying to get to know each other, but always in the public eye, and not in a very realistic way. So getting away was probably good for us.

02-01:49:37

Burnett: Yeah. Well, this is changing the subject a little bit, but the thread is thinking about boys and girls at universities. Were there dances, formals, that kind of thing that were kind of the gendered sort of social activities that you attended, or that were just sort of generally undertaken at Cal at the time?

02-01:50:06

Samuelson:

Definitely around fraternities and sororities there were all sorts of social gatherings like that. And that may have been the primary date function at the time. There were certain campus-wide dances and activities, say, after a basketball game, but I don't recall those as being as dominant as the fraternity and sorority gatherings. And I think the dormitories—Bowles Hall for one—also very definitely had a very active social program. But the other thing we experienced in the fifties, unlike today, was the expectation that you would become engaged while you were an undergraduate, and marry shortly thereafter. And I think that played a certain role in Colette's and my situation. Pinnings were a very big thing, where you would first give your girlfriend your fraternity pin. That was important ritual. There was something in the newspaper about thus-and-so has just been pinned, and then there would be the engagement. That whole social scene was huge, particularly among fraternities and sororities. And after a pinning or engagement, the fraternity would go over to the sorority and sing a few songs. It just was part of the culture.

02-01:51:50

Burnett:

It sounds lovely, and it sounds kind of terrifying at the same time, because it seems like there are these built-in steps, right? There was the dating, pin, engagement, marriage, and so at each stage things are public, right? You announce to everybody.

02-01:52:12

Samuelson:

That's right.

02-01:52:14

Burnett:

And that must've—

02-01:52:16

Samuelson:

Absolutely. And I so admire the trends that followed where people did not get married right away. Both men and women had a chance to work, or maybe to travel to Europe, certainly develop greater maturity, probably spend more time than my generation did in talking through some very basics about the relationship, children or working or finances or whatever the case may be. And so I think that was a sadder aspect of what we went through, and probably contributed somewhat to the fact that while Colette and I were married ten years our marriage did not last. Parenthetically, I would note that the following President, Bill Strickland, and the following Second Vice President, Sue Trees, also married. And their marriage, I'm afraid, did not last. I think Colette and I set up a certain expectation on their part, as well.

02-01:53:31

Burnett:

Well, I think the sixties did a real number on gender roles, on relationships, and threw a lot of things into question, and there are a lot of relationships that took a hit as a result. And speaking of maturity, I guess there was also an issue—I'm not sure at which stage of student government you were at with this, but there was a controversy about one of the fraternities, that there was a

kind of misconduct of some fraternity brothers when it came to a sorority, and that was something that had to be sort of worked out. Do you remember anything about that?

02-01:54:17

Samuelsen: Well, not during my senior year. You may be referring—

02-01:54:19

Burnett: No, earlier, earlier.

02-01:54:20

Samuelsen: —to the panty raid of 1956.

02-01:54:21

Burnett: Yeah, yeah, of 1956. And was that involved in some of the student government interest in developing a better campus climate? Is that part of that story?

02-01:54:34

Samuelsen: I don't think so. I think it's one of those occasions that just happened. It was a hot night. Students had gathered. Water was being thrown. And all of a sudden things got out of control. I, for better or worse, was in the fraternity house on the north side of the campus and wasn't even aware it was going on, although none of my fraternity brothers were there, and it sounds like I'm being super responsible, but I thought, gosh, if I leave, there's nobody else here at the house to protect the place. But I know Jim Kidder was involved, because he had just been elected ASUC president. He and I have talked about that. And he came back to his fraternity house and found out what was going on, and gathered a couple of the fraternity brothers to go to a nearby sorority and try to put a stop to it. But the damage was done. I mean, that was a black eye to the Berkeley campus, because a lot of articles were removed from sororities, and people paid the price. My good friend Don Martin was the president of the Fraternity Council at that time, so he had to step in as best he could to rectify the damage. He would have to tell that story, but he had to meet with the Dean of Students first thing the next morning, and apologies had to be extended, and steps had to be taken. I recall Clark Kerr telling an interesting story about that. He felt some of the blame was that the University had decided to get rid of a one-week spring break, in part because, as he told the story, the students felt that they were getting out of school too late in the summer to get jobs at the National Park Service, or other plush jobs. Other colleges were letting students out earlier, so they decided to shorten the semester one week, and at least some of the students who were trying to rationalize their actions said, "Well, we didn't get our usual week of rest and recreation."

But anyway, Kerr was able to use the need for "rest and recreation," as I recall, in going to Walter Haas, Sr., of Levi Strauss fame, and secure a major donation to establish the Strawberry Canyon Recreation Center—there's a big

swimming pool up there now on the other side of the stadium—so as to give students an opportunity to get out from under books and go up there and swim and enjoy themselves. So how much of that is fact and how much is fable, I don't know.

02-01:58:08

Burnett:

Right. And also, in the light of recent issues surrounding sexual misconduct and assault, even—and it is a kind of violation, right, of course.

02-01:58:20

Samuelsen:

Absolutely.

02-01:58:21

Burnett:

And it has been romanticized, and I think there's a film called *Animal House* that kind of romanticized that in the seventies, and so we have a culture of excusing bad behavior. And so there was an effort at the time to address it and say, this is not how people behave, and it's not how men behave. And it must have been difficult to handle that, and to see that. But that was one event out of a larger context of tremendous achievements that you and your friends and colleagues had in student government to move the campus forward and to bring resources to students on campus, it seems, to allow them to develop themselves fully, to just make things a bit easier for students, and also to manage the changing political tides, because you had new organizations bringing the politics of the world to campus. So much is bubbling over at that time. It was a really electric time, I think, in the history of Cal, and you were—

02-01:59:52

Samuelsen:

Oh, absolutely.

02-01:59:52

Burnett:

—a witness to it.

02-01:59:54

Samuelsen:

Well, and people like Mike Miller, who was so instrumental in forming SLATE. I thought the world of Mike: very bright, very committed, very passionate. We looked at things a little bit differently, but he was right upfront about his motivations and what he was trying to do, and, I think, had the best interests of the students and the generations to follow at heart. Reasonable people can differ. But it wasn't confrontational during my time, it was just dialoguing and trying to find a way that was satisfactory for both.

02-02:00:43

Burnett:

And it's a new era of youth politics, because Tom Hayden apparently spent summer with SLATE in '58?

02-02:00:53

Samuelsen:

That's right.

02-02:00:54

Burnett: And took back what he learned to Michigan.

02-02:00:57

Samuelson: That's right.

02-02:00:58

Burnett: And then you have SDS and the Port Huron statement and all of that follows shortly after that. So this is a real epicenter for change for young people, change at Cal, and change in the nature and the meaning of the university in the United States at that time. So it was a really powerful time.

02-02:01:25

Samuelson: That's right.

02-02:01:26

Burnett: So next time I think we'll head over to Kentucky [laughter] and take off from there, to explore the early 1960s.

02-02:01:39

Samuelson: Thank you.

02-02:01:39

Burnett: Thank you.

[End of Interview]

Interview 3: June 14, 2016

03-00:00:18

Burnett: This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series and it's Tuesday, June 14, 2016. This is our third session. And we're here at the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley. So last we left off you had completed your bachelor's degree and you had become engaged to Colette and you'd had a whirlwind of activity in student government. So could we talk about what's next for you, I guess, on the family horizon, shall we say?

03-00:01:11

Samuelsen: Colette and I were married on September 14, 1958 at the St. John's Presbyterian Church on College Avenue here in Berkeley. Just a small family wedding. But it was followed with a reception in the home of Ken and Marian Morrish, and they were the parents of my good friend Tom Morrish from the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. So I mentioned them early on. My kid brother was best man. Did a beautiful job of toasting us. And then we were off for my service at Fort Knox, Kentucky, because of my obligation having graduated as a second lieutenant through the ROTC program.

03-00:02:07

Burnett: And Scott Samuelsen also went to Cal, is that right?

03-00:02:12

Samuelsen: Yes.

03-00:02:13

Burnett: Yeah. When did he start?

03-00:02:17

Samuelsen: He's six-and-a-half years younger than I am, so he must have started in 1960, graduated in 1964.

03-00:02:25

Burnett: Okay. That'll help us keep track of things.

03-00:02:28

Samuelsen: That's right.

03-00:02:29

Burnett: And so can you unpack a little bit about how ROTC works in terms of what the agreement is and maybe there are different kinds of agreements you can have. When you serve ROTC you do it while you're in school and there's activities, exercises, as you mentioned last session. And is it kind of like the reserve? You agree that once you finish you are going to do a certain amount of service? How does that work?

03-00:03:02

Samuelsen: Yes, to all of that. One of the decisions you need to make is what branch of the service to be in. I was in the Army ROTC program so I chose armor. I'm

not quite sure why, except two of my close friends, Scott Sherman, I've mentioned Scott before, and Larry Stewart, who was head yell leader our senior year, chose armor and so the three of us were kind of a troika. The service at that time was active duty for either six months or two years, followed by reserve service, which could be, as I recall, up to seven, seven-and-half-years for those who served six months active duty, and three or four years of reserve duty for those who served a two-year stint.

The arrival in Fort Knox was somewhat problematic for Colette and me because Larry and Scott met us. Larry immediately read my orders and said, "Lieutenant, you are here for two years and not six months." I had either not read the orders or had misinterpreted them. Orders were two or three pages long, a lot of language that was kind of foreign. But in any event, all of a sudden we had to adjust to the fact we were going to be at Fort Knox, Kentucky for two years and not six months. And so any plans to return for graduate study in the fall of 1959 went out the window. So it was then up to us to make the most of two years. But one advantage was, indeed, I only had the shorter reserve duty after coming back.

Reserve duty generally involved going to reserve meetings once a week and then going to summer camp, for us down at Camp Roberts off of Highway 101 south of Salinas and King City. And going for, as I recall, two weeks. And that's what I did following my return from Army service.

03-00:05:43

Burnett:

Right. And at the time Fort Knox was the center for the Armor School, is that right?

03-00:05:50

Samuelsen:

Yes, that's right.

03-00:05:51

Burnett:

And that's where you trained to learn about mechanized warfare.

03-00:05:55

Samuelsen:

That's right. And I think that's now been changed. I think armor training is now at Fort Benning, Georgia. But at that time it was definitely based in Fort Knox. So I had basic armor training and then I was part of a company that trained enlisted armor men at the time.

03-00:06:21

Burnett:

What was that like? So you were inside tanks or were you directing things a bit more?

03-00:06:28

Samuelsen:

Well, initially, during my own basic training, I was inside tanks, learning how to drive tanks, fire ammunition out of tanks. In retrospect I wonder what in the world were we thinking wanting to be in a war sitting in a tank. But that was

what we chose. Maybe we liked the color of the scarfs. I think we wore yellow scarfs. Maybe that attracted us. I think the artillery wore—

03-00:07:03

Burnett: Right. Kind of ascots, right?

03-00:07:04

Samuelsen: —red. That's right.

03-00:07:08

Burnett: And Fort Knox is an impressive place because it was massive. At the time I think it had something like 4,000 buildings. That sounds like a substantial base. And the story about tanks is that they're very hot, very noisy. So was it an uncomfortable type of exercise?

03-00:07:38

Samuelsen: It was. It was.

03-00:07:41

Burnett: What kind of tanks were you working in?

03-00:07:44

Samuelsen: Oh, I don't remember. I know there was a name for them. M48 or something like that. But they were large. And you made the most of it. But fortunately, during my two years I was able to evolve into positions other than being in a tank.

03-00:08:02

Burnett: Right, right. And military service was just basically, if you were a man at that age you were basically going to do some kind of service? Is that right?

03-00:08:16

Samuelsen: Yes.

03-00:08:16

Burnett: I had another conversation with someone who served in World War II and he was talking about the benefits or what he believed would be the benefits of some kind of national service. There's something you get out of it or there's something that the nation gets out of having everybody do something. It doesn't have to be preparation for war. Where do you sit on that opinion?

03-00:08:51

Samuelsen: Yes, I think having the opportunity to give back to your country, to do something beyond your own self-gratification, is important. And certainly I felt that in serving in the Army and serving in the reserves.

03-00:09:11

Burnett: And you had a couple of friends from Cal who were there and that also helps things, I think. It smoothed things out a little bit.

03-00:09:22

Samuelsen:

Well, actually, they didn't stay that long. They went elsewhere for the balance of their service. So it was an opportunity to, going back to your earlier question, to make new friends, meet people from other parts of the country, to gain a little perspective on what your life had been growing up in California and going to the University of California. One of my vivid recollections is meeting people from elsewhere in the country and they would ask about where I'd gone to college and I said, "Berkeley." And almost universally they would say, "Wow, that's certainly a wonderful institution." And I think it gave me an opportunity to realize how fortunate we had been.

03-00:10:18

Burnett:

And especially at that time. Berkeley acquires a different kind of reputation in the 1960s, of course.

03-00:10:24

Samuelsen:

That's right.

03-00:10:24

Burnett:

Also equally famous but perhaps notorious to some. But at that time there are the discoveries of elements. I don't know if Californium and Berkelium and have been discovered by that time. I can't remember. But to have an element on the periodic table named after a place like that. Seaborg becomes chancellor just a couple of years after this time that you're talking about. So Berkeley is on the world stage. That must have had something to do with pride about Cal for you.

03-00:11:04

Samuelsen:

Definitely. It definitely was the academic reputation and orientation that was being referenced.

03-00:11:05

Burnett:

And so I'm thinking armor and I'm thinking Europe. Fort Knox is training these people in armor school. Is the next step mostly to the European deployments for NATO?

03-00:11:34

Samuelsen:

Yes. And, of course, that was an option for those who decided to make a career out of it or extend their duty. I obviously did not decide to do that but that was certainly an option and you realized you were helping train people for that type of long-term commitment.

03-00:11:55

Burnett:

While you were there, or prior to that, did you ever think about a career in the military?

03-00:12:00

Samuelsen:

No.

03-00:12:02

Burnett: Okay. So it was a service for that time, doing your duty, and it was partly a seamless transition out of scouting, I imagine, right?

03-00:12:12

Samuelsen: Yes.

03-00:12:15

Burnett: It's part of what it meant to be an American at that time.

03-00:12:19

Samuelsen: And you hoped that the international situation did not deteriorate to the point where you were forced to extend your duty, where you actually went into combat. There were certainly concerns about coming out of the Cold War, Khrushchev acting out at the United Nations. You just held your breath that things did not get to that point. But I'm grateful for the time I had and it did influence my eventually deciding to go to law school, because for the second of my two years, I served as counsel to special court martials. And the counsels for special court martials, as opposed to general court martials, did not have to have legal training. It gave me an opportunity first as a defense counsel and then as a prosecutor to try cases before the judges who in this case were military officers, to learn advocacy, to try and build the best case I could, either for or against people who had been charged with everything from petty theft to AWOL to stealing a tank. There was one fellow who actually climbed into a tank and started off and went charging down whatever terrain he could find. And so I think I was a prosecutor at the time and I had to, with a straight face, go in and charge him. He was in the brink at the time. I had to charge him for this terrible crime of stealing a tank.

03-00:14:23

Burnett: It's one of the things, I think, many people think about, is the opportunity, if given the opportunity, I think it would be a very enjoyable thing to do if you didn't have to worry about consequences for others or yourself. But that is an interesting exposure. One of the things I wonder about is how that opportunity arose for you and why you chose it. Because when I think about talking to you about your life and your character and personality, that's a kind of adversarial work, I imagine—prosecution and defense—and I think of you as kind of the opposite, as a bridge builder, as someone who understands both sides of a situation, a complex situation, and seeking some kind of resolution. So how did that come up for you and why did you choose it and how did you become interested in that?

03-00:15:30

Samuelsen: Well, thank you for the compliment. I think a friend that I had made who was an officer and was a prosecutor at the time approached me and asked if I would be interested in doing that. I think then I was debating whether to go to law school or accept an opportunity to go to divinity school in New York City. We can come back to that in a minute. And it seemed like an opportunity to see how I felt about that kind of work. And there are, of course, many

aspects of law that do not involve advocacy in a court. You can go into the corporate field or domestic relations or estate planning and not face advocacy. But I thought it was a good opportunity not only to advocate but to hone my verbal skills and to learn about other sides of our civilization, those who had not had the positive experiences I had had. Usually the young recruits we were defending came from very poor backgrounds. They were deeply troubled by where they had found themselves. So there was an opportunity also, particularly when you're on the defense side, to reach out to these young men and help them through this, even though you might only be able to negotiate a reduced penalty. But they still had lives to live. So I felt that aspect of my personality was at play, as well.

03-00:17:38

Burnett:

And I suppose it's part of that exposure, as you said, to people from different walks of life. And others have said that, too, about military service, is that you're brought outside of your bubble, and everyone has one. And you get to interact with folks from different backgrounds. Did that inspire you to go further in the pursuit of law? How did that connect you to the next step for you?

03-00:18:08

Samuelson:

I think it did. I also had the opportunity to take a bus up to Louisville twice a week during a portion of the time I was in Fort Knox and take a law class at the University of Louisville. Colette herself had started law school in Louisville and I'm sure I was influenced somewhat by the experience she was having, which was very positive. But that also gave me a chance to study law, and the course I took was in domestic relations. It was an opportunity to learn a little bit about law school, studying cases, responding to assignments and being part of class interaction.

03-00:18:54

Burnett:

As you've said, there are many different aspects of the law and you could specialize in a number of different types. What was attractive to you about the kind of law that you were being exposed to? What type of law was most attractive to you?

03-00:19:12

Samuelson:

I don't recall, Paul, that I was particularly attracted to one aspect or the other. I was thinking more broadly of whether the law was a direction to go. And I think from the get-go I realized that law could open up my career to many different directions other than the actual practice of law. That, of course, is what eventually turned out to be the direction I took. But I was intrigued by the law, by the legal process, felt a passion for that. And I'm glad that I had that background. But I also was very attracted to the opportunity to go to divinity school. That was a tough decision.

03-00:20:10

Burnett:

Well, before we go there, can you talk about the nature of that passion for the law? What did that mean to you?

03-00:20:20

Samuelsen:

I just think we're a nation that's founded on the law, starting with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the court system. It just is very fundamental to who we are as a nation. I think that I had known lawyers growing up through my parents and through my work at the university and I greatly respected them. I'd had an opportunity to talk to them a little bit about why they enjoyed being on the bench or why they enjoyed being in the courtroom or why they enjoyed that line of work. So it was just something very basic that drew me, which, incidentally, made it that much harder later on when I ultimately made the decision to leave the practice and join the University of California. But we'll get to that later on.

03-00:21:25

Burnett:

Right, right. I feel like I keep repeating myself in this. I talk about the times that you were in as being this electric time. If you search "electric" in this interview it's going to come up all these times. But basically this time, in the late fifties, early sixties, is coming into what some people refer to as the golden age of jurisprudence. This is this incredible time where groundbreaking cases—this is the beginning of the due process revolution. You've got the Miranda stuff coming in later. But it's at the beginning of this time and you have incredible Supreme Court cases that have enormous consequences down to today. And I'm wondering if that was part of the story for you. Let me put it this way. Would the law have been as attractive to you at some other time, let's say, twenty years before or twenty years after? Is there something about the times, where people were talking about the law as an exciting professional opportunity, but an exciting moral opportunity, an exciting social justice opportunity, an exciting historical opportunity?

03-00:22:46

Samuelsen:

Yes. I think it was a very special time. Earl Warren was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and I grew up with Earl Warren as governor and his being appointed chief justice was very significant, particularly after *Brown v. Board of Education* was rendered. So I think there was the experience through Warren's involvement and through cases like *Brown* that resonated with my generation and certainly attracted me. I don't want to overstate it but you felt that law was playing a very important part about our evolution as a country and we were starting at long last to address some issues that were terribly important, particularly with regard to integration of schools and some of the backlash that was reverberating in the South and elsewhere.

03-00:24:01

Burnett:

And there's also an international dimension to it. I don't know if this factored into things. One story that you can spin on this time, too, is that there were two large competing ways of organizing society that were successful in their

own ways, competing and territorial, and the side that was opposite the United States of America was pointing to some of the issues surrounding racial injustice and so on and saying, "This is why your system is broken," right.

03-00:24:47

Samuelson: That's right.

03-00:24:50

Burnett: It's not just tanks that are involved in that war, that Cold War. It's also hearts and minds and a kind of moral conflict, as well, internally and externally. I wonder if that factored in, because you were also in the military at that time. I imagine the talk around the barstools sometimes would land on something like that. Am I too far afield?

03-00:25:20

Samuelson: No, I don't think so. And this was post-World War II and the atrocities of World War II. Some of those atrocities were becoming more and more apparent, particularly as you grew older and heard stories or read stories of what had occurred. So that combined with the threat of the Cold War made you wonder if we didn't have some tough struggles ahead. It came back to are we going to be a nation of laws that hopefully rectifies some of the inequities we were becoming more and more aware of. The opposite outcome was something, as you imply, that you just wanted to avoid if at all possible.

03-00:26:17

Burnett: Well, a revolution. In the subsequent years, I don't want to jump ahead too far, but I was talking to one person about the late sixties, early seventies. Revolution was in the air. It was something that people talked about, not just as a possibility but in their minds a likelihood, a destiny. And your temperament, I think, and this interest in the law—the law represents not just a static institution but one that is able to adapt gradually to changing times and that maybe was what is attractive to you about that.

03-00:27:06

Samuelson: Yes, yes.

03-00:27:07

Burnett: Yeah. But it's not the only possibility for you at this time in your life in terms of a path to a profession or a calling. What else was on the horizon for you as a possibility in terms of a career?

03-00:27:24

Samuelson: I had two very good friends going back to my Pasadena days who were in divinity school, Union Seminary in New York City. (JRS: Dick Pease and John Brooke by name; John was the friend who unsuccessfully recruited me to Stanford.) They wrote me about a program that was supported by the Rockefeller Foundation that would afford people a one-year trial run at seminary. So you didn't have to make a three-year commitment. You could make a one-year commitment and just try it on for size. I found that to be very

attractive, again, because I was debating which way to go. I've already indicated how I explored the law while I was at Fort Knox. But this was still another possibility. And I think I may have also considered graduate school. I was a political science major at Berkeley and obviously this could lead to a political science graduate or public service graduate program. I think I was intrigued somewhat by the possibility of some kind of a governmental service, either nationally or internationally. As with all young people, you weigh your possibilities.

03-00:28:55

Burnett:

Yeah. Talk about a golden age not just for law but for public service. On the horizon are these calls to public service. It's a moral call. In all of these domains, it seems, not just for divinity school and the ministry but public service, the law, all of these. Or national defense. All of these things had a ring to it for you. It seems like you could have gone either way at that juncture. Each way was a possibility. Did Colette influence you in your choice? Were you thinking about that as a couple, about where to go and what to do?

03-00:29:49

Samuelsen:

I'm sure we discussed it at length. I suppose the influence might have been because she was, herself, pursuing law school and the practice of law. There was an attraction to following suit. And I knew she was enjoying her experience. So that might have had some influence. But beyond that I think she would have supported whatever I decided to do.

03-00:30:23

Burnett:

And Union Theological Seminary would have been a good choice. That would have been the Cal of religious education, I would think.

03-00:30:35

Samuelsen:

Oh, yes.

03-00:30:36

Burnett:

And New York City would have presented an attractive opportunity. There are no bad choices for you at this moment, it seems. And so you're at Fort Knox and you're immersed in that environment, but you're also making tentative forays into taking a law class in Louisville. Are there any other recollections from that period that were striking to you or that you would like to recount, from your time at Fort Knox?

03-00:31:13

Samuelsen:

We tried to make the best use we could of opportunities to go to cultural events, athletic events, and community events. I recall Stephen Foster concerts. They were very enjoyable. "My Old Kentucky Home" and the various beautiful pieces that he composed. But on the sports side several stand out and the most significant was the NCAA finals that were held in Louisville in 1959 for basketball. One of the four competing teams was Berkeley. They were to go on to win the championship. So we received a call from Dick

Erickson, who was then the executive director of the California Alumni Association, asking if we would like to go. He said, "I can arrange for tickets for the two games." And obviously we said yes. But he said, "I have a favor to ask. We're also arranging for the pom-pom girls to attend the NCAA championships. But they need a place to stay. Could you arrange something at Fort Knox?" I don't know how I did this but I arranged accommodations for them in the bachelor officer quarters, presumably for two nights.

The first night Colette and I drove to Louisville and watched the Bears upset Cincinnati. They had a star by the name of Oscar Robertson, who went on to a stellar NBA career, one of the all-time greats. And the Bears defeated them. So the next night they played West Virginia and their star was Jerry West. But the first night after the game we literally met these five pom-pom girls. And how we crammed them into our car and drove them back to Fort Knox a half-an-hour away and put them up for the night I just don't know. The next morning we drove them back to Louisville because they wanted to be part of all the pre-game festivities.

The second night Cal beat West Virginia and Jerry West seventy-one to seventy. The last championship Cal has won in basketball. That was a team coached by Pete Newell. It was a huge upset. I don't recall taking the pom-pom girls back to Fort Knox after that. My recollection is that they wanted to stay in Louisville and party. So where they spent that night I don't know.

In any event, being there for those two games was pretty exciting. And there weren't that many Berkeley rooters. You just didn't jump on planes as readily in those days. I remember sitting with a group of maybe twenty, twenty-five Berkeley rooters and cheering them on.

03-00:34:41

Burnett:

Another form of duty expressing itself at that time. [laughter]

03-00:34:44

Samuelson:

Yes. Oh, yes. Well, somebody had to do it. But I might add a little sideline, which I think is a fun story. The campus also sent the Cal band to Louisville. And so obviously they were rooting for Cal to defeat Cincinnati the first night. But the second game the first night was between the University of Louisville and West Virginia. West Virginia beat Louisville, so they were out of the tournament. Well, all of the University of Louisville fans, of course, were very disappointed but many of them had tickets for the second night. So the second night before the game between Cal and West Virginia the Cal band, as I recall, struck up "My Old Kentucky Home." That brought all the University of Louisville fans over to the Cal side by virtue of the band having reached out the way they did. And so the second night we had far more people rooting for us than the first night.

03-00:35:59

Burnett:

That's really sweet actually. That's kind of neat. Well, the Cal band is always an attractive force musically. So that's not surprising.

03-00:36:15

Samuelson:

That's right. But while we were there, speaking of athletic events, and here it goes back to my dad and all his connections, he arranged for us to go to the Kentucky Derby. He arranged for us to go to the Indianapolis 500 in Indianapolis. And those were wonderful memories. As I look back I've been able to be present for some pretty significant athletic events, thanks to my dad.

03-00:36:47

Burnett:

I hope you had earplugs for the Indianapolis. [laughter] Although if you were in the armor school you probably had acclimated to noise a little bit. I do want to keep track of this because I've heard—you mentioned Stephen Foster. So there's music in your life a little bit. Athletics you've talked about a fair bit. I know you're passionate about that. Can you talk about music and what you like? And you play, is that right?

03-00:37:26

Samuelson:

I do play the piano. It's something I've done since, oh, golly, I was four or five years old. It started in the classics but as time went on I evolved into a honky-tonk style. So I can play today a number of songs going back to the twenties and the thirties, popular music. So I sit down at the piano from time to time. But music today is largely centered around Colette's and my daughter, Thea, who is a choral conductor in New York and Washington, DC. I might just digress because it's very much on my mind at this moment. A couple of weeks ago Jeane and I had a chance to be in New York City for the tenth anniversary of the New York City Master Chorale performing in Lincoln Center. Thea founded that chorale ten years ago. She is the artistic director. And they performed "Carmina Burana" with a wonderful dance ensemble and a wonderful youth chorus. They were augmented by singers from the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC. And that came about because Thea has two gigs. Her second one is artistic director of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC. The following week we took the train to Washington and went to the Kennedy Center for the Gay Men's Chorus singing the same piece, "Carmina Burana." This time they were augmented by singers who came down from New York. So you talk about pride. It was pretty special. And Thea literally goes back and forth between Washington and New York by train once a week to make this all possible.

The reason it's on my mind just now is that this last Saturday night, after the terrible massacre in Orlando, the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC first performed at the Capital and then I believe literally marched down Pennsylvania Street and performed in front of the White House. I watched that yesterday thanks to YouTube and was teary the entire time. They sang "We Shall Overcome." They sang the national anthem. And they sang "Make Me Hear You." And they did it several times. And so the video is obviously

showing all of these singers led by Thea. And then that was followed by at least ten speakers coming up to the microphone in front of the White House and pouring their hearts out as to what had transpired the night before in Orlando. So it's an opportunity to observe my daughter using music to convey messages of inclusiveness and love and hope in a very meaningful way.

03-00:41:29

Burnett:

Well, music is important when there are no words. And even when there are words that accompany music, I think that music is able to convey a sentiment and soul when it's just hard to talk at all about something. And that's what I appreciate about it in that context. So it's a wonderful gift that she was able to provide, and the whole chorus.

03-00:41:57

Samuelson:

She also has taken elements of the Gay Men's Chorus to Cuba and just two weeks ago to the Ukraine. And mind you, this is a gay men's group and they were able to sing songs and convey messages that perhaps you would not be able to convey if you were giving a speech or writing in a newspaper. But because of music they are able to convey these important messages and they had gay and lesbians in attendance who were just in tears because it helped them in their journeys.

03-00:42:47

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. And it's a struggle in those places with a long history of ongoing discrimination and exclusion.

03-00:42:58

Samuelson:

That's right. The State Department arranged for these two tours. Thank goodness there are these opportunities through our state department to serve these purposes.

03-00:43:13

Burnett:

It's one of the latest expressions of freedom or its recent fulfillment, right, freedom to marry and all of that stuff. Yeah. I'm glad you brought it up. It was on my mind, too. Sometimes it's important to talk about things in the present, especially if they're there, right out front. But music, it's been part of your life, and obviously you created the space for your daughter to develop that interest.

03-00:43:49

Samuelson:

Well, I of course take credit for her having gone into music with my honky-tonk style. No, just kidding. She just from the get-go had a passion for music, first as a pianist. She also studied ballet. So it goes way beyond any influence I may have had.

03-00:44:19

Burnett:

But it's there alongside athletics. It's also connected to faith practice, as well. Speaking of things you can't convey with words, music is part of religious experience and religious practice. It's something to be thankful for, I think.

03-00:44:41

Samuelsen: That's right.

03-00:44:46

Burnett: So it's 1958, September 1958 to August 1960 that you're in Kentucky.

03-00:44:56

Samuelsen: Yes, that's right.

03-00:44:59

Burnett: And then you're briefly in Washington, DC. This is a mystery to me. Can you talk about what happened there?

03-00:45:08

Samuelsen: Well, I think at that stage Colette and I had every intention to return to Berkeley and start law school. But we received a call from Stan McCaffrey. And that name has come up a number of times. Stan McCaffrey had gone to high school in Whittier with Richard Nixon. Stan was recruited by Nixon as Nixon was preparing for the 1960 campaign to become his executive assistant. Stan left a position as a vice president of the University of California to take that position. He had kept track of our journey and so he called and said, "Why don't you come to Washington, DC and help on the campaign. I will send you a bio of Richard Nixon that I think will inspire you." And, of course, having grown up in California I was well aware of Richard Nixon and knew a little bit about his background. Not extensively but the book written by—I think the name was Earl Mazo—was very favorable. Talked about Nixon's personal as well as political life. I think there also was a connection with my dad. I talked earlier about my dad losing his sight and a number of people writing columns for my dad during his absence while he was recovering and one of them was Richard Nixon. So dad, I don't recall the details, but he had some connection and Nixon was quite interested in sports so he wrote as a would-be sports writer over my dad's name.

03-00:47:25

Burnett: Yeah, he was a big football fan, as I understand it.

03-00:47:25

Samuelsen: Yes. Going back to the story, I made arrangements to go to Washington and talk to several of the people there. The name Pat Gray particularly comes to mind. I think he was campaign director for Nixon or some such position. And he asked me to come to Washington and head a correspondence staff of some twelve to fifteen individuals, a staff that would respond to various letters that were being received or were going to be received during the course of the campaign. We decided to go to Washington, to put off returning to Berkeley, thinking that this was a rather unique opportunity to work on a political campaign. At that point I think we were oriented toward the Republican side of things and towards Nixon. That was to change, at least in my case, as years went on. But we devoted our time between August and December, until after the election, to answering letters that people were writing. Sometimes a

thousand letters a day would be received. We had a number of form letters and so the staff of fifteen would apply letter three or six or whatever. And these would be prepared. And there was a signature, an automatic machine that signed "Richard Nixon" on them. So we had quite a bit of a say on using that signature machine. If a letter could not be answered with one of the form letters then one of the staff would draft a few sentences or a few lines and one of my principal jobs was to review the draft and give the okay for the letter to go out over Nixon's name. If I felt it was too controversial or needed more attention, I would send it upstairs to someone in a better position to respond in Nixon's name. I don't want to exaggerate how much authority we had. But when you're responding to a thousand letters a day you're probably going to make a few mistakes along the way.

03-00:50:018

Burnett:

With a total staff of twelve? A thousand letters a day with a staff—

03-00:50:21

Samuelson:

Yeah.

03-00:50:21

Burnett:

Wow.

03-00:50:22

Samuelson:

I think it might have been a staff of fifteen.

03-00:50:24

Burnett:

Okay, still.

03-00:50:27

Samuelson:

It was quite an interesting experience but it goes back to Stan McCaffrey, and I think he had a lot to do with it because, as I've suggested earlier, he was a mentor and if Stan felt something was worthwhile then I would listen. Again, we had the opportunity of seeing a lot of Stan and his wife Beth and his two kids. We also became involved with a church youth program while in Washington, one of the ministers from Pasadena during my growing up days had become senior minister of a church there and asked us to come over and help out as youth advisors. So we did some of that, as well. It was a very interesting experience.

03-00:51:17

Burnett:

And a return to DC for you because I think you were there for the jamboree. Is that right?

03-00:51:21

Samuelson:

Yes.

03-00:51:22

Burnett:

Okay. I mean, it's a different feeling in Washington, DC, isn't it, when you go there? What was it like for you to be working in that city at that time?

03-00:51:39

Samuelson:

We worked long hours into the evening. We did develop some nice friendships with the fifteen staffers. I don't think we took that much advantage of the cultural events or the historic events. We were there to do a job. I had had the opportunity, several opportunities, to be in Washington before so I had done that part. I have one recollection of how enamored you can become with whoever you're supporting. And we became very enamored with Richard Nixon. You lose your objectivity. Everything he does or says is right. Everything the opponent, in this case John F. Kennedy, said was wrong. And years later when Kennedy spoke here in Berkeley in Memorial Stadium my mind changed 180 degrees and I became much enamored with President Kennedy and what he stood for.

03-00:52:55

Burnett:

It is a turning point moment right at that time, at the end of the fifties, the beginning of the sixties. It's probably the last time where you could say, especially in California, where you could say there was a—the historians are going to kick my butt over this—but there was kind of a broad consensus and the differences between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party were significant but nothing compared to the divergence that we see now. Others might argue that you're basically voting for the same structure. But then it seemed there wasn't much of a difference. But you could see a divergence coming, I think. So others I've talked to at the time, at that very moment were becoming Goldwater conservatives, right. The Southwest was coming into its own and things were just beginning to shift a little bit. What did that look like to you? You were reading the letters that are coming in, right? What was on the minds of the public that was reaching out to Richard Nixon and asking questions or making complaints or what have you? What were Americans thinking about at that time?

03-00:54:43

Samuelson:

Most of the letters were just indicating their support of his candidacy, hoping for a continuation of the Eisenhower years. Of course, Nixon served as Eisenhower's vice president. But as we have been discussing in the past, there was that comfort level about the Eisenhower administration and what he stood for and I think a feeling that Eisenhower and then Nixon would be in the best position to maintain the peace that at that point we were enjoying, notwithstanding the Cold War and the threats of the Cold War. I don't recall, though, over and beyond that the specific issues those letters raised. But I'm sure they covered the gamut given the turmoil in the South and the uncertainty about where we were going with civil rights, what the role of the federal government should be, and the traditional federal versus states-rights issue.

03-00:56:01

Burnett:

Yeah. I guess Sputnik is '57 and then there's a big push for education, science education in the schools, like we're falling behind the Soviet Union. Imagine that sentiment, there's that competition. And I think there's a recession

in '58, '58 to '60 is a bit of a recession, if I'm not mistaken. So maybe there's a—

03-00:56:29

Samuelson:

Yes, I think that's so. But even then you go back to the political parties. A lot had to do with your upbringing. I was raised by Republican parents. I think they had some reservations about FDR and Truman. Southern California tended to be more Republican-leaning at that time. And then, as I said, I was influenced by Stan McCaffrey and all the good things he said about Nixon. It was almost like it was more personality-oriented than issue-oriented campaign and who did you feel comfortable with? And we all felt comfortable with Ike. He was kind of the father figure and the like. We got into the sixties, as we well know, and it became more issue-oriented and the government became more active on a legislative side in dealing with some of these issues we've been talking about.

03-00:57:41

Burnett:

Oh, yeah. It's a dramatic change and you're witnessing that as time goes on. And Stan McCaffrey, it sounds to me like he was a door opener. He saw something in you and he saw that this guy's going to do something, so "I'm going to throw different things at him and see what sticks. That's my sense of him. I'm going to see if he's interested in politics and see how he grabs onto that." And so it was interesting to you. It was an interesting time. But you wanted to go to graduate school and Colette wanted to go to graduate school. That was already the decision that had been made essentially. And so you have to apply in advance. So had you applied to graduate school before you went to DC?

03-00:58:35

Samuelson:

I had applied to law school and been accepted. One of the steps I had to take was to ask Boalt Hall to defer for one year, which they graciously did. It helped that I knew the dean and the associate dean. I had worked with the associate dean when I was in student government. So I had an advantage there. But I think had Nixon won the election we might well have stayed on in Washington for another six-to-nine months before returning to Berkeley. That wasn't discussed precisely but would have been a likely outcome given our relationship with McCaffrey, work I'd done with the correspondence staff and Pat Gray, people like that. But when he was defeated, we immediately made plans to return to Berkeley and then the question was what are we going to do until I entered law school and what was Colette going to do to complete her law school studies. So those were decisions at that point yet to be made.

03-01:00:00

Burnett:

Right, right. So you return to Berkeley and that's at the beginning of '61, right? I think. Yeah, the beginning of '61. In May of '60, one of the key events that folks remember from that time at Berkeley was there was a demonstration against the House Un-American Activities Committee that was meeting at San Francisco's City Hall. I think the police turned on the hoses.

Some graduate students in Berkeley got deported who were from the UK and Sweden. And people were arrested and it was pretty ugly. So things were starting to heat up. That wasn't there when you left. And when you got back things like that were starting to happen.

03-01:00:57

Samuelsen: That's right.

03-01:00:58

Burnett: Did you notice a difference when you got back in terms of the conversations people were having?

03-01:01:01

Samuelsen: Oh, I think so. It was somewhat like the struggles in the South. You just couldn't quite believe that people were becoming not only as heated as they were but were becoming as activist as they were. I've always been one to try and work things out through conversations and compromises and non-confrontational approaches and so I had to struggle with the reality of what was happening. But on the other hand I think we became very aware of the issues that were being fought and particularly in a setting like Berkeley because a lot of the activists were from the faculty or student body. You became well aware how people were being singled out for their views. The approaches being used by the activists were contrary to some of the beliefs about free speech that all of us felt were pretty important.

03-01:02:13

Burnett: And so you're back at Berkeley but it's the fall semester that you would start at—

03-01:02:25

Samuelsen: Fall. So we came back in December. I think we came back in time for the holidays. So then I had decided to call Cliff Dochterman, who I had known through the Alumni Association. He had been field representative for the Alumni Association during our undergraduate days but he had taken a position as special assistant to Clark Kerr when Clark became president. I asked if there might be a position in the Kerr administration for this nine-month period before we started law school. He introduced me to Dean McHenry, who was then university dean of academic planning. Dean offered me a position on his staff, which was a significant opportunity for me.

03-01:03:26

Burnett: And what is the purview of academic planning?

03-01:03:34

Samuelsen: Well, this was a system-wide position. So I think Dean was interacting with the campuses with regard to their own academic plans and the direction campuses were going to go, not only for the existing campuses but the campuses that were on the drawing board. One of my assignments was to go to the library at the School of Education on the Berkeley campus and research

whatever collegiate models I could come up with around the world. This assignment was from Dean McHenry and I had no idea he and Clark Kerr were talking about the possibility of one of the emerging new campuses yet to be established being founded on the basis of a collegial model. Harvard has a collegial model. Edinburgh and Oxford have a collegial model. So I spent hours reading through books and preparing papers for Dean. They played a role, though I don't know what role, in eventually being the basis on which the Santa Cruz campus was formed. And Dean McHenry, as you probably know, went on to become the founding chancellor at Santa Cruz. So that is a long way of answering your question about academic planning but I think it covered quite a gamut.

Another example goes to my assignment as a staff of a committee that Clark Kerr established to research the best location for a new college of architecture. It was a committee headed by William Wurster, who was dean of the school of architecture here at Berkeley. And, of course, Wurster Hall is now named for him. The committee was made up of faculty from various campuses of the university. My recollection of their work, since there already was a school here at Berkeley, was a focus on southern California. And the focus quickly turned to either Irvine, which was still open—

03-01:06:45

Burnett:

Experiment station?

03-01:06:46

Samuelson:

—space. Well, it wasn't that. It was a ranch with cattle. But by then I think it had been chosen as one of the future campuses. We went down and boarded pickup trucks, drove all over the property in the company of William Pereira, who was the architect that had been hired by Dan Aldrich, the founding chancellor of Irvine. We met with him, went over all the plans for the campus and the community. I say we. The committee did. But my job was staffing the committee and drafting its report. It has been amazing to think of the site evolving the way it has and then watching it grow over the years, particularly since my brother is a member of the faculty there. The other focus was at UCLA and ultimately the committee recommended that the architectural program be incorporated as part, as I recall, of the fine arts program at UCLA. But, again, that goes back to academic planning. Stepping back and thinking about the future of the campuses, either existing or projected.

And then, as I think I suggested earlier, Dean McHenry played quite a role with Clark Kerr in developing the higher education program for the entire state. I think he was the principal lead with the special committees of the assembly and the senate that put together the Master Plan for Higher Education.

03-01:08:46

Burnett:

Yeah. To back up, can you set a little bit of context for what you were told and what you learned prior to this? Because this is the great expansion of

higher education. There's nothing like it really. When is Santa Barbara? Is that '64? Is that right? Or is that earlier?

03-01:09:13

Samuelsen: I think that's earlier. That's in the fifties.

03-01:09:14

Burnett: Yeah, in the fifties.

03-01:09:15

Samuelsen: Where the state college was converted to a University of California campus.

03-01:09:19

Burnett: Yeah. But it's in the late fifties, early sixties, how many campuses are established at that time? It's this grand expansion of higher education and it is this unfolding of this master plan. How much conversation was there about that and what did you know about that at the time?

03-01:09:40

Samuelsen: There was a lot of conversation. We could all feel the growth of the state, with more students in the pipeline. There still was this expectation that every qualified student would be able to go to a University of California campus. It just was part and parcel of the growth and urbanization that we were all experiencing. And then there was considerable excitement as to where the campuses might be located. And unlike the process I later took part in that led to a campus in the Central Valley, at that time it was pretty much a review of selected opportunities that might be out there. There wasn't the broad search that we went through for the tenth campus. So here were opportunities thanks to the generosity of the Irvine Company and Foundation for what became UCI and the Cowell Foundation for what became UCSC, as well as the conversion down in San Diego of an old marine base to form UCSD. So there was a lot of conversation in the hallways about these possibilities and plans. Although I was not directly involved, I was aware of them and had some sense when Dean sent me over to the library that the collegial plan was going to play a role somewhere along the line. And it ended up playing a role not only at Santa Cruz but in San Diego.

03-01:11:36

Burnett: What you're saying is that the decisions about siting unfolded as a part of negotiations and serendipity, opportunities—

03-01:11:52

Samuelsen: Yes.

03-01:11:53

Burnett: —and less in terms of, say, operations research, systems analysis. For example, there's this concentration of population within this area so the university needs to be sited between mile here and mile there and a very rational—like in the way that Amazon.com decides where their warehouses are going to be. It's very logical, with a view to economies of scale and real

cost reduction and all these kinds of economic rationales. So it wasn't so much like that and more an organic process of back and forth and conversations about what's possible and what the choices are and roughly where things can be located with respect to growing population centers.

03-01:12:49

Samuelson:

Yes, and it was before the time of environmental-impact reports and concern about the impact of these decisions on the environment. That will come into play big time when we get to the selection of the tenth campus. The methodology there is exactly as you described it, what we used in the Central Valley, but far different in selecting the campuses at Santa Cruz and Irvine and San Diego.

03-01:13:29

Burnett:

But it must have been so exciting because when you think of academic planning you think of incremental change, you think of possibly a reorganization of an existing system that would be fought tooth and nail by the existing representatives of that institution. And here you have *de novo* a brand new institution and opportunity to learn about—you're young. You're really young. You're just out of school and you're being asked by Clark Kerr to research existing models and report on them. And did he give directives in terms of what they were looking for in terms of the collegiate model? How it might fit to a California context?

03-01:14:28

Samuelson:

I don't recall that, Paul. I think it was pretty open-ended as to what I might uncover and what might be done with it. One thing I should mention, though, in this context is an administrator who had the office next to mine during this nine-month period by the name of Earl Bolton. And Earl became another mentor of mine. For some reason, again, like Stan McCaffrey, we really hit it off. I think often we were the first two to arrive in the morning, so we would greet each other. Earl was special assistant to Clark Kerr and his primary responsibility was to negotiate the land acquisitions for the three campuses that were emerging. So I had an opportunity to sense from him where things stood in terms of negotiations. He had a legal background. He'd been a professor of law at USC before Kerr recruited him to come up to the Office of the President. So he used his legal background in negotiating these transactions, much like I used my legal training later on to negotiate property negotiations for the university. And he took me under his wing, encouraged me about my law school studies. I remember he took me to lunch before I started law school and gave me the ABCs of how best to get the most out of law school, to get good grades, to write papers. He invited me back to work for him during the summers while I was in law school. So I not only had the nine months of working for the Office of the President before I went to law school, but I also worked for three months after my first year and my second year of law school. Eventually, and getting ahead of my story, Earl is the one, as well as Clark Kerr, who convinced me to leave the practice of law and come back and work for them in 1967.

03-01:17:22

Burnett:

Yeah. Well, I mean, it is pretty straight-up contract law, is it not? If you're negotiating land acquisitions, that's law, right? So it's something you're exposed to.

03-01:17:36

Samuelsen:

But it also is cultivation of landowners, be it for a gift or be it for favorable terms, and so there was that element. And Earl was a shrewd negotiator and very, very good with people.

03-01:17:58

Burnett:

Yeah. Contract law is not as dry as some people make it out to be. It can be, but I think there is that human side. Other folks that I've talked to in that domain have described some pretty extraordinary circumstances that they find themselves in and it requires a certain kind of person to do well in, I think. Charm is an element and patience. It is a people job. For something that ends up being this kind of dry paper thing, it is a real people job to succeed in it. But in hearing these stories you wish, if you had to reform higher education again, you wish every person starting their career could get appointed a mentor or there could be just a mentor pool. It's a wonderful gift to have not one but several mentors. It's so important, isn't it? Every story I hear about successful accomplished people, it is this story of mentorship. For every leader there's a period of following, where they're guided. And I think that's so important to education. I shouldn't say that. I think there are programs out there. But it seems to be such an ignored part of professional paths and it's off the books, right? It is outside of the curriculum. You just wish that there could be more of that in the world, I think. We'd have fewer lost people, less lost time. How many people do you know who went and pursued degrees and they went all the way through and they're like, "God, I don't like this. I don't even like this job." And there's a story about law school, isn't there, that there's two kinds of people in law school. There's the people who love law school but they hate to practice and there's the people who hate law school but love to practice.

03-01:20:12

Samuelsen:

[laughter] That's very true.

03-01:20:13

Burnett:

[laughter] And there's a sense that there's kind of a disconnect between the education and the kind of work that you end up doing. And so I can't help but think about how important that guidance is for anybody going into that kind of work. It just seems to be so, so crucial. So I didn't even have an inkling that it had such a direct connection to what you end up doing later. You have this early expertise in the planning for new campuses. It's absolutely fascinating. And so you then begin. I guess both you and Colette start, although she had started law school in Louisville. So was she transferring credits to attend law school?

03-01:21:12

Samuelson:

She was and she went to USF law school at night, a tremendous commitment on her part. So she worked during the day and largely was, except for the service that I mentioned with the Office of the President, paying the bills. But as time went on she was able to get enough credits so that we graduated from law school at the same time and were able to take the bar together at the same time.

03-01:21:46

Burnett:

Wow. That is tremendous. That is a very common story that you hear, in those days when the gender roles were fairly circumscribed, but women were beginning to enter the professions. It was common for women to support the men, say, in medical school and they would go to work at night and it was a tremendous burden for her and for many women at that time. That was just beginning.

03-01:22:17

Samuelson:

Yes. Then we had an opportunity our last year of law school to become head residents of Bowles Hall. This goes back to one of my mentors, Arleigh Williams, who started at the ASUC as director of activities my senior year. So he and I became very close at that time. He went on to become dean of students at Berkeley and in that capacity he asked Colette and me if we would be interested in being part of an experiment in one of the dormitories. Traditionally they had had what they called house mothers, single women who were there to hold the hands of the students and maintain some kind of decorum. But Arleigh had the idea of having a young couple serve in that role. We accepted that position, lived at Bowles Hall along with 204 young men. And, in part, our decision allowed Colette to finish law school without having to work full-time. We were provided room and board at Bowles Hall. I'm sure we also received some kind of a stipend. I don't remember what that might have been. But it allowed us to meet our needs until we finished law school and could work full-time.

And that was quite an experience. We had two graduate advisors serving with us. (JRS: Burt Broome and Jim McCabe by name.) Bowles Hall is a unique institution. It had a very, very strong tradition of student government. That was one of the attractions for us, because of what I've suggested earlier about my respect for student government, the role students can make in providing for their needs. We worked very closely with the two presidents, a fellow by the name of Bob Pizioli and a fellow by the name of George Nagle. We would meet with them and the Student Council on a regular basis and they would create social programs, handle judicial matters that would come before them from time to time, try to figure out how to make that a wonderful place to study and live. I'm very pleased, this is jumping ahead, but more recently a group of Bowles Hall alums have done an amazing job of recapturing the Bowles experience. Bowles Hall sometime after our time was closed for a number of years by the university and there were threats to turn it into a new residential center for the business school or tear it down. But this group of

alumni, headed by a fellow by the name of Bob Sayles, has raised a lot of money and Bowles Hall is being renovated right now and I think this next fall will reopen, much in the tradition we experienced of having a strong student government.

03-01:26:15

Burnett: Can you describe the building a little bit? What year roughly was it built? What style is it?

03-01:26:21

Samuelsen: Well, it was built in 1930. It's a Tudor-style building that has a lot of character. It's just north of Memorial Stadium, so it stands out. I think it has seven stories. It was built on the side of a hill, so the lower stories had few rooms. The upper stories had many more rooms. Had a large dining room where all the meals were taken. Had a large library. Various recreational needs were met there.

03-01:27:11

Burnett: So it's kind of lots of wood. Is that kind of the style that it has?

03-01:27:16

Samuelsen: I don't think of wood as much as concrete. [laughter]

03-01:27:18

Burnett: Okay. [laughter] Tudor on the exterior but on the interior it's all business.

03-01:27:25

Samuelsen: And I may have used the wrong word describing it.

03-01:27:31

Burnett: But stone yeah.

03-01:27:32

Samuelsen: It looks like a castle from afar.

03-01:27:33

Burnett: Okay, okay. I understand. Okay. Yeah. Yeah.

03-01:27:36

Samuelsen: Not only stone but concrete floors. It was kind of hard to keep the noise down.

03-01:27:43

Burnett: Oh, I bet. I bet. And so did students knock on your door? So I was a graduate advisor at the University of Pennsylvania and my wife was, too, and I think part of your job was to sort of cement community. Every once in a while you'd get a knock on your door and somebody was in trouble. So you were kind of a social resource and a kind of *in loco parentis* a bit.

03-01:28:13

Samuelsen: Yes.

03-01:28:15

Burnett: So was that part of your duties there in that capacity?

03-01:28:19

Samuelson: Yes.

03-01:28:20

Burnett: Yeah. So that seems to fit with your orientation of service, right?

03-01:28:28

Samuelson: Well, I think that's why Arleigh Williams was interested in our becoming part of this. Obviously as dean of students he was very interested in the welfare of the students outside the classroom and felt we might be able to help. The two events that I recall vividly are first the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and that happened during our year. We had to be there to help these 204 young men grieve, even as we were grieving ourselves. We were not that much older. Trying to make sense of what had transpired. Some went home to be with their families, but some were not able to, so we would set up various conversation points in the library or dining room so we could talk through what had transpired. A major decision we had to make, and we did it in concert with the student leadership there at Bowles, was whether to proceed with a dance the Saturday after this occurred. And I think it occurred on a Friday. We decided to proceed, feeling that it was important on a Saturday night that as many of us could gather and be there for one another as possible. A number of parents called and took issue with our decision but I continued to feel it was the right decision to make. And as I recall, while there was some dancing and some socializing, there were a number of small groups that just sat and talked among themselves. And it was a date type function, so the men had dates. So we were impacting not only the men but some of the women they had invited.

The other event I recall was an automobile accident involving a young man by the name of Dan McIntosh. He was not severely injured but he was injured enough, and I don't recall the details, that he was hospitalized at what was then Cowell Hospital on the campus. So we would spend a lot of time visiting him in the hospital or when his parents came from out of town, being with them, consoling them, helping him adjust. I'm pretty sure he broke a leg, among other things. So there had to be some adjustments along those lines. The irony of that is that some years later—I say some years later, it had to be three years later because he was a freshman at the time—he became ASUC president. So he and I were able to maintain a relationship, albeit at a different time, because we're now talking about the sixties and he was facing some of the decisions of the sixties that were far different than what I was facing as to the role of ASUC and the extent to which they would be stepping in to support some of the matters that were being addressed.

03-01:32:04

Burnett: So were you able to act as an advisor or at any rate a listener in that respect?

03-01:32:12

Samuelsen:

I don't think it'd be right for me to say that I was. By then I was practicing law. I was away from the campus. I'd lost contact.

03-01:32:26

Burnett:

It is under the circumstances of things like the assassination of John F. Kennedy or 9/11 or the shooting in Orlando that you see the importance of community, right, and you see when it matters most and people are able to come together. And I think your decision to continue with the dance is a reflection of your understanding that you don't stop the world because something tragic happens. You maybe change the way you do something but you decided to hold the social event and the social event unfolded in a different way but you understood it was important to have it and to allow people to do whatever they needed to do. Rather than just say it's cancelled, the world is cancelled because of something tragic that has happened, you saw that with your daughter's chorus stepping up to memorialize or the way in which the campuses held a vigil yesterday to address something. And a vigil is a very solemn thing, anything that brings people together. And they're going to do what they do in that context. You made that call and you had the right instinct, I think, notwithstanding the calls from parents, which was going to happen in any case, whatever you chose to do.

03-01:34:07

Samuelsen:

I believe I also had the opportunity in talking to the parents to help them in their own grieving and hopefully give them some explanation of why we thought we should go ahead, for all the reasons you just articulated.

03-01:34:21

Burnett:

I know that for some, to this day, people are discussing why it happened and the various conspiracy-theory industries. But at the time making sense of a senseless act, what were people saying about what they thought this meant? What was going through people's minds as they were talking through the crisis?

03-01:34:53

Samuelsen:

Great sadness. JFK, of course, had been to Memorial Stadium just a year before. I think we all identified with him to a certain extent. I think he was pursuing the Peace Corps and other programs that students could identify with and appreciated. But there was disbelief that this could happen in our country, even though we've had other assassinations, that life had been snuffed out so quickly. As with today, uncertainty as to, okay, where do we go from here? What kind of leadership is going to emerge and what steps can be taken to avoid another Orlando or another Dallas assassination?

03-01:35:55

Burnett:

Absolutely. And so much is happening and starting to change at that time. You're at Berkeley until the end of the summer of '64, is that right, or do you continue to stay there?

03-01:36:18

Samuelsen: We left when school was out in June.

03-01:36:26

Burnett: In June.

03-01:36:26

Samuelsen: And started to study for the bar. Did that at home. But we had no idea of what was going to evolve in the fall of '64 on the Berkeley campus and by then we were practicing law and away from the campus. But I don't recall there being any forewarning about that or particular issues that were being hammered out that would have predicted what was to happen.

03-01:37:01

Burnett: Although you were on campus you were moving on with your life and you were studying in law school. Can you talk about the law school? Can you talk about the experience and initially what was attractive to you? I can imagine there was an influence from your recent experience. But what was most attractive to you in terms of the coursework you were taking, the professors that you encountered, and possible paths that you were thinking about as you were going through law school?

03-01:37:43

Samuelsen: Very, very stimulating experience. We were blessed with outstanding professors. Everyone was not only very intelligent but very challenging. I very much enjoyed my classmates, developed some very close relationships with several of them. We were there to help each other and not compete against each other. And I just enjoyed the challenge of going to class, of studying, preparing for the next day. Felt very much at home and that I'd found the right place. I don't recall, as I went through it, being particularly drawn to one field or the other. I just thought that would take care of itself in due course. I was there to get as broad an understanding of the law as possible, to benefit from the interaction that you would have with students and faculty, to hone your skills, to develop an objective way of thinking through a particular problem, of coming to some kind of conclusion, be it the right one or not.

03-01:39:28

Burnett: And so dispassion is an important ingredient to the passion of the law. So there is this virtue in reason, right, that you seem to be exploring there. Because it could have been an explicitly moral direction if you went to divinity school. And there's reasoning through moral questions there, as well. But in law school you're trying to interpret the law and the spirit of the law takes a bit of a backburner. Or were there courses in philosophy of law? Were you reading Montesquieu and that kind of stuff as part of it?

03-01:40:18

Samuelsen: No, I don't recall such courses. But you're also being inspired by those who have gone on before, the Founding Fathers and the Supreme Court justices. The great minds that have put together these decisions, these laws, these

procedures that are so fundamental to our legal system. And so there's a great deal of awe and admiration. But you also are just mindful that the whole idea is to graduate and find something that is satisfying once you have graduated. I didn't really concentrate on that until, well, we all did our third year because you started to pursue various possibilities, have interviews, and hopefully by the time you graduate have some sense of where you were going.

03-01:41:31

Burnett:

Was that structured by the school? What is it called when they come in, a recruiting day or something like that, when you do like these mass interviews? Or was it more subtle than that and more informal?

03-01:41:51

Samuelson:

I think it was a combination of both. Certainly firms would come to the law school and you would make appointments to meet with representatives from the law firms. But you also had your own networks that you would pursue, people you knew who were lawyers. So I think it was a combination of both. In my case, in my third year I was chairman of what was called the moot court board, made up of maybe twelve or so law students who would manage the moot court process of those in their second year. I had done that in my second year with a partner and we had put together briefs and gone before a moot court made up of judges or professors and argued our case. So somehow I became chairman of the board. I guess it's just characteristic of me to assume leadership positions wherever I go. My predecessor as chairman of the moot court had become a member of a firm in San Francisco, Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon. (JRS: Gary Ricks by name.) So he and I had become close because he had briefed me on what was involved in being chairman of the moot court. And as I recall, he's the one who arranged for me to meet with partners of the Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon firm. As I suggested in an earlier discussion, one of the partners was the son-in-law of Robert Gordon Sproul. So when I met Vernon Gooden and had all these connections with the University of California, I had a leg up in being offered a position. As it turned out, Vernon was my first boss at the Bronson firm and I had a wonderful relationship with him.

03-01:44:17

Burnett:

And what was the range of work that that law firm undertook when you started there and what were you doing when you started there?

03-01:44:29

Samuelson:

The firm had a very broad practice but much of their practice had to do with being insurance counsel, being on the defense side of various injuries and accidents and malfunctions that might occur. They urged anybody coming to the firm to start with that defense work to gain some experience in what is called law and motion, where you go out before a judge and argue some procedural matter, and take depositions, where you interview witnesses at length with a recording secretary on various aspects of an accident or a problem. And so I spent my time in that arena for the almost two-and-a-half

years or three years that I was there. It was tedious work. It involved review of a lot of documents, sitting through a lot of long depositions where you were not only asking questions of whomever was being deposed but you were sitting there as somebody else was asking questions. And depending upon your position you might be raising some objections from time to time as to the questions that were being asked. Regrettably, I never had a chance to try a case from beginning to end and I think one of the struggles I had in deciding whether to leave the practice was whether I was leaving it prematurely, whether I should stay there longer.

Incidentally, going back to Earl Bolton, one of his bits of advice was that I practice law for a while just to see what it was really like. He said, "I have my eye on you and I am hoping I can eventually attract you back to the Office of the President. I'd like to have you work for me in negotiating some of these new campus sites or in handling some other types of negotiations." And from time to time he would reach out to me and ask if I was ready and I would say, "No, I really want to stick to the practice of law longer." I also had a call, as I recall, while I think of it, from Arleigh Williams who, as I said earlier, was dean of students. And this was during the height of the free speech movement and the aftermath of free speech, the Vietnam, anti-Vietnam demonstrations, the like. He said, "There's an opening on my staff for dean of men. Would you be interested?" You get an inquiry like that from somebody like Arleigh Williams and you think, "Wow, this might be very interesting." Albeit it would take me probably along a career path in the dean of students/dean of men/ student affairs arena, as opposed to what Earl Bolton was contemplating. But it was something that I gave a lot of thought to. And I said, "No, I think I would like to spend longer in the practice of law, apropos of Earl Bolton's advice, before I make a decision like that. There are a lot of aspects of what I'm doing I really enjoy." I studied for three years in law school to become a lawyer. I really enjoy working in San Francisco. I enjoy the partners and associates with whom I'm working. It was pretty exciting work. But those were just some side aspects that were going on during the time I was practicing law.

03-01:49:10

Burnett:

Well, they're opportunities and people saw that you could have succeeded in any of those domains. Aside from the opportunity to do a trial of Union Theological Seminary, were you considering seriously something like the ministry at any point in this time?

03-01:49:56

Samuelson:

Well, I'm not sure at this time I was but I think when I was considering divinity school, as when I was younger, growing up in Pasadena, and active in my church, I certainly was considering that as a possible arena. One of my very closest friends, to the point I talk to him every Monday morning at 9:00, is a minister. John Brooke is his name. He was one of the two friends at Union Divinity School that tried to get me to take the one-year Rockefeller program.

(JRS: He was also the friend who “recruited” me for Stanford.) He in later years came to Orinda Community Church as associate pastor. And I was chairman of the search committee that brought him to Orinda. It was about the time that Jeane and I became engaged and John married us in what is now our home in 1970. But John and I have talked many times over the years about the path taken and the path not taken. I’ve had a chance to revisit what would have been a different path for me, being there with him on many, many occasions as he has pursued his pastoral responsibilities.

03-01:51:32

Burnett:

I guess with thinking about career, it’s very seldom that any career is a perfect fit with character and I think what you want is enough of a fit that it brings out the best in you and enough room to pursue the other pieces of your character that don’t fit, right?

03-01:52:00

Samuelson:

That’s right.

03-01:52:01

Burnett:

That’s right. So you were able to continue to be active in church and you had friends and community that allowed you to do that. But the fundamental piece of it I see is service. It’s always nice to be needed, right, and I think that when that call came, you got called but you got called by the university instead of the church and you answered that call, I suppose, right?

03-01:52:30

Samuelson:

I had the good advantage, too, of being able to marry education and law in the work that I did for the university. So it was a nice coming together. But service, and thank you for that compliment, but service is a very key role. I was not feeling in the practice of law an opportunity to serve in the same way I did during the time that I had been working at the university both before going to law school and while I was in law school. I’d also had an opportunity as an undergraduate to serve not only the university but generations of students. And that’s a passion that won out. I just felt that I would have more satisfaction long-term with that career, particularly a career where I could use my legal training, not as a lawyer per se for the university but I had that legal training that I could utilize in terms of negotiating property transactions, in working with people, in reaching agreements as they came along. There was also something about the practice of law where you are accountable for every hour, every minute, every ten minutes you devote, you had to keep track of that because obviously someone needs to be billed. There were expectations as to how many hours you would bill in a given month. Sometimes you became involved in things where you couldn’t really bill and so you had to make up for that on weekends or evenings. It just was not a framework that I was comfortable in. I can’t tell you how many good friends who went on to the legal profession in the purer sense have said to me over the years, “We so envy you in the decision you made. We’ve been burned out many times over and it appears you were able to become involved in programs, in projects of

the university that were very satisfying. You have left somewhat of a legacy. We're not sure we can say that about what we have done." I was fortunate.

03-01:55:15

Burnett:

That in itself is a really great compliment and reflection on you, I think, for people to say that. Well, perhaps we should pick up next time.

03-01:55:25

Samuelson:

Wonderful. Thank you so much.

[End of Interview]

Interview 4: July 12, 2016

04-00:00:13

Burnett:

This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University Oral History Series. This is our fourth session and it's July 12, 2016 and we're here in the Bancroft Library. So we have landed now, landed you back in your transition from your law practice to the University of California Office of the President. Can you talk about the nature of that landing? How did that come about and how did you find yourself there?

04-00:00:55

Samuelsen:

Well, this was in 1966-67 that I started to think more seriously about leaving the practice of law and joining Earl Bolton and Clark Kerr and some of the exciting projects that they had in mind. I think it goes back to what I've suggested before, that I had developed a very close relationship with both of them. They had urged me to practice law for a while and then consider coming back. Earl approached me in the fall and offered the position of coordinator of special projects. My recollection of that conversation, and there probably were several, was that the highlight was the prospect of still more new campuses for the University of California. The university had just opened Santa Cruz, San Diego, and Irvine. But the population growth was such that Kerr envisioned, sometime before the end of the century, opening as many as three more. Earl had been the point person in negotiating those campus sites from a property standpoint. And so he felt the need for some assistance in finding and locating and negotiating new campus sites. But they threw out some other possibilities, too. There was some talk, as I recall, of an observatory down in the South Pacific, and that sounded kind of exciting to go to Australia or whatever, and negotiate a site there.

Somewhere on the list was this brand new program called the Natural Land and Water Reserves System. But I don't recall understanding the full breadth of that until later on when I met Ken Norris and he told me more about it. So in all fairness I can't say that the new program, the NLWRS, was one of the attractions. I just didn't know that much about it. I don't recall there being a lot of publicity when it was established. And, of course, at that time the university was enthralled in student protests. Reagan was running for governor and bashing Berkeley in the process and the attention was more on those issues than on any new programs that might be undertaken.

So there I am starting this brand new job, filled with vim and vigor, working for Earl, who was then vice president for governmental relations. He had responsibility for relations with Washington, DC and relations with the Atomic Energy Commission and thus the relationship between the university and the Livermore, Berkeley, and Los Alamos laboratories. And responsibility for contracts and grants. He had this bailiwick of special projects. Like me he had a legal background. He had the experience in property negotiations that Kerr could rely on him for carrying out those responsibilities.

04-00:04:24

Burnett: And the name special projects, does that denote a kind of catch-all box—

04-00:04:31

Samuelsen: Yes.

04-00:04:31

Burnett: —for things that don't fit under normal things. So they tend to be new initiatives?

04-00:04:37

Samuelsen: Yes.

04-00:04:37

Burnett: They tend to be boutique, unusual projects. So that's exciting, right? There's something special, quite literally, about this. So can you talk a little bit about your first responsibility? What did you sink your teeth into? Or was it a sense of juggling balls in the air? Was it one thing that you focused on at a time or was it very much a bit of a circus coordinating all of these things?

04-00:05:10

Samuelsen: Well, the two projects that I think I recall starting with, one has to do with the Bancroft Library, where we are right now. Earl asked if I would go along to meet the widow of a former regent by the name of Gerald Hager, Ella Barrows Hager. And she was the daughter of former President David Prescott Barrows of the University of California. Small world. So we met with her over tea in her home in Berkeley and then basically Earl turned it over to me to work out the final arrangements for Ella to give all of her husband's papers to the Bancroft Library—the letter of gift, the terms of the gift, that type of thing, which was really a wonderful opportunity to get to know her. I had not known her husband, although I was well aware that he was instrumental in the decision to put the Santa Cruz campus in Santa Cruz and not San Jose, which was the alternative at the time. Because in my prior time with the university I attended that meeting of the Board of Regents and recall he was instrumental in that decision. And, in fact, one of the roads down on the campus is named Hager Road. Ironically, I might say, that as years have gone on, Ella and Regent Hager's daughter, Mary Hager, now Mary Hager Hafner and her husband Dick Hafner, have become very close friends of Jeane's and mine. We had lunch with them just two weeks ago. Dick, during the sixties, was the public affairs officer here at Berkeley. Now they run a wonderful winery up in Healdsburg and so we meet halfway for lunch and enjoy Hafner wine. It's always fun to be with them because Dick and I can talk about the latest at the University of California from our perspectives. We have other personal connections, as well.

04-00:07:49

Burnett: Talking of siting, and I don't want to get ahead to the future endeavors in your career. But when you think about siting a university campus, that's a lot of future local revenue, I suppose, for a city to have. It's a huge plum, to say the

least. And therefore it's political. So during that time, from before when you were working on doing the research on UC Santa Cruz, were there conversations about kind of wacky proposals for siting of university campuses because of political consideration? Or were these always really great ideas? Like you couldn't go wrong with any of these sites. Or did people make strange suggestions for the location of sites for universities?

04-00:08:58

Samuelson:

Well, of course, I wasn't involved in the sixties, but as I reflect back I think there was less of that political involvement or crazy ideas coming out from left field than there was when I become involved with the tenth campus in the San Joaquin Valley, and we'll talk about that later.

04-00:09:19

Burnett:

Okay, we'll save that. Right.

04-00:09:21

Samuelson:

Because there it did become much more political and the parties were much more aggressive in promoting their respective sites and coming up with schemes that they would hope would be attractive.

But I think in the sixties it was not as open a process. I think Kerr and the regents and Bolton pretty well zeroed in on where they wanted to be. You didn't have environmental impact reports, you didn't have the competition. There was more of a competition, as I said earlier, between Santa Cruz and San Jose, Amador Valley, as to where that campus would site and I'm sure the various parties were advocating left and right to get the regents to decide there. But nothing like we experienced in the nineties and the early part of this century when we ended up selecting the Merced site.

04-00:10:29

Burnett:

So a relatively more closed process and more of a spirit of consensus? Is that a fair characterization?

04-00:10:37

Samuelson:

Yes, yes.

04-00:10:38

Burnett:

So there was a sense that we all agreed on the broad contours of this approach but the finer points can be discussed.

04-00:10:47

Samuelson:

I was going to mention, Paul, the other early assignment that I recall but it shows how wide ranging the so-called special projects were. As I said earlier, Earl Bolton was responsible for relations with the Atomic Energy Commission and therefore the laboratories. So he arranged for a committee of the Board of Regents to go to Los Alamos, New Mexico for a visit. He approached me and said, "I want you to go in advance, be the advance guy, and make all of the arrangements." So, oh my gosh, I flew to Albuquerque

and then took a little one-engine plane from Albuquerque to Los Alamos, spent a day talking to them about how the tour might be conducted, how the briefings might be conducted, where the meals were going to be served, where the regents would stay and so forth. But it was an intriguing operation and except for my Boy Scout days I'm not sure I'd ever been to New Mexico.

04-00:11:59

Burnett:

Well, it's interesting because Los Alamos was a boys' camp originally. Oppenheimer, he went there as a kid and he suggested this place. Because it was a boys' camp that had horses. It's apparently beautiful. I don't know if it still is, if climate change has done a number on it. But it was apparently a beautiful area. I don't know how much you're allowed to talk about with respect to Los Alamos. But can you talk about the site and what it was like to be there at that time in the sixties?

04-00:12:35

Samuelsen:

That's a number of years ago, Paul.

04-00:12:36

Burnett:

Fair enough. Fair enough.

04-00:12:39

Samuelsen:

I certainly was impressed by the setting in general because that is a beautiful part of the world. Rather barren in many ways. Then I was impressed by the size of the campus, the number of buildings, how well developed it was. Beyond that, I don't have any particular recollections because I was really concentrating on the visit that was forthcoming and the details of that. It wasn't a time when I was able to, at leisure, wander around and become acquainted with the surrounding area.

04-00:13:23

Burnett:

Right, right. Not everyone gets to go to a place like that. So it's an interesting experience. And it's such an extraordinary place because it was a city created out of nothing, as you say, and it was all built within, I don't know, eighteen months or something. And then, of course, they added buildings later. But to create a city that was a secret city on top of that. So it's a special place.

04-00:13:52

Samuelsen:

That's right.

04-00:13:53

Burnett:

And how did that visit go?

04-00:13:57

Samuelsen:

I think it went well. I wasn't part of the visit per se. I was just the advance person. But Earl was pleased with the arrangements.

04-00:14:09

Burnett:

Wow, that's great. So you had had responsibility for, as you say, special projects. And there was this other boutique object which was this NLWRS,

which had been, I think, approved just two years before in 1965 and it was an outgrowth of discussions from the early sixties on about serving the needs of the scientific community and the students at the University of California. Can you talk about how you first encountered that project and how you first learned about it and what your first impressions were of it?

04-00:15:02

Samuelsen:

Well, Earl had told me a little bit about this young professor from UCLA by the name of Ken Norris and so soon after I arrived he wrote to Ken and said, "I want you to come to Berkeley to meet this new coordinator of special projects." So arrangements were made for Ken to do that. I might say, though, that prior to that, a rather momentous decision effecting me was made and that was the Board of Regents firing Clark Kerr. I was just devastated by that. This was in the middle of January and I was still recovering, as we all were, from what this meant for the university, what this meant for us individually. It certainly caused me to wonder if I had made a mistake leaving the practice of law to come to a rather unknown future. But within a week or so, Ken came to Berkeley and I met him for the first time. And, oh, my gosh, I was overwhelmed by his charm, his personality, the vision he laid out for me of what he had been largely responsible for creating, which was this brand new program called the Natural Land and Water Reserve System. He was an, "Aw, shucks," type of guy. Very down to earth. I talked to my long-time administrative assistant just yesterday and I said, "What do you remember about Ken?" And she said, "He was just so easy to be with. You never felt intimidated."

Ken said, "Roger, I'm not an administrator. I am a visionary and I was able to put this program together. Fortunately Clark Kerr recommended it to the regents and the regents approved it in 1965. But I need help." And he said, "Here are three ways that you can help me. First of all, I want you to go with me to Sacramento to meet with the Department of Parks and Recreation and help me negotiate a long-term use agreement for Año Nuevo Island as an addition to the natural reserve system." This was a small island off the coast of San Mateo County. "Secondly, I want you to come to Los Angeles in a couple of weeks and join me in meeting a representative of the Ford Foundation. We have the opportunity of getting a \$500,000 matching grant and I've been working for a long period of time with a program officer by the name of Gordon Harrison. But I don't know how to take it from here. I need help. I know it's going to take identifying matching money, it's going to take action by the Board of Regents." Mind you, I am less than a month into my new job and all of a sudden he is suggesting this. But then he said, "And the third thing I want you to do, I have an opportunity in a couple of weeks to join a fellow by the name of Huey Johnson, who's the western director of The Nature Conservancy, on a weekend trip to something called the Northern California Coast Range Preserve. And I'd like you to come along and in the process maybe I can tell you a little bit more about this program and its

potential and how we hope to go about assembling the various parcels and the like.”

I remember vividly that trip because Huey Johnson and Ken Norris knew each other very well. They both have a lot of ideas and they express themselves well. So driving up they were in the front seat of the car and I was in the backseat. I hardly got a word in edgewise the whole time. I was just soaking this up as these two were talking from their perspectives about The Nature Conservancy, one of the finest conservation organizations in the world but still somewhat in its infancy. And Ken Norris was talking about the Natural Land and Water Reserve System, obviously in its infancy. So we spent the weekend on the preserve. The south fork of the Eel River comes through this site. I forget how many acres it has, but thousands of acres. Beautiful conifer forest, beautiful doug fir, beautiful redwoods. And Huey had even arranged, and I don't know if Ken knew this in advance, but he had arranged for a helicopter to be brought in. And so the three of us flew over, with a pilot obviously, the site in a helicopter. Talk about an introduction to what Ken was hoping to achieve. I was immediately taken in. Little did I know I would spend the better part of the next twenty-four years of my life helping Ken put this system together.

04-00:21:08

Burnett:

A couple of things about that. This sounds like an emotional and almost spiritual, transformative event, to witness these ecosystems. An ecosystem is a nonspiritual name for it but it's almost like an overwhelming, awesome in the literal sense, experience. And one of the things I was struck by in an article by Ken Norris later, not much later, I think '68, and he's writing arguments for why this natural reserve system is necessary. And so I'm struck by, on the one hand, this awesome site, this awesome set of sites, but also the strong rational arguments for why this system was necessary. And it's very impressive. But the other thing he wrote in this article was, when he was reflecting on the earlier period, he talked about it as this was necessary and it has been necessary for a very long time but it hasn't come to be because there hasn't been a plan. And individual scientists have said we need to preserve this area and it would get kicked upstairs in a particular university. And he gave this impression of this just being these isolated individuals at these isolated campuses trying to get something done to create a space in which to do research and in which to teach and failing. And he said, "What's missing is a plan." And then I think about your being hired and him coming to you and saying, "I can't do this administrative stuff." So in a sense he was thinking of you as the overseer of the plan. Perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself here. But he saw in you this potential ally as someone who could serve this coordinated function, because that is it, it seems, in its essence. But there were these other stakeholders. And we'll maybe get to that. In that car ride up there, when they were going back and forth, were they talking about the appreciation of it, the wonder of it? Were they also talking about why it was important? Or were you just kind of a fly on the wall absorbing things?

04-00:24:06

Samuelson:

Oh, I think I was a fly on the wall. I'm sure they covered all of what you've just suggested but I think they also were talking about the deed restrictions on this particular property, which had been imposed by the former owners from whom The Nature Conservancy acquired the property. They were pretty stringent. And so there was a discussion about how much leeway researchers and students need to use and benefit from sites that might be brought in the system.

04-00:24:52

Burnett:

Sorry to interrupt but they were conservation restrictions in the sense that they wanted to limit human activity in these areas?

04-00:24:59

Samuelson:

Yes, that's right. And without going into a lot of detail on that particular site, we worked for years to overcome those. They weren't totally overcome until after my time as director, years later. I went to the dedication of the reserve after I retired as director and was asked to speak about this journey and what was involved. But a lot of it had to do with handholding the former owners and getting them to give up some of the restrictions they had imposed. I think in the process of that weekend I was learning about what might be involved in working with Ken. And I'm sure that he reviewed how the system came about and the steps that he went through. You're absolutely right. It was his genius that put together a statewide plan that would pass muster with all the chancellors and all the regents. There was unanimity behind this. But it really went to how thorough Ken and the committee he assembled thought through the issues. They realized you can't acquire and manage everything. You have to have representative samples. There are limits to what you can have. They appreciated that these sites needed to be available not just to the University of California but to other institutions of higher education around the country, around the world. Not only because we are a public institution but this would also encourage collaboration between researchers with different backgrounds and different perspectives. Ken was just a masterful in giving the leadership that was required. At the time he was just an assistant professor. My gosh, how he found the time to do this I will always wonder.

What amazes me in looking back is how closely the system has evolved, even to today, in the manner Ken and his committee envisioned and spelled out and documented. It's absolutely remarkable.

04-00:27:54

Burnett:

Sorry, go ahead.

04-00:27:55

Samuelson:

Well, I was going to say, and also we need to talk about the timing. Nineteen sixty-five. I'm not sure that you could do this today. I'm not sure you could have done it three years later after Reagan became governor and funding for the university started to diminish. Kerr was gone. Kerr's leadership in the

establishment of the program was instrumental. He was very, very supportive. I'm not sure it would have happened except for that period. And then you ask yourself, "Well, could it have happened earlier?" I think you've already suggested that there were efforts to acquire sites here and there. Maybe the realities of urbanization and the loss of sites had not been adequately documented or was not enough on the minds of administrators to react to it, even though many, many faculty, and Ken was not alone, were losing these sites. So the timing at that particular time, 1965, was fortuitous.

04-00:29:14

Burnett:

I think you're right. It sounds to me, from what I've read, that it was a bit of a perfect squeeze, because you have the expansion of the university system, the massive increase in the student population, so a need for teaching resources. And then you also have the decline that Ken Norris has written about beautifully, the decline in available sites. He writes about himself and his fellow scientists as these besieged—"We're being chased off the land and chased by urban sprawl, chased by the development of highways and all of the development of the coast line." In previous generations the University of California and the system had taken for granted the availability of sites just right on the doorstep. Half an hour up in the hills and you're there. And that was literally disappearing. And I guess the other piece of it is the history of conservation in California, which is particularly strong. And I don't want to make too big a case for that. But you had the conservation stakeholders, which could be problematic in the case that you described because these sites are for use, right? And it sounds to me like you had a number of preservationists, those who want ecosystems without people in them at all. And conservationists are much more about, "well, what kind of compromises can we make with the fact that human beings need to have access to these resources, in some cases need to use them?" And I imagine that that played both to your strengths and to the very core of what you needed to do. And you're in land acquisition and you need to negotiate all of those covenants. Initially I thought of it just as acquiring land but you're acquiring wishes, baggage, restrictions, limitations, and then those are going to hopefully change over time as the need for those sites change over time. So it was a big squeeze and a crunch at a point. And I think you're right. That if you go push it too long either direction you lose the momentum. There's that demand of the students, the student resources, and the dwindling supply of available land and therein you get that moment where that has to happen. So it is extraordinary.

04-00:32:05

Samuelson:

It is. Ken used to love to tell the story. You mentioned losing his research site in studying the desert iguana out in a field near Palm Springs and it was the size of a football field. This is when he was in graduate studies in the fifties. So he would go out there periodically to check his traps and check the migration of some of the iguana he was following. One day he went out there and half the site had been bulldozed over and this was for a new motel of

some sort. This was three miles from Palm Springs, a couple of hundred yards from the nearest road. He thought he had found a wide-open space. He would tell that story in order to make the case that it's now or never. When he talked to his fellow faculty members they would share the same experience. That's when he assembled a group from each of the campuses and said, "Let's put together a plan and see if we can present this to President Kerr." Interestingly, they put a plan together and then Ken wrote to Kerr and said, "I suggest that the university consider putting together a proposal of the type that we were just describing and appoint a committee to oversee this and here are some possible committee members." So Kerr thought, "Gee, that's a great idea." His advisor said, "Yeah, let's do that." And as I look back through the record, that was in October of 1963. Kerr said, "I'd like to have a preliminary report in three months and a final report in about nine months." Well, Ken and his committee were able to deliver on those deadlines because they already had the plan pretty much worked out, with refinements and so forth. And the entire plan was presented, I think it took twelve to fifteen pages, something like that. Presented to the council of chancellors, to the Board of Regents' committee on educational policy, to the regents themselves. I don't think you would do that today. You would send the regents or the chancellors a two-page summary. But this was the entire plan in mimeograph form. Just amazing. But it worked.

04-00:34:57

Burnett:

And I guess the other piece of it, too, when you're talking about reaching people like the regents, who come from a variety of different backgrounds, not always academic, the other piece of it is Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, this notion that we are kind of fouling our nest a little bit. And that's right then, isn't it? It's just a few years before. And that was on everybody's coffee table, I understand. I wasn't there but—

04-00:35:32

Samuelson:

Oh, absolutely. Years later, a woman by the name of Meg Herring was writing a piece and she asked me if I could arrange an interview with Clark Kerr. This was many years after he left the presidency. So the three of us sat down and talked to Kerr about what he was experiencing at that time. He pointed out that he and the regents had just gone through the site selection process for three new campuses and they realized how few suitable places were still available because of urbanization. And so he perceived that there was a need for natural areas to be preserved before it was too late. But he also had an environmental side to him. His wife Kay was co-founder of the program, the Save the Bay Association. We all benefit from her and her colleagues' good efforts. We just lost one of her colleagues, Sylvia McLaughlin, the wife of the former regent, Regent Donald McLaughlin. Kerr also had had experience while, I think, at Berkeley to get to know biologists and people in the natural sciences and he was a student enough of the needs of what he called old biology to know that they needed field sites to study. New biology was more concentrated in laboratories and required sophisticated instrumentation and

the like. He just felt that the Natural Reserve System was needed to help preserve the old biology even as the needs of new biology were being addressed. This is really skipping ahead but one of the things that impresses me as I reflect today is how on many of our reserves there's a blending of the new and the old. A number of our reserves have wonderful sophisticated labs. So the students can go out in the field during the day and back in the late afternoon to the lab and do their work on computers or whatever instrumentation is available to them. So it's kind of a melding of both.

04-00:38:21

Burnett:

And it's a huge thing in the history of science, too, this lab-field border. It's a necessary move, I think, for field scientists to kind of appropriate some of the techniques and the technologies and bring them into the field. It provides them with more legitimacy and it was a necessary move to do that. Absolutely. And we are getting ahead of ourselves but the point was that this is kind of a turning point to—and speaking of squeezes in the 1960s because molecular biology just takes off in the 1950s, forties, fifties, and it's just been non-stop ever since. Biology is really dominated by lab science. And so there's another squeeze at work, speaking of now or never. Everyone saw it, it seemed.

04-00:39:26

Samuelson:

One of my favorite Ken Norris expressions was, “You can't study nature if you don't have nature to study.”

04-00:39:34

Burnett:

Very true. Very true. I was actually quite surprised by the case he made in 1968, so this is just a year after that helicopter ride, where he makes an argument that would not be out of place in 2016. It's very much in service to the requirements of the new life science. He literally says the phrase gene banks. He talks about that this is genetic material that we need to preserve for the future. And just thinking about the stakeholders. So there's the conservationists, even the preservationists. The field scientists, the ecologists, the conservation biologists. But also geneticists and pharmaceutical companies. He had in mind the broadest panoply of characters who could potentially support this endeavor and he was selling it then. It's really extraordinary to read that. And, of course, biotech takes off. Genetic engineering is possible five years later. He was very prescient and savvy in that sense.

04-00:41:04

Samuelson:

We don't know what the future holds and he was basically arguing, and I think his fellow colleagues were arguing, that if we don't preserve lands we're precluding discoveries or innovations we can't possibly foresee down the line as people learn more about the natural processes and how they effect not only plants and animals but you and me.

04-00:41:36

Burnett:

Right, right. You described when you had to do some handholding of the previous owners of a reserve. And handholding to get them to let go of some ideas about the uses to which they wanted that land to be put, the limits and covenants and so on. I imagine that you have to do a lot of homework to learn about sites but also about the system as a whole, what Ken Norris wanted it to be, what the others wanted it to be. Did you have to have conversations with faculty? Did you have to become a quick study in terms of the type of science that was going to be done in those places? How did you develop the kind of situational or operational expertise necessary to make that kind of sale, to do that kind of handholding? How did that work for you?

04-00:42:43

Samuelson:

To begin with, I always worked very closely with the faculty, be it Ken Norris or Mildred Mathias who followed him as chair of the university-wide NRS Advisory Committee. Mildred and I would talk at least once a week. And if I were to visit a site I would always have—not always but I more often than not would have—a faculty member or two with me so I could be learning in the process as they shared with me some of their observations, concerns or reservations. Then it was my job, and this is where my legal background helped, to figure out an agreement that would meet faculty needs but also meet whatever expectations the landowner/donor might have. It took time. You had to develop a feeling of trust. But I think we were able to come up with some fairly common language that met the needs of both sides, not that we didn't have long arguments on occasion. But it generally worked out pretty well. And I guess in general, to illustrate, obviously if we were dealing with a donor and we wanted to use his or her or their property for the Natural Reserve System, we needed to accept a restriction that the gift was solely for the use and management of the property for that purpose. But beyond that, we recognized that times can change, surrounding development or circumstances beyond our control might make it less desirable to hold that property. So we did provide that there would be an opportunity for the university to sell or exchange a property later on but only if it was done so upon the recommendation of the advisory committee and the action of the Board of Regents, and only if any proceeds from that sale or exchange would be devoted for the benefit of the Natural Reserve System.

04-00:45:23

Burnett:

To make sure that there would be—

04-00:45:26

Samuelson:

That's right. And so in that way we were able to carry out the intent of the donor, which was to benefit the natural sciences, but to also recognize, and I think most of the donors recognized—there were certainly exceptions—that times can change. And, indeed, we did acquire a couple of rather small properties that did not turn out to be as viable as we had thought they might at the outset and we'll get into that a little bit later. But there were a couple very beneficial outcomes from that.

04-00:46:03

Burnett:

Right. You can do some trading to get land that's perhaps more unique.

04-00:46:09

Samuelsen:

That's right. I'm not sure I became an expert in the natural sciences by a long shot, because I don't have that background. But I think I did have the ability to consult with faculty members, work with them on language they felt was satisfactory and then in turn work with the donors. So I was kind of the go-between.

04-00:46:36

Burnett:

Right, right. You mentioned her. Can you talk a little bit about Mildred Mathias? Did she become a more important figure later on? She's initially chair of the system-wide faculty committee. Is that right?

04-00:47:04

Samuelsen:

Well, Ken actually—

04-00:47:02

Burnett:

Oh, he was. Okay.

04-00:47:03

Samuelsen:

—was the initial chair. After the system was established he was named chair. But then he took a leave of absence to go to Chile for research and at some stage he took a position in Hawaii. That was in 1968. So he and I only really worked together for about a year-and-a-half before he went to Hawaii to become involved with Sea Life Park there. And upon his recommendation the president asked Mildred to assume the chairmanship. She ended up serving during the entire time that I was involved and thereafter. Probably the longest serving chairman of a presidential advisory committee there ever has been. But Mildred, oh, my gosh. We called Ken the father of the system. We ended up calling Mildred the mother of the system. She just had a way about her. One of my favorite expressions was "Pied Piper." And that came from the expeditions she used to take through cooperative extension to Costa Rica and South America and the like. Jeane and I were fortunate to go on one of those trips to Peru, Machu Picchu, and the Amazon river. She was absolutely incredible in leading these expeditions and that's where the pied piper came in. She had an amazing ability with people. She was very articulate. She also was just a very highly regarded botanist. The botanical gardens at UCLA are named for her. I gave a talk upon her death and called her a woman of all seasons. She really was a remarkable person. And she could be very caring, very thoughtful on the one-hand, but she could also be very decisive, strong on the other. I had the good benefit of her advice, as I said, almost on a weekly basis. So it went beyond a close friendship. She could take me to task when necessary. She could get after me to finish something when it was necessary. She was a true colleague.

04-00:49:57

Burnett:

Right. Before we go further ahead in the story, you mentioned early on that something that changed things dramatically was the firing of Clark Kerr and what that entailed for the work that you were doing. Can you talk a little bit on your perspective on what happened and how that impacted and altered things with respect to your work there?

04-00:50:30

Samuelson:

Well, as I said earlier, it was devastating and fortunately we had Harry Wellman as executive vice president, who was able to assume the acting presidency for the balance of that year, 1967. And Harry had a very calming manner about him. But for me personally, it really changed the direction of that portion of my career because after Clark Kerr was fired Harry and another vice president by the name of Gene Lee asked me to assume new responsibilities that I had not anticipated. The most significant was to serve as secretary or staff to the president's council of chancellors. And in that capacity I would join the president and the chancellors and some of the vice presidents on at least two occasions every month. One was a special meeting in Berkeley. Another would be the night before the Board of Regents meeting. My job was to help prepare an agenda, to attend the meetings, to take notes, to follow-up with the campuses or offices in the Office of the President with action that was taken. Keep the president apprised of progress that was being made and so on. It was an interesting time because for a while I literally was reporting to two vice presidents. Half the day I report to Vice President Bolton. The other half I would report to Vice President Lee. And then Lee decided to go back to the Berkeley campus and leave his position, so then Earl Bolton was named vice president for administration and everything was consolidated under him. But it meant that even though Ken Norris and others were after me to help develop this new program, I had this other portion of my portfolio that had not been anticipated. In addition, I was given responsibility to appoint various members to the president's advisory committee. So literally I would have to get nominations from the campuses and prepare letters of appointment for the president. And there were many, many committees over and beyond the advisory committee for the Natural Reserve System.

Somebody came up with the idea of a general policy compilation. And this required going through the various general policies that had been enacted over the years, put them into some kind of a binder. This was before the days of computers. It also required putting together an index. That index ended up being part of a little packet that the regents and others had. It included the state constitution provisions for Article IX, section 9 and the various rules and regulations governing general work. And then there was a section on this compilation. I was given that job, to go through all of these policies, put them into some kind of meaningful form and the like. I did this for four years.

04-00:54:40

Burnett:

Oh, wow.

04-00:54:38

Samuelson:

I would literally take a briefcase to the various regents meetings that had all these policies in case they were ever called upon. Never was called upon but there I was with my little satchel. It was an interesting time. So it was characteristic of my whole career, where there was always something else that was being added to the Natural Land and Water Reserve System responsibilities. And obviously it was hard for Mildred or faculty members who would be asking me to pursue something, if I would say, "Well, I'll maybe get to that next week." I was juggling. I've often speculated about that, whether it was programmatic in the sense that, notwithstanding the enthusiasm behind the establishment of this new program, the office of the president wasn't quite sure where to put it on the organization chart or how to staff it or how much time it was going to take or whether to leave it to the faculty to assemble. Or whether it was individual, that because of my background, not being an academic but being an attorney by training and having had the background that I had, they thought they could ask me to do these various and sundry other so-called special projects that might be of benefit. I was delighted with the variety and the opportunity. I mean, my gosh, what an opportunity it was to sit through those council of chancellors meetings during a time of not only student unrest but responding to budget cuts and debating whether to impose some kind of fees. They didn't want to call it tuition so they came up with an education fee. These were people of the highest caliber. Roger Heyns of Berkeley and Dan Aldrich of Irvine and Dean McHenry in Santa Cruz, to name three. (JRS: Others included Emil Mrak of Davis, Vernon Cheadle of Santa Barbara, Franklin Murphy and later Chuck Young of UCLA, Ivan Hinderaker of Riverside, and Bill McGill of San Diego.) I had a high regard for all of them. To see them interact and work with first acting President Wellman and then with President Charles Hitch, to come to a consensus as to how to proceed was inspiring. And particularly with the student protests. These were not people who had been schooled in how you handled protests or how to interact with police or all those types of things. It was a learning experience for all of them. So there I was, just listening, taking notes. They were very gracious in having me at their side. I had a chance to get to know each of them personally in ways I can't possibly put into words. It was a very, very special time.

04-00:58:15

Burnett:

Well, regardless of the intention or the plan around having you do that work, it certainly seemed to have had an effect, right, or several effects, in that you got exposure. You already had some exposure. You were known, just going back to ASUC days. But you were working at the regental level, even if you say you were just a kind of secretary or a kind of legal counsel in some respects. You witnessed all of those discussions personally and you met those people. And I can't help but think that that was an added benefit for the Natural Reserve System down the line, or even at the time, because you knew how it did or might fit into the larger system. You got to see it, how priorities were being reassigned at that time. I think you described, you had an interview in

the eighties, looking back on that time. You can correct what this is describing but you described this kind of planning as an eight-course meal or what you would do to plan an eight-course meal. So there's so many different challenges. And when I think of an eight-course meal I think of timing being important. And so I think of the experience that you've had at the chancellors meetings and at the regents meetings, and I also think of the kind of coordinating aspect of this that you had to do. Can you talk a little bit about how this began to roll out at the beginning when you're the coordinator of the Natural Land and Water Reserve System? Or maybe we could talk about the specific—

04-01:00:29

Samuelsen:

I've often felt that personal relationships are at the cornerstone of any success that I may have had because this is a big institution and you can get mired down in the complexities of getting things done, certainly working your way up to the regental level and getting items approved by the regents. But I always valued the personal relationships I had, be they with campus officials or the general counsel's office or the real estate office or the budget office. And obviously donors and the people with whom I was negotiating. So there was that aspect of it. But gosh, each transaction was different and I thought maybe at some stage I might just dwell on a couple to be illustrative of what it was like to put together this eight-course meal in order to bring all of the people together, the finances together, the various aspects of the transaction itself together.

04-01:02:04

Burnett:

Well, we can maybe deal with that as things come up. This was a time of real change on campus and around the world. And I think you described that period as we weren't quite sure whether you were going to have to pack up your tent and go home. We felt like it wasn't necessarily going to happen, the Natural Reserve System. Can you put us in that time a little bit with the uncertainty on campus? We're seeing a kind of renaissance of political demonstrations today. Maybe that's a way to sort of think about it. Civil rights are again on the political agenda and it's in the streets. Can you reflect on that time in the University of California system, in Berkeley, and in Oakland?

04-01:03:17

Samuelsen:

Well, it was unsettling, to say the least, particularly for those of us who had been around for a long time and knew the university in one way and now it was being used in still another because of the issues that were at stake and the protests that were underway. Going to work in a given day and not knowing if you were going to see smoke bombs over the Berkeley campus or police on the streets or protestors coming down from a demonstration at Sproul Hall and wanting to enter into where the president was located at University Hall was unnerving. I even had a job, I was on the seventh or top floor at the time, of being in touch with the campus police and looking out my window and deciding when and if the doors to University Hall should be closed to keep protestors from coming in.

04-01:04:29

Burnett: And did you have to make that call sometimes?

04-01:04:31

Samuelsen: Yes, I did. Again, I don't know if you call that a special project but there I was and given that job.

04-01:04:39

Burnett: It's certainly a special project. [laughter]

04-01:04:43

Samuelsen: I do recall, and I forget the exact issue, but there was a sit-in in President Hitch's office at one stage. And because I was a little younger than some of the administrators they had me join in negotiating with the protestors. I remember a luncheon up in the faculty club where we met with the representatives of the sit-in to negotiate some kind of a peaceful settlement, which we were able to do. I mean, that was the reality of what was happening. And I don't mean to exaggerate my role because I was just a very, very small part of a much larger role that Roger Heyns and others were facing day in and day out. But it was an unsettling time.

Then, because of Governor Reagan and his approach to the university, with the funding cutbacks that were being experienced, the administration was becoming very leery about the expenditure of funds, the expansion of programs, be they the Natural Land and Water Reserve System or any other program. So you did wonder whether this new program was going to get much beyond the initial seven sites that were brought in when the System was established and a few sites that were added prior to the time I'm describing. I certainly recall being told by some high level administrators that, "You really need to slow down, if not stop negotiations. We just can't afford to do that at this time." And this was even after the Ford Foundation had granted a \$500,000 matching grant and the university had committed a matching fund from what was called the University Opportunity Fund to do this. Each of the acquisitions had to be approved by the Board of Regents. And we would propose one item at a time. But you could pretty well tell that the university was not going to meet its full \$500,000 obligation in that regard, which led to further negotiations with Ford down the line, which we will get to.

So I had to figure out ways of working internally and externally to keep the dream alive, to overcome the resistance that I was feeling. And not work around the administration, because that was their feeling, but to see if there were opportunities that we could cultivate that would give people a comfort level that we could indeed proceed. We were very, very lucky. In some respects things fell in place for us that led to the decision to take on a major fundraising campaign so that we could find private funding to augment what we could anticipate was the loss of internal funding for the program.

04-01:08:25

Burnett:

It does turn into a development opportunity, doesn't it? And you can leverage that decline in funding and say, "Look, this had the full backing of all of these stakeholders. This was full steam ahead. For whatever reason you want to assign to the cuts in funding, we're now faced with this shortfall," and that's something you can sell. And were people responsive, at least initially, to that—

04-01:09:00

Samuelson:

Oh, I think so. But I also think that I came to so believe in the purpose of the system and the need to proceed now or never, that it was worth whatever effort I could devote to it. And, again, I don't want to single myself out. I was doing this in collaboration with Mildred and the faculty and my staff. We were all in this together. But we were just determined to somehow keep the dream alive. I did find during the course of my career here, I guess when you work for the university as long as I have, you find that there is more than one way to do things. And if you have a dead end going one way then you try another way. And here's where I think personal relationships also play dividends. You can sit down and talk through, "Well, are there other ways that you can think of our doing this, even though the traditional way is not the right way?" This is a very complex place but there are avenues that you can pursue and I think I was able to do that.

04-01:10:38

Burnett:

Yeah. You said in a previous interview, again thirty years ago, about this time, and it speaks to the kind of pressure that you were under. You said something about the development efforts; it's not something that you just turn on or off. And I think you were referring to the pressure of the university, saying, "Hold on. Don't negotiate for new acquisitions." And it speaks to the nature of the work that you do, that it's not something that just sort of stops at a certain threshold. Everything in this is ongoing, right? The NCCRP, the Northern California Coastal Range Preserve, it was acquired by the Nature Conservancy in 1959, I think. You encountered it in 1967. It was not acquired by the Natural Reserve System until 1989. So to say that this is a process is a real understatement, I think. It requires long-term commitment. And so even though these were uncertain times you almost saw the vision that Ken Norris had for it, that this was a multi-decade project. There were goals that were set out at the beginning of the 1960s. I think there were fifty-plus sites that were the goal. And not just conservation areas or ecological research sites but there were archeological sites, there were geological sites that were in the original big plan. And today it's thirty-nine, I think. One of the acquisitions is 615,000 acres, that desert. The name is going to escape me because it's a very long complicated name but it's this desert ecosystem or set of ecosystems [the Steele Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center]. And so in a sense there's a real fulfillment of the original plan and it took fifty years. And it maybe is going to take another fifty years to keep it going. So your baptism by fire is this time of great tumult and change in California and in the world and

you had to be kind of quick on your feet, I think, in seeking out relationships and looking for avenues for doing the work.

04-01:13:29

Samuelsen:

And I think we had to be patient and realize that these things do take time. I'm one that likes to develop a consensus among various parties. I think that if I have any skill at all, it's perhaps in getting various people to collaborate and figure out ways of doing something. So part of that is just keeping in touch in a timely way. And if there is a delay for whatever reason, to explain why there is a delay and listen to folks' concern about that and just say things will change or can change. Let's keep after it. That's what we did over and over again in the course of those trying days.

04-01:14:36

Burnett:

And the acting chancellor was Henry Wellman.

04-01:14:41

Samuelsen:

Acting president.

04-01:14:42

Burnett:

Acting president, excuse me. And he came from, was it the College of Agriculture?

04-01:14:50

Samuelsen:

Agriculture. He had an agricultural background. But he was very supportive. On one occasion while he was acting president he and Earl Bolton and I had lunch at the faculty club and we talked through much of what we're talking about here. How to keep this alive but not push so far that we get an outright no. So he was very helpful. And likewise, Charles Hitch could not have been more supportive. He meant a great deal to me because at some stage Earl Bolton took a position with Booz Allen Hamilton as a management consultant. So he left. And this was a second blow to me after Clark Kerr had been fired, to have Earl Bolton leave. He had been my mentor—I modeled much of my administrative approach to Earl Bolton. We had known each other a long time. A fellow attorney so that he could sympathize with my interest in the law. But when he decided to leave, President Hitch called me down to his office and told me that he valued my service, hoped that I would stay with the university, felt I had a future with the university. That meant a great deal at the time. And then later he became very supportive of our Ford Foundation campaign and would write letters to prospective donors. He's the one who introduced me to Regent (William A.) Wilson. And maybe I'm getting ahead of myself a little bit here, but I think in the context we've been discussing, the fact that we decided to take on a fundraising campaign was terribly important to keep the momentum going, to cultivate gifts that could be used for some of the purchases.

The details of the campaign are these. We still had about, oh, \$175,000 of the Ford Foundation grant, the original grant to match. And, as I said earlier, it

became evident the university was not going to match the balance from the university opportunity fund they had set aside. There were just too many demands on that fund. So I approached the Ford Foundation and asked them if they would be willing to kick in another \$75,000 to round it off at \$250,000 and challenge us to raise three dollars for every one dollar of their grant. And they agreed to do that. Not without a lot of back and forth and, "Well, I'm not sure we can do that," and "Maybe," and "Okay." But they finally agreed to do it. So we took an item to the Board of Regents authorizing a two million dollar campaign. The first million would be on the three for one grant. That would be for purchase of new sites for the Natural Reserve System, where sites were only available for a purchase price or partial purchase price. The other half would be for an endowment to give us some operating money. Again we were trying to meet the needs because funding was at a premium. The Board of Regents approved that. So then I went to President Hitch and said, "We need help in appointing a campaign advisory committee," a high level committee, "and this should be appointed by you and we need your help in identifying some leadership." He said, "Well, one person that comes to mind is a brand new member of the Board of Regents. He was appointed by Governor Reagan. His name is Bill Wilson, William Wilson. And why don't I call him and ask if he'd be willing to talk to you." And that's what happened.

So I flew to Los Angeles and met with Bill Wilson. I learned in preparation for this that he was a member of Reagan's kitchen cabinet. He was rather conservative in his views. And he didn't know the first thing about this Natural Land and Water Reserve System. So I walk into his office and we had a wonderful conversation. And I look back and I think, "Well, we probably didn't talk about politics," even though I had changed 180 degrees at that stage in my own political leanings. I probably mentioned I worked on the Richard Nixon campaign to gain some favor.

04-01:21:31

Burnett:

Which was true.

04-01:21:33

Samuelson:

Which was true. And probably tried to cultivate his interest and involvement. I've been known to do that kind of thing. Anyway, he agreed on the spot to assume the chairmanship of this campaign advisory committee, I'm sure not having a good sense of how much work was going to be involved and how much we'd be calling upon him. And that began a relationship that lasted, oh, I would say for the next ten years or so. Because even though it was supposed to be a two- to three-year campaign it not only took us longer to meet the match but we had so many prospects in the pipeline we wanted to keep it going. So he assumed the chairmanship.

And then we had a group of I forget how many, maybe fifteen people. I mentioned Sylvia McLaughlin earlier. She was on that committee. Fortunately we were able to attract a Southern California and a Northern California chair.

The Southern California chair was another regent by the name of Bob Reynolds and the Northern California chair was the chairman of PG&E, by the name of Shermer Sibley. Both of them gave extraordinary service and I'll talk later about Shermer Sibley and some of the roles he played. I'm not really sure how we got Shermer. He was a graduate of Berkeley, class of '36. I did have three classmates from Boalt Law School who were on his legal staff and I think I utilized those contacts in cultivating Shermer. He became a good friend and set up some amazing contacts in the San Francisco area. At that time, it may still be true; I think the various corporations based in the Bay Area would scratch each other's backs. So the chairman of Chevron would take on a campaign and would say, "Well, why don't you throw in \$50,000 and match my \$50,000?" So then Shermer would call him and say, "Well, I supported that earlier cause. How about your supporting the Natural Land and Water Reserve System because I'm the chairman, I'm the Northern California chairman of that." Anyway, we were off and running on this campaign.

04-01:23:25
Burnett:

Yeah. There are a lot of disparaging comments about the old boy's network these days but you can see that there is a kind of civic approach that a lot of these leaders seem to have. And you were saying earlier about Wilson being conservative and you were concerned about that. Was there the kind of conservative animus against conservation and that kind of thing, nature preserves and that kind of stuff, that there is, say, today? Because it seems like at that time folks that I have talked to who were conservative, they were involved in—Sylvia McLaughlin is from the mining industry, right, and a lot of the Save the Bay folks, the effort and the money came from mining wealth. And so there were folks who consider themselves to even be Goldwater conservatives who were really interested in nature. And it's kind of a Teddy Roosevelt kind of thing back then. Later it acquires the patina of hippies and lefties and that kind of thing. Maybe that's not true but is there a sense in which you could sell someone who was conservative, had conservative values on something like the Natural Reserve System?

04-01:25:01
Samuelson:

Yes, I think things have changed dramatically since then. I don't recall there being any difficulty convincing Bill of the importance of this program and he, like the rest of us, could realize that these open spaces were disappearing all too quickly. So I don't recall any political leanings one way or the other. Indeed, I think a number of the people that we cultivated probably had conservative leanings but they valued the land, appreciated the land and the like. And also I don't think that acquiring land had quite the same overtures as, say, climate change, where there are arguments as to whether it's real or not and whether industries are polluting the air and whether we ought to cut back on certain industries, which raises all sorts of issues beyond just pure conservation.

04-01:26:06
Burnett:

Right, right. Exactly.

04-01:26:09

Samuelsen:

And then I was able to take along Ken Norris or Mildred Mathias or Bill Mayhew. I don't care what your political leanings; these were people you could not say no to. And that's because they were very real, as I suggested earlier. They could articulate the importance. They were obviously passionate about their work. They could suggest some of the advantages you and I discussed earlier.

04-01:26:38

Burnett:

Yeah. And these were thoughtful people so you could reach them and appeal to what this could mean for science, what it could mean for education and what it could mean for the future. So there were those appeals that could be made.

04-01:26:54

Samuelsen:

Well, one of the pleasures I had was meeting perhaps monthly with the executive committee that we set up for the campaign advisory committee, headed by Bill Wilson. Others included Maynard Toll, Em Sebanius and Don Anderson. But we would meet and then Mildred would come along. And, oh, my gosh, usually half the conversation was zeroed in on Mildred and what she was doing, her latest trip to Costa Rica or her recent visit to the botanical gardens out east of Pasadena or her latest meeting of The Nature Conservancy because she was on the board of The Nature Conservancy. They were just intrigued by her but I think they were learning in the process. They, like me, did not have a natural science background and so it was a learning experience for all of us. So we spent half the time doing that and then the other half talking about where we were on various prospects in the confines of the Petroleum Club of Los Angeles with a nice lunch that I think Bill Wilson was hosting.

04-01:28:22

Burnett:

Right. Well, one of the background interviews I did spoke eloquently about Charles Hitch's way of doing things in the development field, or getting people together. He mentioned that one feature of it was very good wine and very good scotch and that this was a nice sort of lubricant to these kinds of things.

04-01:28:55

Samuelsen:

And a cigar once in a while.

04-00:28:56

Burnett:

Once in a while a cigar.

04-01:28:57

Samuelsen:

Yeah, he had a nice cigar that he liked.

04-01:28:58

Burnett:

[laughter] It is a tremendous social dimension to something that's very serious. But you need people with the right people skills. So that you had those skills but you had faith that the people you worked with had those, as

well and that you were able to sort of together be unstoppable in that sense, right, in getting people genuinely excited about that.

04-01:29:30

Samuelsen:

Yes, yes. Well, the other key person, and I want to talk more about my staff later on. But the other key person in the campaign was our campaign manager Bill Davis. We recruited him. He had a position in New York and we interviewed several prospects. Bill joined us and we could not have had the success we did without Bill Davis. He was the person behind the scenes who not only had the confidence of Bill Wilson and the committee but certainly of yours truly and the staff. He would draft letters. He would research prospects. He would prepare briefing papers before we would visit a prospect. Never wanted to be front and center. He always wanted to push Bill or Mildred or me or Ken or somebody front and center. But he would have a way of following up and he would have a way of reminding you that this had a high priority. So he might wander in and say, "Roger, I know how busy you are but you've got to make this call right now." And I think he developed that kind of a relationship with Bill Wilson, as well. There's Regent Wilson, who had a few other things going beyond serving as chair of our committee, but he would call Bill and say, "You need to make this call." He just had a nice way. Usually with a sense of humor but always with a little bit of a needle.

04-01:31:24

Burnett:

Right, right. There are all of these management textbooks stacked a mile high about motivating people, right? And so these key figures who can generate excitement, inspire perseverance. That becomes a real key element. So you're trying to figure out with this group how to get private money to make up for the shortfall in that initial matching grant challenge. And so the Ford Foundation provided \$75,000 of additional seed money.

04-01:32:20

Samuelsen:

On top of the 175, so a total of \$250,000.

04-01:32:23

Burnett:

A total of a quarter of a million dollars. And that would be matched then by getting other folks involved.

04-01:32:32

Samuelsen:

That's right. And so they might be foundations, corporations, individuals. I think after all was said and done, I once counted up, and these are very round figures, but I think we were able to attract say thirty foundations, thirty corporations, and maybe fifty or more individuals over the course of the many years that we did this. It was rather an amazing effort. In the meantime we were conducting other aspects of the program, acquiring new sites and dealing with day in and day out management issues or use issues that might be in the pipeline. But it was a stimulating experience.

But I also think that there were ancillary benefits. Bill Wilson, being a member of the Board of Regents, was always asked by the chairman of the education policy committee or the buildings and grounds committee or the regents themselves, whatever aspect, "What do you think of this transaction?" He became the sounding board for the Board of Regents. And we took many actions to the regents. I once added up that I must have written well over a hundred different regents items, maybe 135 regents items over the course of my career. It became almost second nature for me to do that. But you can be sure that I made a point of briefing Bill Wilson before any item went to the Board of Regents to make sure he was comfortable with it, if he had any questions. And particularly some of the big items, like the Big Creek transaction we can get into later, I flew down to Los Angeles and spent a couple of hours with him going over every aspect of that transaction. And I didn't tell anybody I was doing this but it certainly helped when Bill was called upon at the regent's meeting to say, "Well, I've discussed this at some length with Roger and I did have some questions but he satisfied me that this is really a very sound proposal and I recommend that we approve it." And that would be it. Hardly any discussion at all. So there was that aspect going on.

And then I just think it gave the system credibility to have the Ford Foundation behind it, to have all of these people supporting it. And, of course, we had our newsletter. We had ways of letting the world know that we had these people on our side. And it certainly helped to have the money that was available. When I was able to work out the Big Creek transaction and say, "We'll throw in \$200,000," I knew that we had that money in the bank because of the success of the campaign. Now, as with all negotiations you're taking a chance that ultimately the president and the regents are going to go along with whatever you're negotiating, but that's just part of the art of figuring out how far you can go and how much leeway you have and whether you're going to be shutdown down the line. But you learn that through experience and time.

04-01:36:37

Burnett:

Yeah, I was going to say, it is this tremendous art because what you've described is this constant checking in with people. So you want a level of visibility that turns the Natural Reserve System into a thing for the regents. It comes up regularly enough that they know, "Oh, yeah, this is what we're doing." This is what the University of California does. And they know it and they're reminded of it. But how far can you go with reminding someone before it becomes annoying or tedious? And it sounds to me like your technique was to have these social relationships where someone could be frank with you. And it sounds like you never really got shut down, or did you? Was there a time when someone said, "Enough of this Natural Reserve System thing?"

04-01:37:43

Samuelson:

Well, I knew when to back down. Going back to the regents, there would be times, too, that we would take an item for information, giving them an overall progress report. And you can be sure that I had Ken or Mildred there to make that oral presentation to support whatever written documentation we had distributed in advance. I may have written the report which could be rather lengthy about here's where we are in the system and the like but I was in the back row when it came to presentation because they didn't want to hear from me, the non-scientist, but Mildred or Ken could just charm them, particularly if Bill Wilson were here. And it wasn't just Bill. We had Bob Reynolds, as I said before, as a member of the Board of Regents, and then a regent by the name of Frank Clark, who was a prominent attorney in Los Angeles. He was on our campaign committee. So we had three members of the Board of Regents on our campaign committee who were very familiar with everything you and I have been discussing. That was an advantage and I think was very important in keeping the dream alive.

04-01:39:12

Burnett:

It's ironic, I suppose, that Bill Wilson was appointed by Ronald Reagan when Ronald Reagan was famous for saying things like, "If you've seen one tree you've seen them all." [laughter]

04-01:39:24

Samuelson:

Well, we could kid Bill about that from time to time. Incidentally, he went on when Reagan became president to be the first ambassador to the Vatican. Served in that capacity for a number of years. So he obviously was very close to Reagan. But just a very nice individual. I usually would meet with him at his home. Got to know his wife. I think it was true of the entire experience of the Natural Reserve System, maybe it's my personality, but I developed some very close friendships in the process and I can say the same about some of the donors, many of the donors. Philip Boyd and Jean Burns and Harry and Grace James, to name a few. Some of these, like the Jameses, I would stay in their home on occasion and have dinners and breakfasts and it was quite an opportunity.

04-01:40:40

Burnett:

To develop real connections with people. And they don't seem like terribly cynical people, right.

04-01:40:48

Samuelson:

No.

04-01:40:47

Burnett:

There's a lot of talk about what it is to be an American and the Brexit thing: the nature of the British people is to be down and cynical about things. And it sounds to me like, in spite of what was happening in the late sixties, there was a lot of optimism, a kind of baseline optimism, that if you were good at something you can get somewhere. And I don't know if that's a California optimism or if that's an American optimism but it seems to be a feature of the

people that you are working with. It engaged them on that level, say, that this can be better. This is going to grow but we have to work at it. That seemed to be the kind of message that you were sending people. And so this capital campaign, bad news comes down in 1967 that things have changed and the capital campaign, to make that matching. How long does that last? I suppose it lasts forever. But that immediate chunk of matching that Ford Foundation grant, how long does that take to bring to fruition?

04-01:42:13

Samuelsen:

I believe we started the campaign in about 1973. And I don't recall how long it took us to match the \$250,000 but, as I said earlier, we needed more money. The plan was there. We already had the structure in place. Wilson was willing to continue. So we probably continued that for upwards to ten years. I don't think people like Shermer Sibley stayed on that long. He pretty well did his thing and moved on. But it continued. In fact, I think Bill Davis left for a while, then he came back on a part-time basis. So we continued to feel the need in whatever way we could to raise private funding. Funding for the system has always been a problem, and it's still a problem. Notwithstanding what I've said about the campaign and the acquisition funds and so forth, but it's been a real struggle from the very beginning to provide adequate operational and maintenance and management money. Staffing has always been less than it should be. And I think the situation's improving as time goes on. But, again, it goes back to the sixties and the fact that in 1965 the campuses were doing very well financially. System-wide it was doing well. There was this feeling that the university could pretty well get what it wanted out of the state.

This is an aside but I met former Governor Pat Brown on one occasion years after both he and Kerr were out of office. And so he asked me what I did for my career and I told him. He said, "Oh, my gosh, how well did you know Clark Kerr?" So obviously I said that I knew him pretty well. He said, "You know, I so admire that man. When he was president whatever he asked for I would say yes." Well, that's quite a change from where we are today. So I think when the system was established in '65 there was the feeling that as these reserves were acquired there would be departmental money available on the campus that was to administer a given site to provide for the staffing and the maintenance and the fencing that was needed. There certainly were provisions for one-time, what we call establishment funds, to get a place up and running. But nowhere near enough to do what was needed. I think, too, it was prior to the feeling, in keeping with our earlier conversation, to make maximum use of these sites. They needed to have facilities and you weren't going to do that for all of the reserves but certainly for the key reserves. You needed places for dormitories, for laboratories, for the manager to live, for vehicles to be stored, for equipment to be stored, instrumentation to be housed. And so there's been quite an evolution as years have gone on from 1965. Not that Ken and all didn't recognize the need for certain improvements but I think it's gone far beyond what even they imagined at the time. Well,

that takes money. But use and productivity follows money so it's money well spent.

04-01:46:52

Burnett:

Right. And there's that accountability piece of it, too. As part of the original plan, it was not just particular sites that were representative ecosystems. I mean that's the sort of major scientific side of it. But in terms of the teaching, the educational side of it, you wanted reserves to be located within striking distance of all the major campuses. Is that right?

04-01:47:18

Samuelson:

Well, we certainly wanted a representative sample to be near the campuses to facilitate use. But I think from the get-go there were always three classifications. One would be near-campus reserves. Another would be multi-habitat reserves that might be in some distant places, as indeed they are out in the desert, on the Big Sur coast and Hastings Natural History Reservation in Carmel Valley, and the list goes on and on. And then there might be a few special habitat reserves, archeological sites or ones that would not have more than a couple of habitats but nevertheless were very important to have. I think one of my disappointments is that we don't have more near campus reserves. I just look outside the window here up to Strawberry Canyon. We tried to get portions of Strawberry Canyon put in the Natural Reserve System because of the proximity obviously to Berkeley and the fact that students can go to a reserve in an afternoon and go back to their dorms at night. We weren't able to work that out but one of my real satisfactions is to see the newest reserve, I don't know how many acres, maybe 6,000 acres, adjacent to the Merced campus has within the last year been put into reserve status. The Merced Vernal Pool and Grassland Reserve. Well, I think it's going to become one of the most valuable reserves in the system because of the proximity to that campus and not only for students and researchers but for the general public. Not that it'll be open to the general public but there'll be periodic guided tours. I envision someday there'll be maybe a visitor's center there on the edge of the reserve to explain what is there, how this is important to the general public. If you want to tour the site there's something available next Saturday at 10:00 am, that kind of thing.

04-01:49:42

Burnett:

One of the things that happens over the course of—and this is just sort of speaking globally—over this time period or into the twenty-first century now, is the relative decline of the field sciences versus the lab sciences. There's relatively fewer resources and also, I imagine, students going into things like ecology or conservation biology. Although I think it has tremendous appeal for young students. There's a lot of people who definitely take a course in that area. And so you're thinking about use, users. And if students are not as important as they once were let's say, at that time in the 1970s, then you need other kind of stakeholders, too. So I think getting the public to be aware of it as a system. Because I think initially it's students and scientists. Those are the two user constituencies, if that's right, and then over time it broadens into

thinking about those who are interested in wildlife preservation, those who are just passionate about birds. There's all these constituencies. And so that is something that has become a feature of the Natural Reserve System, that the public, the general public can make an appointment or take a class and go enjoy the Natural Reserve System.

04-01:51:33

Samuelsen:

I would say in a selective way on some of the reserves that's possible. I hope that it's expanded as years go on. A lot has to do with the reserve managers and their willingness to allow this. We certainly encourage it. But it does take staff time, it takes energy, and some would obviously feel more importance to doing this than others. But another constituency is K through twelve. And it's been very exciting that some of our reserves accommodate K through twelve. I think the pilot in this regard is due to the wonderful efforts of Leslie Dawson, the wife of the reserve manager, Dan Dawson, until recently, of the Valentine Reserve. And she took it upon herself to develop a K through twelve program for the east side of the Sierra and the Mammoth Lakes area. But other reserves have done that, as well. To expose young elementary school aged kids to the environment and get them excited is terribly important. But coming back to students, I think another advantage to near campus reserves that I was describing, be that in Merced or other campuses, is hopefully providing an opportunity for every student to experience the environment, even if they're not going to be natural scientists. Just to become aware of the importance of the environment and their place in the environment and hopefully be supportive of environmental issues as years go on. At least be knowledgeable about them.

04-01:53:31

Burnett:

Right, right. The field sciences are romantic sciences, right, in that kind of nineteenth century sense. It's almost synonymous with the exploration narrative of going out and being exposed to something new, something magical, right? It's, in a sense, perhaps harder to get super excited about a laboratory bench. You can talk about the importance of the research that's being done there. But if you're talking about, and I talk about this with paleontologists, hooking people early into the romance of science, whatever they end up doing, even if they end up not in the sciences at all, as you said, it is those field sciences. So a lot of the paleontologists that I talk to, they got the bug early with dinosaurs and they would go out; they collected fossils in the backyard. And I think you understand that, too, with your background in scouting. There's this exposure to—I can only describe it as wonder. There's an exposure to wonder and wonder is in short supply for young people, I think. You've got a six-inch screen that they're looking at and they may be living in a cramped city in an apartment building and they may have no exposure to that. And it's getting that exposure that gets those gears going to think about what kind of possible life they could lead. That's a wonderful feature of the Natural Reserve System, I think. Well, thank you very much for taking the time to sit with us today and we'll continue next time.

04-01:55:29

Samuelson: Thank you, Paul.

[End of Interview]

Interview 5: August 9, 2016

05-00:00:13

Burnett:

This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University Series. This is our fifth session and this is August 9, 2016. And we're here talking in the Bancroft Library at the University of California Berkeley. So, Roger, last time we were talking about a kind of introduction to the Natural Land and Water Reserve System, which was founded in the mid-sixties. And you talked a little bit about the process of working with donors. So a general introduction to that type of work and the significance of that system at the time and the uncertainty surrounding the survival of that system. There were a lot of political changes in the air and there was a kind of perfect confluence of factors that buoyed the Natural Reserve System and allowed it to at least survive that initial incubation stage. And I want to reflect for a moment in the late sixties. Can you talk a little bit about the ecosystem of Roger Samuelsen himself and what was going on in your life to match those times?

05-00:01:47

Samuelsen:

Thank you, Paul. It was a time of transition for me. I think I've already described what I was going through professionally. But on a personal level, I separated from Colette in the fall of 1968. But fortunately, in less than six months, I met for the first time Jeane Stewart McBurney. And the circumstances of that were that Jeane and my sister-in-law Sharon had worked together in the dean of students office. Jeane had separated from her first husband at about the same time I separated from Colette. So Sharon brought us together. Sharon wasn't the only one who tried to bring us together. One of our favorite stories is that Jeane went home to West Hartford, Connecticut the preceding Thanksgiving for the celebration of Thanksgiving but also for the marriage of her brother. And at the reception she ran into one of her dad's top lieutenants at Travelers Insurance. And this gentleman said, "Jeane, I'm so sorry to hear about your separation. But when you go back to California I want you to meet my cousin, Roger Samuelsen, who has recently been separated himself." Small world. But Jeane and I met on March 3, 1969 and I'm one who remembers dates like that and celebrates them every year. And at the time she was living in a Frank Lloyd Wright inspired home in Lafayette and had a little boy who was less than a year old. I was smitten from the outset and I thought, "Gee, if I play my cards right I can get three for one. I can get Jeane and a home and Bobby." And that's exactly how it turned out.

05-00:04:02

Burnett:

Wow. Divorce is always a kind of sad thing but you both seem like optimistic people and positive people. So you were able to turn that around in a fairly short order, right, and move forward. And it sounds like you had a tremendous support network, as well, on both sides, right? People were like, "Oh, you got divorced so I know just the person." [laughter]

05-00:04:34

Samuelson:

I think I said in our first segment that my brother and sister-in-law took me into their home, a home they had rented in Orinda. I lived with them for a number of months. And, indeed, that's where Jeane and I had our first date. I mean, I picked her up and took her to Orinda and Scott and Sharon very discreetly poured us drinks and went into the kitchen to prepare the meal and an hour later they came out while Jeane and I were sipping drinks in front of the fireplace and becoming acquainted. But there were many other friends, too, who were rallying for us and that meant a great deal.

05-00:05:20

Burnett:

And so this romance blossoms during this period. So things move along. I understand that as you become closer you eventually pop the question. [laughter] When did that happen and how did that happen?

05-00:05:45

Samuelson:

It was during a backpack trip in the Sierra. Scott and Sharon, Jeane and I went backpacking out of Mammoth Lakes. And I took along a little plastic pint of wine in anticipation that at some stage I was going to suggest to Scott and Sharon that they take a long day hike. That's exactly what happened. So on the banks of Thousand Island Lake, which is in the shadow of Mount Banner and Mount Ritter, I popped the question. And fortunately Jeane said yes. I was going to either use that wine to celebrate or use that wine to try and make up for the fact that she had said no. But she said yes. And that was one of Jeane's first backpacks ever. She complained somewhat along the trail but she kept on going. This is parenthetical, but it started her own love for the Sierra and she now, for all these years since, has gone out every year with a group of wonderful women called the Mountain Mamas and backpacked, camped out. Today, like my group, they tend to stay in cabins. But I'm very mindful of that group right now because they're about ready to lose one of their members any moment now to cancer. It's a sad moment in that regard. Maral Wingo by name. But as with my group, it's been a support group and they're there for one another and that means a great deal.

05-00:07:42

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. It sounds like a really warm and tight network of people who know each other professionally, socially. Is there a geography to this? What's that region? It's Orinda and Lafayette? It's over the hills in that area. Is there a community that's solid not just through University of California but through the area, through neighbors or is it through these backpacking networks that you meet these folks?

05-00:08:18

Samuelson:

Well, I think both. The backpacking groups, both for Jeane and for me, don't all come from Lamorinda but many of them do in Jeane's case. For a while one of them came all the way from Utah every year to join the group. As we will discuss later with my group, Phil Pister lives in Bishop. And Frank

Baldwin now lives in Portland. So we come from all around to gather once a year. But it's worth it.

05-00:09:02

Burnett: Oh, that's wonderful. So Jeane has been with you this whole time?

05-00:09:10

Samuelson: Yes.

05-00:09:11

Burnett: Can you talk a little bit about her? Did she go along with you on some of these professional trips? Can you talk about her passions and interests?

05-00:09:25

Samuelson: Well, Jeane was born and raised in West Hartford, Connecticut. Actually, she was born in Detroit, where our son now lives. But the family soon moved to West Hartford. She came to California with her first husband, who was at the Boalt School of Law. Fortunately, after they separated, even though her parents were urging her to return home with this little baby boy, she resisted doing that. So she had loved being in California. She actually has roots here on her father's side and we used to visit with her beloved grandmother, Jessie Stewart, who lived in Portola Valley. And I think we called her Nana from time to time. This is digressing a moment. But the first oral history here at the Bancroft I was involved in was with Jessie Stewart. And that's because Jeane and I thought her story ought to be told. She helped Benjamin Ide Wheeler lay the cornerstone of the Campanile in 1914. She was then president of the Associated Women Students. And her father was the first president of the San Francisco Cable Car Company. So she was able to talk a little bit about the earthquake and about those experiences. I approached Willa Baum, the initial director of the oral history program here—

05-00:11:11

Burnett: Yeah, Willa was—sure.

05-00:11:13

Samuelson: —and asked her what would be involved to do an oral history and she said, "Well, if you can come up with a thousand dollars we'll be happy to do it."

05-00:11:23

Burnett: What year was this, roughly? Well, we can find out afterwards.

05-00:11:25

Samuelson: Oh, gosh, it had to be in the early seventies, I would guess.

05-00:11:31

Burnett: Yeah. So it's probably on reel-to-reel tape.

05-00:11:45

Samuelsen: That's right. It's a little more than a thousand dollars today. Jeane's dad footed the bill and so we have this wonderful account from Nana, Nana Stewart.

05-00:11:45

Burnett: Yeah. Oh, it is wonderful to get all of that.

05-00:11:46

Samuelsen: Have that down.

05-00:11:50

Burnett: The witnesses to that length of time, all the way back to the earthquake. It's incredible.

05-00:11:55

Samuelsen: But going back to Jeane just quickly. She not only was a wonderful mother to our kids growing up but professionally she worked for the Athenian School in Danville for a while, became director of admissions. And then later started her own practice as an educational consultant. Did that for a number of years. So she would work with parents and young people who were contemplating college, helping them through the process of application, of decision-making. Was beloved by all she served.

But you ask about the Natural Reserve System. She had her baptism of fire during our honeymoon. I don't know quite how I convinced her to do this but after we were married, on Valentine's Day of 1970, we spent the first night at San Francis Hotel in San Francisco and then we started up the coast with the expectation we were going to honeymoon in Mendocino. The first night we spent in Bodega Bay. And whether I thought about this on the spot or had previously planned it, I don't know, but I suggested that we go out and look at the Bodega Marine Laboratory and Reserve, the reserve being kind of a donut around the laboratory and part of the Natural Reserve System. Cadet Hand, the then director, showed us around and gave us a grand tour and so forth.

So then we make our way up the coast and stay at the Little River Inn in Mendocino. And while we were there I said, "Gosh, there's a reserve called the Pygmy Forest Reserve not too far from here." So I coerced her to go out and look at the Pygmy Forest Reserve, which I think is the only time I ever was on that particular reserve.

05-00:14:12

Burnett: It was just acquired two years before, I think. Nineteen sixty-eight was when the Pygmy Forest Reserve started. And it's what it sounds like. It's these sort of dwarf trees. Is that right?

05-00:14:26

Samuelsen: Yes. The soil conditions are such that the roots cannot penetrate that much into the soils and so you literally have acres and acres of pygmy forest.

05-00:14:40

Burnett: Oh, it must be beautiful.

05-00:14:42

Samuelsen: It's now named for a wonderful geologist here at Berkeley, now deceased, Hans Jenny. But I think since my time it's been expanded through an arrangement with the Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy owned an adjacent property. I think that's now all under one management, through the Natural Reserve System.

05-00:15:03

Burnett: Oh, I see. You went through some turmoil with this real happy ending that sort of kept going. It sounds like it's not over. [laughter] That's wonderful.

05-00:15:18

Samuelsen: [laughter] Forty-six years later, here we are.

05-00:15:21

Burnett: Yeah, absolutely. And just as a side note, you're about to celebrate your eightieth birthday. And I understand you're going to have family out? Is that it? That they're going to come and celebrate with you?

05-00:15:35

Samuelsen: Yes. There are going to be seventeen of us gathering this coming Saturday in our home, the same home I described earlier, and we'll be in the same room where Jeane and I were married on Valentine's Day in 1970 with our three children and our daughters-in-law and six grandchildren. My brother and sister-in-law, who made this all possible, will be there. And Jeane's sister and brother-in-law who live in San Francisco will join us. So that's seventeen in all. But at the head table will be our three kids. Jeane and I have a "his, hers, and ours." "His" by my marriage to Colette is Thea. I've described her before. "Hers" is Bobby, who's now Robert, and then Jeane and I were fortunate to have a son of our own in 1971, Jamie, and he and his family will be out here from Detroit or Troy, Michigan.

05-00:16:40

Burnett: Oh, great. Great. Well, that's something to celebrate, definitely. Once you've got your wedding and the honeymoon and the celebrations, there's also some kind of consolidation or solidification in the Natural Reserve System a little bit, too. Can you talk a little bit about the dedication of the Natural Land and Water Reserves System?

05-00:17:14

Samuelsen: Well, dear Jeane. This was, again, less than a month after we were married. We had a wonderful dedication of the whole system at the Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center. Ken Norris, who then had gone to Hawaii to be director of research for Sea Life Park, came back and gave one of the talks. Phil Boyd, who donated that site and was a regent at the university, gave one of the talks. Incidentally, while he was talking, I think it was perhaps while he was accepting applause for his talk, he stepped back and immediately ran into

a cholla cactus and it embedded itself into his arm. The next day in the local papers there was a picture of Phil Boyd with this cholla cactus. And he thought nothing of it because he was a desert rat in his own way and probably had had this experience before. The program was officiated by President Hitch, who also gave a very nice talk on the occasion. And it was very well attended, very well received by all concerned.

Logistically it was a nightmare because getting out to the center of the reserve on a dirt road is a challenge. And so we had shuttle buses from the parking lot at the Living Desert Museum, as I recall.

05-00:19:01

Burnett: Right, right. So this is dedicated in 1970.

05-00:19:06

Samuelson: Yes.

05-00:19:07

Burnett: You become the director of what becomes the Natural Reserve System in 1974. But in between there's a lot of world history that takes place at that time. And the Natural Reserve System is not quite out of the woods yet, so to speak. There's the initial \$500,000 matching grant that comes from the Ford Foundation and that's '67 through to '70. You managed to pull together donations to make this thing possible. But there's more fundraising on the horizon. The Ford Foundation becomes involved again in the early seventies. Can you talk a little about that? I don't know if we've covered this but when I think of the Ford Foundation I think of international development. I think of these large projects to support a wide range of things. Why was the Ford Foundation supportive of the Natural Reserve System? You may not have an answer for that. I'm just curious.

05-00:20:23

Samuelson: I think at the time they had an environmental program. And whether they have one today, I don't know. But we did fit the niche that they had in mind. As I said earlier, that was terribly important, not only in getting the system started when the regents were prepared to match dollar for dollar up to \$500,000, but also later when the state funding issue became more dire and the regents had to pull back from its commitment. I think they ended up matching \$300,000 or \$325,000, and so that's when we converted the balance into the nucleus of a fundraising campaign.

Well, that's one of the ways we were able to keep the dream of the system alive, by saying we know that the university is strapped but we will try to raise some money. And fortunately we were, over a period of as many as ten years—I think we raised over a million dollars in cash. I think we were able to cultivate property worth maybe over 2 million dollars, \$2.5 million, something like that. And then we were very fortunate in attracting two gifts of

land that ultimately were sold and gave us a nest egg far beyond anything we could possibly have anticipated. And I might tell the story of those two.

05-00:22:33

Burnett:

Yeah. I want to make sure I get the timeline right. In 1972 the two-million-dollar challenge campaign was launched. Now, does that mean that the goal was announced as a two million dollar campaign and that there was another initial donation from Ford to help that?

05-00:23:02

Samuelson:

Well, the two-million-dollar campaign included the \$250,000 that Ford agreed to. And so we fulfilled that match by, as I say, raising over a million dollars of cash. But during the course of the campaign we were able to bring in these other gifts. And it was tied to the structure that we had created for the campaign. One of the gifts was due to the friendship of Bill Wilson, Regent Wilson, I described him earlier, with a gentleman by the name of Tom Jones, who, as I recall, was chairman of the board of the Northrop Corporation. Bill went to him and told him about the campaign and Jones offered fifty-seven acres of land in the Santa Monica mountains not too far from Interstate 405 and not too far from UCLA. We accepted that into the system. One day we heard that there was interest in buying that acreage. We evaluated the site and thought, well, it had limited utility as a natural reserve but maybe we could sell it and use the proceeds to acquire some other property in the Santa Monica mountains that would have greater diversity and greater use by not only UCLA but by other campuses of the university and elsewhere, in keeping with the basic tenets of the Natural Reserve System.

The university is required to put properties like that out to bid. And so we did that and an organization called the Santa Monica Conservancy got wind of it and immediately threatened litigation, feeling that under their charter with the state legislature, they were entitled to first refusal. There evolved extensive behind the scenes negotiations with their executive director, Joe Edmiston. I remember camping out in the general counsel's office for days at a time so that I could be next to Karl Droese, who was representing us on the counsel side. Of course, I have a legal background but I realized that this was far beyond my expertise. We finally negotiated a settlement and part of the settlement was that the university would obtain the right to a new property called Stunt Ranch, which has subsequently been brought into the Natural Reserve System and is a very viable site that's managed by the UCLA campus.

We put the property out for bid and received, as I recall, something like three closed bids. One was \$100,000, which was far below what we felt the value to be. I think we thought the value might be seven, eight hundred thousand dollars, something like that. But then we opened another bid and it was \$3.5 million from the Getty Foundation. And that's the first time that we learned that the Getty Foundation was interested in building a new museum on an

adjacent piece of property and they wanted the fifty-seven acres to be preserved in its natural state so that they could have freedom to protect the entire hillside and proceed with their plans. And you said you were just done with a project at the Getty Museum.

05-00:27:45

Burnett: I was.

05-00:27:45

Samuelsen: So you have some sense.

05-00:27:46

Burnett: I looked at it. Yeah.

05-00:27:47

Samuelsen: As you went up you were looking at the fifty-seven acres. Well, oh, my gosh, \$3.5 million given the background we've discussed about the needs of the system, that was huge.

05-00:28:03

Burnett: And you didn't give up the kind of purpose. Because there's an element of conservation. Even if you did sell the land, you would like it ideally to be preserved in some way. And so the Getty preserved that land to preserve a view, essentially.

05-00:28:27

Samuelsen: That's right.

05-00:28:29

Burnett: But also it happens that they're really dedicated to the conservation of human activity. It's kind of a nice confluence of interests, let's say, to some degree.

05-00:28:41

Samuelsen: I subsequently attended the wonderful luncheon where Getty formally announced their plans and it was at a high rise in Westwood. And they thanked me on behalf of the university for our cooperation. I don't think they fully understood what all went on behind the scenes. But we could literally all go to the window and look out to the site and envision what was about to transpire.

05-00:29:11

Burnett: Yeah. And that would have been in the eighties that they—

05-00:29:14

Samuelsen: Oh, this was sometime in the seventies, I think.

05-00:29:15

Burnett: Really? Way back then they had this vision for the institute.

05-00:29:21

Samuelsen:

I don't know when the museum was ultimately built because, of course, it's a very complex design with the tram and the like. But someone had a vision and, as you know, it's just a magnificent setting. That was one of the parcels that we were able to cultivate strictly through Bill Wilson's friendship with Tom Jones.

And then another piece of property came to our attention. This goes back to Bill Davis, our campaign manager. I talked last time about Bill Davis and the role that he played behind the scenes. He was not one to take no for an answer. We had approached the Union Oil Company about a donation, probably saying, "Well, Chevron has donated \$50,000. How about you folks?" And they turned us down. But Bill Davis would not take no. So he called the chairman of the board and asked if, by chance, they might have some land that would have value to the Natural Reserve System, either as a natural reserve or as property that we could sell. And the chairman said, "Well, let me think about that a little bit." Ultimately they identified acreage near the little town of Etiwanda. I think it was something like 176 acres. I only remember that because Union Oil is also known with the number seventy-six.

Eventually, after years of negotiations and involvement of many other parties, that property was sold and it actually was sold after my time. But I followed it so I'm well aware that they sold it for something like two, two-and-a-half million dollars.

05-00:31:40

Burnett:

Wow.

05-00:31:44

Samuelsen:

And so this and the proceeds from the Jones property gave the wherewithal to establish an endowment for the Natural Reserve System to acquire additional lands for the system and to meet some really critical needs during that period of time when funding was at a premium and we were struggling to just keep the doors open.

05-00:32:17

Burnett:

Operational needs, I imagine. There's not money coming from the UC system. And this is entirely a soft money operation basically. And so thinking about the economy of California. It's the oil industry. There's Getty, there's Union Oil. Think of defense contractors and the aerospace industry with Northrop. So there are the heavy hitters out there who've made a lot of money in California. I imagine there is a concern about being good corporate citizens. Does that factor into it? It's the 1970s. Oil's getting kind of a bad name and there are these oil spills that are happening and this is one way to improve the perception of the companies and it's a good way to do that, I think.

05-00:33:26

Samuelson:

We definitely used that argument in spades. And in their own way they had ways of letting their shareholders and others know of what good citizens they were and how environmentally conscious they were, even though in some respects they might not have been. [laughter]

05-00:33:51

Burnett:

This gets back to the art of negotiation. Speaking of the Jones property negotiations. Before it ever got to the Getty Institute, there was this Santa Monica Conservancy that felt it had right of first refusal and you were negotiating with them. What are some of the tools that could come into play? I can imagine the conservancy wanting maybe some kind of covenant on the sale of the property. If they couldn't have it themselves they would say, "So can you make sure that it's going to be preserved or not going to be developed into properties or things like that?" Are those some of the kinds of negotiations? What would be on the table in these negotiations?

05-00:34:43

Samuelson:

I can't recall precisely but as a starting point both of us were in basically the business of preserving, protecting our natural environment. And so I am sure we tried to get them to realize that we were not talking about a business or creating profits. We were going to use these proceeds for the benefit of the Natural Reserve System and so explored ways we could collaborate and work together to make this all possible. And I think that the ultimate compromise that we reached achieved just that. As I recall, and I may be a little bit off-based here, but we conveyed another site that we had received through a donation to the conservancy. We offered to cooperate in the management of Stunt Ranch. We promised to have docent-led tours of Stunt Ranch and be involved in K-12 programs, all of which served the conservancy's interest, as well as ours. So there was far more than just dollars and cents at stake. I think they were able to take their bows at the luncheon I mentioned, even as we took our bows.

05-00:36:26

Burnett:

So it's not just horse-trading; it's also just finding a harmony of interests. It's a cliché, the win/win situation. But it's real. Both parties can get something out of it and they can align. That, I guess, speaks to the relationship development that you talked about that's important. You have to really know what people want, what people really want. And sometimes it takes time to develop a full knowledge of that and a full knowledge of what's possible.

I think about the needs of the Natural Reserve System from a scientific point of view. The scientists want to bring some of the best laboratory practices into the field and one aspect of that is establishing a baseline of what things are like. And that involves a tremendous amount of recording and measurement and stability of the ecosystem from intrusion, or protection of the ecosystem from intrusion, from development, of outside human involvement and so forth. And there's harmony of interest there with the preservation people who

want the ecosystem to not be interrupted at all or altered at all. Were there instances where scientists and preservationists crossed swords over that? Because there is a certain amount of human intervention in those scientific practices, even the best kinds of scientific practices. There's alteration. And sometimes it's deliberate. There's experimentation. Did that ever come up as a problem when you were negotiating properties or is it something that wasn't such an issue?

05-00:38:37

Samuelsen:

It certainly did come up. Big Creek particularly comes to mind. We might want to talk a little bit about that acquisition, which was a very significant addition to the Natural Reserve System. The owners of the property wanted to retain certain rights of their own in an enclave and certain rights to hike on the property that was going to be coming in to the Natural Reserve System. I recall many a discussion with the owners about how much use the reserve would receive, how many trails might be constructed, how many facilities or improvements might be built to support teaching and research. Ken Norris was very instrumental in those discussions. And there were times that he would become livid as he was trying to get them to realize that just holding the land was not enough. The university is not in a position to just hold land. It had to have a viable use to justify its existence. And we ultimately were able to work out satisfactory language that met the needs of all the parties. But even beyond my time, and quite recently, as that particular reserve has advanced plans to build some support facilities, some of the owners have resisted those developments before the Coastal Commission and planning commissions. I have not been part of that but I have heard about the arguments that were made and have been asked behind the scenes for some of my recollections of some of those discussions with Ken and me and others. I could cite other examples, as well, but that's the one that particularly comes to mind, particularly since it's so fresh. I might say the Coastal Commission did approve the improvements and that's an exciting advance for that particular reserve on the Big Sur coast.

05-00:41:14

Burnett:

And the Natural Reserve System is for use of the University of California system and also internationally, as well. Scientists from other universities in other states and from other countries begin to come to the Natural Reserve System. I don't want to get ahead of ourselves. Is that a later story or is it right from the get-go you've got people from Germany and Japan coming to do research in the natural—

05-00:41:49

Samuelsen:

Oh, I would say from the get-go. That was part of Ken's vision from the earliest times and has been greatly encouraged. And I think there is a record at reserves that predated the Natural Reserve System, like Boyd Deep Canyon and Hastings Natural History Reservation, where there's been considerable use by researchers from other states and other countries.

05-00:42:21

Burnett:

So we've probably jumped ahead quite a few steps. But the sale of some of these properties that enable the endowment to be established, can you give us a sense of the timeframe for that, when the endowment for the Natural Reserve System is established? Is that really a long process? You have to get that money first and then you have to set up an endowment that then begins to provide a stream for the operations of the Natural Reserve System.

05-00:43:00

Samuelson:

Well, there are several endowments in question. The Jones endowment, that started with the sale to Getty, I think we decided not to put all \$3.5 million into endowment form. I think we decided to put something like \$2.5 million or \$2.7 million, something like that, in endowment and set aside some of that for future acquisitions for the Natural Reserve System, particularly in Santa Monica mountains. I believe we put maybe \$300,000 into the Santa Monica mountains and then maybe \$500,000 into other properties we might acquire.

One of my regrets, though, is that while during my tenure we treated that \$2.7 million, whatever it was, as an endowment and, with only one exception I can think of, we would draw upon the interest or income from the investment of that for whatever critical needs we might have. We decided, in collaboration with the treasurer's office and my then boss, vice-president Jim Kendrick, to not formally put it into an endowment. And I regret that because, first of all, I think if we had put it in an endowment and invested it, as the treasurer's office is wont to do, into viable securities, it would have been worth a lot more today than it was worth then. Secondly, my successor as director did not treat it quite the same way as I did and under the pressure of whatever needs she felt there were, drew down upon what I treated as a corpus. And so it's nowhere near what it would have been had we taken a different course of action.

The sale of the Etiwanda property, as I said earlier, came after my time. And I think that has been pretty well treated as an endowment. In fact, I think it has been formally established as an endowment, as I understand it, so that they are literally drawing just the interest from that.

Then there's a third endowment that was created after my time but largely, if not entirely, through the influence of Ken Norris. And I'll get ahead of myself a little bit since we're talking about the endowments.

05-00:46:04

Burnett:

We're going to go back anyways. [laughter]

05-00:46:06

Samuelson:

When Ken retired as a professor of natural history at Santa Cruz, his students wanted to set up a fund in his honor. And so they raised something like \$10,000. Ken then invited Mildred Mathias and Larry Ford, who had been his right-hand at Santa Cruz, one of his daughters and me, to serve on the board of directors of this fund. So we'd decide how it should be spent. As time went

on Ken felt that it really would be better suited in the system-wide office rather than the Santa Cruz campus. And so I helped negotiate the transfer of the fund to the system-wide office, with the board being appointed by the vice-president and the funds being administered out of the Office of the President.

Well, among several initiatives we decided to take was to approach the Packard Foundation about a major endowment for the system. Ken and Larry and I, and maybe Mildred, met with the Packard Foundation. Ken had had a very nice relationship with David Packard, with the two Packard daughters who were students at Santa Cruz, and when Ken Norris approached them about a need they would listen. The long and short of it is that the Ken Norris Fund, led by Ken Norris, on behalf of the Natural Reserve System, in the 1990s made a major, major pitch to the Packard Foundation for an endowment of eight million dollars. Ultimately the foundation made a four million dollar commitment. Fortunately they made that decision just prior to Ken Norris passing away. And so he was able, as his last contribution to the Natural Reserve System, to realize that this endowment had been made and appropriately named for him. So there now is a Kenneth S. Norris endowment that is administered by the system-wide office, which is something that those of us who knew Ken and loved Ken are very grateful for.

05-00:49:18

Burnett:

Yeah, it's a real tribute.

05-00:49:20

Samuelson:

So there now are several endowments available, which is magnificent. Not that there aren't still many other funding needs. And these are, as I said earlier, formally being treated as endowments so that hopefully they will grow, their corpus will grow, and they'll be able to draw down upon the income for that to meet various needs in the future.

05-00:49:44

Burnett:

And so the endowment strategy is a long-term project. There are endowments established in the seventies all the way through and this has just been a gradual piecemeal development to give you a total operating budget that ideally grows over time. And there were some hiccups. You've mentioned a successor drew down on one of the endowments and that had some negative consequences. But there are also economic ups and downs, where sometimes just to keep things going it can be necessary—endowments get hit by financial crashes and things like that and sometimes there are real problems.

So one of the things that we skipped over in our enthusiasm for talking about these matters if you're actually becoming director of the Natural Reserve System. So can you talk about that? That's in 1974. And that's extraordinary because 1973 is a dramatic year of crisis in the world. Going off the gold standard, you have floating exchange rates, you have the OPEC oil crisis, you have the drawdown in Vietnam. It's a lot of geopolitical and economic

uncertainty at this time. And feel at liberty to bring as much of that into the story as possible. But there's a lot of economic uncertainty and I'm wondering if you can talk about your becoming director and what you were thinking about in terms of the fragility of the Natural Reserve System and your interest in its long-term survival in that context.

05-00:51:42

Samuelson:

As I've said before, my involvement with the system started when I joined the university as coordinator of special projects in 1967. And so between then and 1974, even though I had the Natural Reserve System under my umbrella, I had all these other responsibilities. I even had responsibility for alumni relations from a statewide perspective and was staffing something called the Alumni Association of the University of California, which is a story in itself. But as years went on I needed to devote more and more of my time to the system, particularly when we decided to launch the Ford Foundation matching grant campaign and we were starting to generate the types of gifts that I have mentioned. It just became evident I needed to devote full-time to the system. So I literally approached the vice-president to whom I was reporting and suggested that I become director, which coincided title-wise with other people who were already reporting to him in other areas. And so there I was, not with open recruitment or a search or whatever. I just evolved.

Then the question was staffing. And at that time I had a field representative by the name of Dan Cheatham and a wonderful administrative assistant by the name of Maggie Drake. And then we recruited Bill Davis. But I might talk a little bit about the staff if this would be an appropriate time.

05-00:53:50

Burnett:

Sure. Absolutely. Yeah.

05-00:53:53

Samuelson:

Dan was a classmate of mine at Berkeley. Was a forester by training. I think it was before I was director I was sensing the need for help, particularly from a scientific standpoint since, of course, I was not a scientist. We had been given property up in the Trinity Alps called the Sawyer property, which we felt had limited use and thought could be better utilized by either exchanging or disposing of it, somewhat similar to what I've described before. We were able to convince Dan to take on a consulting position to help us evaluate that situation and come up with recommendations as to how we might proceed. That was very helpful. But then the question was, well, can we bring him on for more than just a part-time consulting arrangement. Could we bring him on full-time? One of the memories I have, going back to some of the fiscal problems the university was experiencing, was a flight back from Los Angeles after a regent's meeting. I think I was then reporting to Earl Bolton, who subsequently left to become a management consultant. President Hitch was on that flight. And during the course of the flight he came up to us. This is the president of the university. And he had just gone through a very difficult regents meeting. I don't remember the exact issues at that meeting but the

overall thrust was what are we going to do in the face of cutbacks the university was experiencing? What about this educational fee that we're going to impose on students? And he said, "Gentlemen, I'm very sorry. I had approved the allocation of discretionary funds for this field representative, whatever his name was, Cheatham I believe. But I'm going to have to rescind my decision." Now, mind you, we probably were talking about, I don't know, less than \$50,000, maybe less than \$30,000 in those times. But as supportive as President Hitch was, that's what we were facing. And so we had to wait until another time to bring Dan on full-time. Eventually we were successful and he for many years served as our field representative. He would often go out, look at sites that were proposed for the Natural Reserve System in advance of any of us from the staff going out or any faculty being assembled to go out and make an assessment as to whether it was worth our time. And often it would be, "No, it wouldn't fit our needs or it has these problems," or the like. At one stage he collaborated with a professor down at Santa Barbara by the name of Bob Haller in putting together a habitat list which gave us a benchmark by which we could measure our progress in acquiring sites and representing as many of the habitats of the state as we could.

05-00:57:48

Burnett:

So that was him and this other professor at UC Santa Barbara.

05-00:57:56

Samuelsen:

Yes.

05-00:57:56

Burnett:

So that's a fascinating piece of the Natural Reserve System because it's not just these individual properties. There's a master list of the ecosystems and the Natural Reserve System today is measured by what proportion of those habitats are covered under the system. And it's a kind of goal for the Natural Reserve System and an emblem of its success so far. And I don't know. It's below 200 but there's something like 174 ecosystems in California and out of that the Natural Reserve System has 136 or something like that. That's a key feature. He's not just going out and evaluating these sites but he established some of these important benchmarks, as you say.

05-00:58:50

Samuelsen:

That's right, that's right. Yes.

05-00:58:52

Burnett:

Wow.

05-00stop 4

Samuelsen:

And then my administrative assistant was Maggie Drake. Oh, my gosh, I don't know how I could have survived without Maggie. She was my eyes and ears, in addition to being a wonderful travel planner, stenographer, go-between. I traveled quite a bit, as you can probably sense. Often I was on a flight somewhere or driving somewhere twice a week. In those days you didn't have cell phones so I would stop at a payphone and dial Maggie and she would give

me messages. She knew me so well that the staff members used to kid me and say, “Well, while you’re gone, if we feel a decision has to be made we’ll go to Maggie and say, ‘How do you think Roger would feel about this?’” and they would make a decision and move on. She transcribed I don’t know how many tapes. I had a practice when I was gone, or even when I was in town, of dictating memos to the file. And in part I was trying to capture whatever I had experienced in a given meeting with a donor or land owner or university official and in part I was trying to keep others informed by distributing copies of my memos to the staff or to Mildred Matthias or to Ken Norris. But dear Maggie would transcribe those over and over again. I mentioned my three kids. Sometimes on Saturdays I would take them into the office and they would pick up the Dictaphone and say, “Maggie, this is a memo to the file,” and they would transcribe something. And she would transcribe those. And I still have those memos.

05-01:01:06

Burnett:

Oh, wow. That’s fun.

05-01:01:09

Samuelsen:

And then, as we will probably discuss later, I tended to get involved with a lot of non-university activities as a volunteer. I can’t tell you how much she supported me in those efforts, bless her heart. She not only was a colleague but is, even today, a very close personal friend. Jeane and I have traveled with her and her husband Bob and we’re in touch quite a bit.

05-01:01:43

Burnett:

Oh, wonderful.

05-01:01:46

Samuelsen:

I talked to her the other day and told her where we were in our process and I asked her to remind me about our first meeting. And she said, “Well, I remember vividly that it was a two-hour interview and we just found a lot of things in common.” Her dad had been a business manager of the Berkeley campus and while I don’t think I knew him at the time, we had a lot we could talk about with regard to her folks as well as Maggie’s own journey. So I don’t think I was pressing her. I think it was a lot of just personal conversation. But she literally joined me the day that our son, Jamie, was born. So I can say August 31, 1971 is the day that Maggie joined us.

05-01:02:45

Burnett:

Wow. They say that an organization stands or falls on the quality of its administrative staff. That’s the heart of the organization, the core. And to some degree, I think the informatization, the computerization of a lot of work has perhaps meant that that kind of centralizing figure—the person who gathers up all the information from all those different parts of the organization and organizes it and feeds it back out again. It’s such a crucial role and it’s wonderful that you noted her and her support of the NRS over those years. So

that's a really, really crucial function and people don't identify that function enough, I think.

05-01:03:43

Samuelson:

Oh, that's very true. She also planned the dedication ceremony for the entire system that I just mentioned. We also held a number of dedications of individual reserves. She planned all of those. She planned my retirement party. She was and is one of a kind. And then I think our next hire, because we did have a wonderful cadre of staff people, and they were with me for years, was Jeff Kennedy. Jeff was our environmental planner. Jeff also started on a contractual basis. I mentioned Bodega earlier. And we were required to get a Coastal Commission permit for an improvement to the laboratory and one of the conditions of the permit was that the university establish some kind of a public trail right through the middle of the reserve to connect public trails on either side of the reserve. So Jeff was retained on a consulting basis to put together a plan as to how we could do this to minimize the impact on the natural environment and yet be true to the desires of the Coastal Commission. And his plan was implemented. It was a beautiful piece of work. I think either as part of that or maybe as an additional contract, we decided we needed signage for the boundaries of our reserves. So we asked Jeff to put together language and a design that would be effective for that. As with Dan, we ultimately were able to find funds to bring Jeff on full-time. And as with Maggie and Dan, I could relate many a story about Jeff. But I think one of his most significant contributions was developing a very close relationship with the reserve managers. In many ways reserve management was an extension of our system-wide staff. They do not get enough credit for being on the line, in the field, day in and day out, handling not only the coordination of teaching and research projects, but improvements that are required from time to time, putting out inevitable fires, either literally or—

05-01:06:45

Burnett:

Or figurative, yeah.

05-01:06:46

Samuelson:

—figuratively that come along. Jeff had the good wisdom, in collaboration with some of the managers, of putting together an annual manager's workshop. It provided a chance for the managers to come together for several days and talk shop, and also to get to know each other and have a good time. They would have annual dinners where I think they would dress up in costumes and whatever. It became quite a means of developing *esprit de corps* and giving the managers an opportunity to compare notes with others who were having to manage their respective properties. I had the opportunity just this last fall, since it was the fiftieth anniversary of the reserve system, to join the current and even several former managers over in Mammoth Lakes for their annual gathering and retell the story about Ken Norris and the founding of the system. I concluded by expressing my appreciation for all they have done to make the system what it is today.

05-01:08:02

Burnett: Do they live full-time on the reserves or they live close to the area?

05-01:08:09

Samuelsen: Yes, they live on the reserves. I mean, there are some exceptions to that but in general they live right there on the reserves.

05-01:08:17

Burnett: Okay. And do they have a scientific background? Or what's their—

05-01:08:22

Samuelsen: Yes. They more often than not have a scientific background. All of them do, as far as I know. So they may conduct some of their own research while they're there, but frankly they don't have time to do much of that.

05-01:08:40

Burnett: Right, right, right. Just keeping the site going, operational to receive researchers, to receive students who are on projects. Do they lead some of the educational things as well?

05-01:08:51

Samuelsen: Yes. And I think the amazing aspect of this is how little turnover there has been over the years. Some of the managers go back to my time and are still there.

05-01:09:11

Burnett: Wow.

05-01:09:12

Samuelsen: One of the reasons I wanted to go to Mammoth Lakes this last October was to help bid farewell to Dan Dawson, who had been the reserve manager of the Valentine Reserve for many years and had served on numerous occasions on the university-wide advisory committee representing the managers. Had been just a model as a reserve manager in all he was able to accomplish there during his tenure.

05-01:09:46

Burnett: Well, I think that might be a segue. I do want to go back to talk about some of the donors and things like that. One of the things that can happen is that there are intrusions to these reserve systems, both natural and unnatural. So there can be a fire, for example. One of the things that happened after your time as director, or was later in your period, was there was a problem with a chemical that was applied to the underside of boats to keep barnacles from growing and it was a chemical that was highly toxic to a number of species. And so that became a question of managing the preservation of an ecosystem for scientific research purposes and for preservation purposes. So can you talk a little bit about some of the problems of preserving an ecosystem from either natural disasters or from human encroachment and the role that the local site managers had in meeting some of those challenges?

05-01:11:20

Samuelson:

One of the ways I might answer that is to suggest that among the many responsibilities of the managers is developing good relationships with the surrounding community. Dan Dawson, again, is a perfect example of spending time in the Mammoth Lakes community, getting to know the adjacent property owners, helping them understand why the reserve, in this case the Valentine Camp Reserve, was there, why it's appropriate to keep people from trespassing onto the property. But then also, beyond that, holding annual open houses or arranging for docent tours so that people again could appreciate why this property needs to be protected. That's one way of answering that question. Another comes quickly to mind. I am coming back again to Big Creek. Shortly after we acquired Big Creek fire just devastated the site. And fire is a very natural process. There's a history of suppressing fires and we're seeing the results of suppressed efforts even today because of the fires that are raging in California, including another one at Big Sur. I don't think this one's going to hit Big Creek. But the Rat Creek fire did hit Big Creek. I was personally devastated because of all the effort we put into acquiring this site. I immediately went down and walked up the road, after the fire was out, of course, with several of the owners from whom we had acquired the property, all the way up to see if their cabins were still standing on 120 acres right in the middle of the site. It was fortuitous that we did that because at one of the cabins there were still some hot embers and had we not been there and had access to river water we might have lost that cabin. It was a wonderful opportunity after the initial shock to see that site come back within a year or two—and you go down today and it's back pretty much like it was when we acquired it. But that's just part of what we have to deal with. And other reserves have been hit by fire, too, particularly up near Lake Berryessa, after my time. Just recently the reserve there was reopened, although there's another fire up at Lake Berryessa right now. Whether that's going to again devastate that site I just don't know. But that's just part of the natural process. So I think there are human intrusions, there are natural intrusions, and the bottom-line is you learn from these and you manage them. The question always is how much do you manage and how much do you just allow a site to come back in its natural state.

05-01:15:20

Burnett:

Well, I imagine it's a wonderful opportunity for ecologists because one of the key questions that ecologists look at is plant succession, right?

05-01:15:31

Samuelson:

That's right.

05-01:15:32

Burnett:

And fire, as you said, is a natural process. It's almost laboratory conditions. You start with the razing of the land and then you can go in. Did ecologists sort of seize the opportunity to go in after these fires had taken place to set a new baseline and start measuring the plant succession as the plants came back

and to see the competition and the development of a new web of life out of the ashes of the old?

05-01:16:08

Samuelsen: Very definitely.

05-01:16:08

Burnett: Yeah, yeah. Of course you definitely want buildings to stand. [laughter] You want the improvements that have been made that allow scientists to do the research to continue. You want to be careful of instrumentation. But it's a key feature of what happens in an ecosystem, right, or what happens to ecosystems.

05-01:16:30

Samuelsen: Paul, may I come back to my staff before I forget?

05-01:16:34

Burnett: Of course.

05-01:16:35

Samuelsen: Because there are several others and I want to make sure I don't leave them out of this narrative.

05-01:16:42

Burnett: Please do.

05-01:16:42

Samuelsen: Bob Dering was our budget analyst. Bob studied law at Yale and had a wonderful background in finances. He would put together many of our budget proposals. Did a lot of special assignments for me and was a very important part of our staff. And then we were blessed with two editors, Sarah Gustafson and Susan Rumsey. I think Susan came to us sometime after Sarah and took on the full-time responsibilities when Sarah moved with her husband to Los Alamos. They put together a magnificent publication program that included periodic newsletters, brochures for each of the major reserves in the system, a twentieth anniversary report that you are holding before you. And really helped increase an understanding of the Natural Reserve System.

05-01:18:04

Burnett: And a rich source of documentation. Are you speaking of the NRS Transect?

05-01:18:10

Samuelsen: Yes. They created that publication and it was invaluable. Of course, today it's online and not in written form but that's part of the evolution with technology advancing as it has. And later in my tenure a woman by the name of Violet Nakayama joined us. She had been working in the general counsel's office as a legal assistant. As my time was coming to an end and as the need for property negotiations increased, I was able to bring her on, I think initially part-time and then ultimately full-time, to handle many of the property negotiations. That provided an invaluable bridge following my retirement as

director to continue many negotiations for which I had had responsibility because of my background. She was able to carry those on.

And then, just to complete the picture, from time-to-time we would bring on consultants or part-time employees to help us. Peter Dangermond, former state director of Parks and Recreation, helped us on the Etiwanda property, figuring out how best to either exchange or sell that and still carry out some of the environmental needs of both that community and the Natural Reserve System. He helped us on San Joaquin March, some issues we faced there. A wonderful person from the Davis campus, Joan Ellen Goddard, helped us, particularly after Bob Deering retired, on some of our budgetary projections and our long-term planning. Henry Offen from the Santa Barbara campus, a professor of chemistry, a beloved director of the reserves administered by the Santa Barbara campus, helped us out on some of our programmatic long-term planning and helped bring some credibility to our efforts in that regard. By bits and pieces we kept the dream alive and with limited funding. We had to find creative ways to do it, sometimes hiring folks on a part-time basis.

05-01:21:05

Burnett:

Right, right. There was a core staff that helped you. There's the management of the sites. There's the advisory committee which is faculty from all of the UC system that is there to help you think about the scientific side and the education side and that meets twice a year. Was it twice a year the whole way through or was it times when they'd meet more frequently to deal with—

05-01:21:40

Samuelson:

I think it was throughout. And I have a feeling it's still the same, although, as we've discussed, individual members were available on a moment's notice in a variety of ways to evaluate perspective sites or to conduct, say, a five, ten-year evaluation of existing sites or to meet with donors. We utilized as many of them as we could.

05-01:22:07

Burnett:

Right. And then a kind of core legal team that's there to assist you in the negotiations with properties. And then you would also retain counsel as needed to deal with—these are simply too much for one person. You had this legal background but you have to direct the whole system and you would need special help. Was there a particular law firm that you used or did you just have kind of in-house UCOP legal counsel that would assist?

05-01:22:38

Samuelson:

It's in-house. The university has a general counsel's office with a very, very competent group of attorneys. And at all stages of my tenure one of those attorneys was assigned to me for assistance. We would try to have them attend the meetings of the university-wide advisory committee so they could get to know the faculty and get a sense of what we were trying to accomplish. I would work very closely with them. They would give me quite a bit of leeway because of my own legal background, but in the end I needed their sign-off on

any agreements that were reached, any items going to the Board of Regents, and so it was very important that I not get out in front of them. Indeed, each one of them was very helpful in giving me creative ideas as to how to resolve a particular issue that might come about. I could not have worked something out with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy without Karl Droese, just using that as an example. (JRS: Among the attorneys with whom I worked were James Agate, Jan Behrsin, Gary Morrison, and Althea Titmus Werson. I also collaborated extensively with the Real Estate Office on all aspects of property negotiations and am especially indebted to Dick Hartsook, Jack Schappell, Gary DeWeese, Gordon Schanck, and Kathleen Keeler for their expertise, support and friendship.)

05-01:23:56

Burnett:

Right, right. So there's growth and development of this organization. So for that you need a lot of legal help. You need a lot of administrative help. There's a lot of moving parts to building up the future of the NRS. There's operations, which has the scientific side, so there's the advisory side. The education side, which is the interface between the universities and the managers on the sites. There's the environmental side. So you had an environmental planner who would interface between some of the environmental stakeholders, some of the state government stakeholders to smooth those things out. And then there's almost like a communications group that Sarah Gustafson, who are documentation experts and editors who would kind of reify what's happening and let people know about what's happening and provide documentation for the various features of the organization. Is there another feature of it that I'm—

05-01:25:22

Samuelsen:

I think you've summarized it well. [laughter] Better than I can, Paul.

05-01:25:27

Burnett:

Yeah. This is an oral history org chart.

05-01:25:33

Samuelsen:

Fair enough.

05-01:25:35

Burnett:

And, of course, there are the donors. Sometimes there's a one-off donation and sometimes there are these figures who are involved for almost the entire time that you're there. There are the Boyds. Bill Davis. Oh, he's the regental connection, right, because he's on the regents and he's able to—

05-01:26:04

Samuelsen:

No, Bill's on our staff.

05-01:26:04

Burnett:

On your staff. Oh, Wilson. Bill Wilson.

05-01:26:08

Samuelsen:

Yes, Bill Wilson.

05-01:26:09

Burnett:

I'm sorry. Who is on the regents, to take the temperature of what's happening at that level. So there are all these figures who are very important and can open doors when speaking to new prospective donors and they help you do the work that you need to do.

05-01:26:28

Samuelson:

Yes. And I think I'll talk more about that when we talk about specific transactions that we negotiated because those folks were invaluable assets during that time.

05-01:26:39

Burnett:

Right, right. Absolutely. So one other thing that happens organizationally is that the Natural Land and Water Reserve System is brought under the aegis of the vice-president of Agriculture and Natural Resources three years after you become director. Is there any significance to that? Why does that change take place and what were the consequences of that change, if any?

05-01:27:12

Samuelson:

I think I've said earlier that there always seemed to be a struggle within the Office of the President as to what to do with this Natural Reserve System, this guy Samuelson. And we bounced around. I think I may have had as many as five different vice-presidents that I reported to. But there was some logic in being assigned to the vice-president for agriculture. I think it was agricultural sciences. And so when they decided to assign the Natural Reserve System to the vice-president, his name was Jim Kendrick, and changed his title to vice-president for agriculture and natural resources to encompass the Natural Reserve System. He was responsible for, among other things, the agricultural field stations of the university, of which there—I don't know how many there are now. I think there were nine or ten. (JRS: They are now known as Research and Extension Centers and there are indeed nine.) Thus, there already was a precedent of a statewide system with a number of outlying sites, in this case designed for agriculture. And so on the one hand I felt that it was a good home for the system, largely because of my respect for Jim Kendrick and his embracing what we were trying to do. I just thought the world of Jim, as I did his successor, Ken Farrell. Both were very supportive. But I felt that the negative was the fact that the vice-president for agriculture and natural resources primarily interacted with just three of the then nine general campuses of the university—Riverside, Berkeley, and Davis, because those are the campuses that had agricultural and natural resource programs. I was concerned that it would tend to narrow the focus of the Natural Reserve System, which, of course, was designed to serve all of the campuses and not just the agricultural and natural resource based campuses. It just seemed from an image and strategic standpoint there might be disadvantages. But that's where we were. We made the best of it while we were there.

I'm very pleased, and I'm jumping ahead now, that one of my successors, Alex Glazer, was able to convince people that it was more appropriate the

Natural Reserve System be put under the umbrella of the executive vice-president and provost of the university because that's the top ranking academic, broadly speaking, administrator there is. And so in recent years the reserve system has reported to the vice-president for research and graduate studies and I think that's been a much better fit. Alex Glazer, being an academic, was in a better position to negotiate that than I was. But I think it was the first step in the university fully accepting and recognizing the Natural Reserve System as the academic resource that it is and thinking more and more in terms of how to integrate the system into the academic core of the university, make use of the reserve sites along the lines of more traditional laboratories on the campuses. It was a very important step.

05-01:31:31

Burnett:

And that's something that Ken Norris really wanted, the education side of it. I think Mac Laetsch spoke about this in the mid-seventies and said that it's a key node of interdisciplinary study and the idea was to have these semester-long classes that would involve the Natural Reserve System. And I don't know if that is still in place in the same form but that was a real initiative at the time to get students—I think the word was immersion. They wanted to have an immersion environment, learning environment that was sustained over the course of a semester. And that was a unique feature. The agricultural experiment stations are their own thing. It's a very different kind of operation and it's already deeply integrated into the existing classes that they have for economic entomology or the applied sciences in the agricultural college, basically. And that's got a much, much longer history, too, and you can imagine that there's an institutional path-dependence for that side of the college of agriculture and natural resources.

So the name change, because it was college of agriculture and then it becomes ag and natural resources, is it directly connected to bringing the Natural Reserve System underneath or were there other—

05-01:33:22

Samuelsen:

Yes. Which obviously I appreciated and applauded.

05-01:33:31

Burnett:

Yeah, yeah. And this is maybe outside of your purview. Because they are different sites really. Was there ever any cross-pollination of faculty and some of the faculty that were involved through the Natural Reserve System in the sense of doing agro-ecology or that kind of thing? Or were they just really siloed? They just happened to be administratively under the same umbrella?

05-01:34:03

Samuelsen:

I think they were siloed, as I recall.

05-01:34:06

Burnett:

Yeah, that would make sense. Before we go on to the specific things, I want to just circle back to something called the Trailfinders Campaign. Can you talk a little bit about that? That's an interesting feature.

05-01:34:34

Samuelsen:

This relates to the James San Jacinto Mountains Reserve near Riverside in Southern California, and the wonderful couple, Harry and Grace James, who made that property available to the university. It was the first property acquired after the system was established. And as I've said before, initially seven sites already owned by the university were put into the system. So in 1966, through the efforts of Ken Norris and Mildred Matthias, this was before my time, they worked out a very favorable agreement with Harry and Grace James to acquire their property with the understanding that they would be able to live on the property in their wonderful log cabin during the duration of their lifetime. And Harry and Grace became very close friends of mine.

Before they moved to that site they lived in the Los Angeles area and had what was called a Trailfinders School for Boys in Altadena, just north of Pasadena. Since I was born and raised on the boundary of Pasadena and Altadena, I know that area very well. But in addition to having a school, Harry formed an organization called the Trailfinders, which was somewhat akin to the Boy Scouts. This involved men who would gather for weekly meetings. They would earn awards, somewhat like scouts earned merit badges. They would go on summer encampments. And it included some rather prominent people. Former regent Ed Carter, who headed Broadway stores, a major department store in Southern California. John Van de Kamp, who went on to become attorney general of the State of California. And just an amazing talented group of young men.

I called Harry and asked if we might approach the Trailfinders—now alumni—about raising some money to build a much needed general purpose building on the James Reserve. Harry introduced me to one of the Trailfinders by the name of Em Sebenius, who agreed to chair this effort. Bill Davis and I worked with Em and the small committee that he formed to indeed approach the Trailfinders and ended up raising, I think, upwards of \$100,000. And so on the reserve today is something called Trailfinders Lodge and it probably sleeps upwards to twenty or more students at a time. It includes a general meeting room. And the Trailfinders have continued to be very supportive. Since that initial campaign, and again after my time, they have contributed other funds. They have an annual reunion at the reserve to see how the reserve's coming along, to see the improvements they've made possible, to get updates from the reserve manager. And then they hold another semi-annual reunion somewhere in the Pasadena area. Some of these people, like Em, have become lifetime friends and their dedication has been just very, very helpful.

05-01:39:08

Burnett:

So it sounds to me that an important piece of this is this ongoing stewardship, that there's almost an attraction for donors. And I'm trying to think of a comparison. A donor of a building, they get a sense of—their name is on the top of the building and there's this sense that their name is going to live on. And the building, it's a monument to them. But this is almost a kind of living, sharing in the experience of a natural space. It's not just giving a one-time donation of money, but they come back and they have these annual visits or semi-annual visits or biannual visits. How much of that is your doing, because it sounds to me very similar to your kind of life practice, your getting together with friends and having annual reunions and this kind of thing. Is there a bit of a Samuelsen culture going on here or are you importing practices from stuff that you remember, the church activities from when you were younger, the scouting? What's going on there do you think?

05-01:40:48

Samuelsen:

It reflects my life, I suppose, in some ways and my love of people and my joy in maintaining friendships and finding ways to remember times we've spent together. I'm an honorary member of the Trailfinders and so I've attended several of their reunions. I was supposed to attend the last one in June but because of illness I was not able to, so I sent a statement that could be shared, reflecting on Harry and Grace, on the contributions the Trailfinders have made. I have since talked to Em Sebenius on the phone to get feedback on how that reunion went. But it's something that I guess I enjoy doing and, yes, I guess it reflects on my childhood. One of my closest friends and I organized a reunion of those who used to go to summer camp down at Balboa Island, our church group, about, oh, four or five years ago and we spent a weekend reminiscing. I don't know what it is in my blood but I enjoy doing that kind of thing. I've been deeply involved in planning reunions for my class of 1958 over the years and even now we're starting to think about our sixtieth reunion. I guess it's a way for me to utilize whatever people skills I may have or whatever leadership skills I may have. I probably overdo it but I must admit to enjoying it.

And I think going back to the Natural Reserve System, for all of our donors we tried to maintain relationships and be available to them when they needed it. I say we and I really mean we. I mentioned Maggie a few minutes ago. Maggie had a lot to do with the donor relationships we had. In my last conversation with Em Sebenius he said, "How's Maggie doing? Please give her my best." He said, "I would call you from time to time but I really rather enjoyed Maggie when she answered the phone more than you." I think that reflects the feeling we had. We were all in it in a variety of ways and all contributed in our own way.

05-01:43:43

Burnett:

Yeah. This is development work, so you're building out a future for an institution. You're building up a future. But, interestingly, so much of it is about sustaining relationships over time. It's actually looking backward as

you're looking forward. You've developed these long-term relationships and the sustaining is about kind of memorializing relationships on a cyclical basis, right. Every year let's get together. Every year you get a newsletter. Every year you're reminded of a connection to an institution and to a place and to people. So if this is an advice manual for development people, [laughter] not everyone is in a position to be doing development for a natural space but in some ways it's even more extraordinary because these are not necessarily easily accessible spaces. These could be 10,000 feet up a mountain and they could be 750 feet at the bottom of the edge of the ocean. And so it requires perhaps even more effort to bring people together on something as important as a remote location.

05-01:45:29

Samuelsen: That's right.

05-01:45:30

Burnett: But it's not necessarily immediately clear how you're going to do that, except through this kind of celebration, right? A celebration of people, a celebration of connections with people. So that's kind of how you like to do business, as it were. [laughter]

05-01:45:50

Samuelsen: Well, I'm sure Ken Norris would say the same thing. The last book he wrote, and I used this in my talk before the managers, he said the NRS has been a labor of love and commitment by a whole plethora of people and it still is. And I guess if Ken were here he would join me in saying that it's something to be shared by all those who have worked together to make this possible. This is bigger than any one of us and so you would like to think that there is continuing opportunity to appreciate the value of this program and what our efforts have led to. Here we are, fifty years after it was established. The system is becoming front and center more and more with every passing day, and we can talk about that a little bit more later on. But there's a sense of great satisfaction in seeing that and I think that's largely because of the relationships been made and the time and commitment that's been provided by the many people you and I have already talked about and others we will still talk about.

05-01:47:16

Burnett: Well, let's maybe leave that for the next time.

05-01:47:20

Samuelsen: Okay.

05-01:47:20

Burnett: All right.

[End of Interview]

Interview 6: October 5, 2016

06-00:00:15

Burnett:

This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series and it is October 5, 2016 and this is our sixth session. And we are here in the Bancroft Library at the University of California Berkeley. So we were talking last time about the development of the Natural Land and Water Reserve System and the challenges of fundraising for it and the incredible staff that you hired and worked with over that time who enabled you to grow the system and maintain the system. And I think we touched a little bit on some of the acquisitions but that's a primary objective of yours, to acquire new properties, to fulfill the plan of the NLWRS. And when I was doing some reading for background—and this is right around the time that you retire. It was striking. The University of California wanted an area to study reclamation but the land was also desired by the City of Santa Rosa for a wastewater reservoir. And so as part of all these negotiations, the University of California ends up negotiating that and working a way out. And in another instance the University of California sells Button Ranch in Sonoma to fund student aid. And in this couple of stories I got this real sense that what is required is a tremendous sense of balance, balancing competing interests, and in order to do that you need to compromise. So with that in mind I wanted to ask if we could drill down into some of the key acquisitions that you participated in to give us a window into what it's like to make one of these acquisitions possible. We touched on Big Creek last time but I'm wondering if we could talk a little bit more about this acquisition and how it got off the ground.

06-00:02:58

Samuelsen:

Well, thank you. First of all, Big Creek is located on the Big Sur coast, some 4,000 acres. And, as I recall, it represented over thirty diverse habitats, so it was one of the most interesting sites that came to our attention. I first heard about it when I received a call from Starker Leopold, who's been mentioned before, the prominent professor of zoology here on the Berkeley campus. He said that he had met at Big Creek with a friend of his from the Bohemian Club by the name of Ed Landels and with the executive director of the Save the Redwoods League, John Dewitt. As I heard about the story, the Big Creek property was owned by about eight different owners, all with varying shares. Ed Landels was the major shareholder and therefore kind of the head of the pack. They had been in negotiations with the Save the Redwoods League for the League to acquire the property and turn it over to the Department of Parks and Recreation as a state park. And the reason the Save the Redwoods League was interested is that some of the most southern exposure of the coastal redwoods exists on the Big Creek property. But as these three gentlemen met on the property Starker said, "Gosh, there's a fairly new program at the university called the Natural"—then it was Natural Land and Water Reserve System—"Do you think it might be appropriate to involve them? That might be an alternative for you to consider." He said this to Ed Landels. That led to the phone call and a subsequent luncheon meeting at the Bohemian Club in

San Francisco that involved John Dewitt, Ed Landels, Starker Leopold, and Ken Norris. I was very careful to have a faculty member there with me. We talked about the possibilities of some kind of a collaborative effort between the Save the Redwoods League and the University. Well, that started several years of negotiations.

06-00:05:33

Burnett:

Do you recall when that was? When those early meetings were?

06-00:05:38

Samuelsen:

I would say in about the mid-seventies, about 1975, '76. And I think it took at least two years to finalize the arrangement. But first there was a question of what's the value of the property and what did the owners want for the property. I recall going back and forth with Save the Redwoods League as to who was going to pay for the appraisal. The League, for whatever reason, was reluctant to contribute. But I did learn that they had talked in terms of contributing \$500,000 toward the acquisition. At that stage we were far enough along on our Ford Foundation Challenge Grant that I felt comfortable in suggesting that the university might contribute upwards to \$200,000 toward the acquisition, still having no idea of what the ultimate price was going to be.

So we proceeded, as we always did with acquisitions, to have a group of faculty members visit the site, evaluate its values. Ken Norris and Mildred Mathias were definitely on that trip, as were some other faculty members. And we did this in conjunction with the owners, or as many of the owners as we could, and this was part of my strategy of having the owners interact with the faculty and hopefully become as excited as the faculty might be on the acquisition, maybe with the goal of convincing the owners to take less than a fair market value. It was rather clear from the outset that the eight owners had different requirements in so far as the return on their investment. Some talked in terms of significant reduction in price, Ed Landels being the lead in that regard. Others made it rather clear they expected a full value of whatever their share might be. So for a matter of months we went back and forth as to the possibilities.

06-00:08:14

Burnett:

Sorry to interrupt. Could I ask you about—not naming any names—but to talk a little bit about the nature of the ownership. Are these families that have had these plots in their family for generations? Are they business entities that have acquired this land for commercial purposes? What's the profile of these owners?

06-00:08:38

Samuelsen:

Ed Landels was a prominent attorney in San Francisco. One of the owners was Fred Farr, a former state senator and a very prominent attorney in his own right in the Carmel area. Another was Will Shaw, an architect. Bill Stewart was another attorney. And, as I recall, they had collaborated in some manner in the early sixties to acquire this property from a single landowner for the

purpose of having a retreat, a weekend retreat or periodic retreat. There were several cabins in the center of the property. They would enjoy hiking the trails and the like. But I think as years went on they were getting older and maybe property taxes were playing a role. I think they were thinking about, "Well, what's going to happen after we're no longer able to have this property and is there a way of preserving it but maybe retaining certain rights for ourselves and for our family." Bill Stewart already had deeded one of his shares to his daughter and son-in-law. As years have gone on, I think the other owner's interests have been transferred to either friends or family members by bequest. That was beyond my tenure as to how what actually happened. Incidentally, Fred Farr's son Sam, who now holds that interest because Fred passed away several years ago, has been the congressman in the Monterey area for many years and is retiring in January. But I'm pretty sure he still has an interest there in the property and I'll go into that detail in a few minutes.

As we were negotiating with the Save the Redwoods League and with the owners, I received another call one day, and this time from Ed Landels saying that he had run into the state director of the Nature Conservancy by the name of Henry Little. I think they were members of a fishing club in San Francisco. Ed had told Henry about the negotiations that were under way and he wondered if I would sit down with him and Henry to discuss the possible involvement of the Nature Conservancy. My first reaction was one of disappointment that still another party was going to be involved. How is this going to work out between the Nature Conservancy and the university and the Save the Redwoods League. And, indeed, I had some pretty tough discussions with the Nature Conservancy as to what their role was going to be and how this would play out.

06-00:12:07

Burnett:

What did they want?

06-00:12:09

Samuelson:

They wanted to acquire the property. They wanted to have some kind of a visitor center in the middle of it. They were much more interested in public access than we. They wanted to use it as a prototype project to further their causes. We, of course, are in the teaching and research business and we wanted limited public access. But we were successful in hammering out a deal, contingent upon reaching agreement with the owners. We were not sure at that stage whether the Save the Redwoods League would stay in the game or not. I recall coming out of a meeting with the Nature Conservancy and I guess I raised my voice a little bit. I'm generally a pretty soft-spoken, quiet negotiator. But one of my staff members who heard the noise coming out from the door, Jeff Kennedy, said, "You know, I think we just experienced, what do you call it, the greening of Samuelson." And so they saw a side of me that maybe they hadn't seen that much of before.

So part of the agreement with the Nature Conservancy was that they would take the lead in negotiating with the owners. They were in a better position, had more flexibility than we did being a private conservation organization. But the understanding was that if they were successful in acquiring the interest they would turn over the majority of the property, all but an inholding they would retain, to the university for the Natural Reserve System, but subject to a conservation easement that would, on the one hand, assure that it would be projected in its natural state for teaching and research, but on the other hand would provide for some limited access and would give them the opportunity to build the visitor center on the inholding that was picked under the understanding.

So they finally negotiated, going back and forth, a total acquisition price of about \$1.5 million. And, incidentally, one of the reasons that they became interested was that they had a donor in mind who happened to be a graduate of Berkeley by the name of Ken Hill, who was interested in contributing upwards to \$300,000. So then the question was, well, how are we going to raise the balance of the funds needed. And so we proceeded in a joint shared basis with the Nature Conservancy to raise from other sources, foundations and individuals and the like, the balance of the money. I can't tell you how many trips I made down to the Big Sur Coast handholding potential donors, sometimes with the Nature Conservancy there, and sometimes not. I even retained a friend of mine, going back to my ASUC days at Berkeley, by the name of Wally Frederick, who had done some fundraising and was living in the Carmel area, to help cultivate some donations. (JRS: Wally was Director of Publications for the ASUC during the time I served as ASUC President.)

We were ultimately successful and then the question was, well, what about the Save the Redwoods League. Could we still get them to put in the \$500,000? John Dewitt was a tough negotiator. He was a Berkeley graduate. He and I had known each other somewhat. He had some trouble with Henry Little on a personal level. They would go back and forth. At one point we received some rather strident communication from John saying that the League was no longer interested. But I'm not one to take no for an answer and kept thinking, "Well, there's got to be some way to bring them around because of the involvement of the redwoods on the property," and I thought this might be an ideal cooperative arrangement between the Nature Conservancy, the Save the Redwoods League and the university, kind of a model.

I think we arranged several meetings with members of the board of directors, and John was there. Included was Newton Drury, who was chairman of the board, a Berkeley graduate, former director of the National Park Service, and so we felt we had a little bit of a leg up with University of California connections. The first president we dealt with, a fellow by the name of Dick Leonard, was supportive. I watched as members of the board were interacting with the executive director and weren't always on the same page. But John kept sending letters saying, "Well, we're no longer interested. I hope you can

appreciate our position. "As I said previously, some of that, I think, had to do with frayed relationships with Henry Little of the Nature Conservancy.

06-00:18:07

Burnett:

Did they have a difference beyond the personal? Did they have differences as to the use to which the plot would be put or were there other kind of legal problems in terms of the nature of the agreement?

06-00:18:24

Samuelson:

Yes. I think the Save the Redwoods League was concerned about the price the owners were seeking. I think they were concerned about the rights the owners were retaining, particularly over the acreage where they did not have fee title, rights to walk and fish and the like. I think they wanted more public access. I think they wanted more rights to name redwood groves. They were legitimate concerns which we had to negotiate out. I think in the end we were able to satisfy everybody in the agreement that was worked out. I also had the good fortune of knowing the subsequent president who followed Dick Leonard by the name of Bruce Howard through our church in Orinda. He and I were friends. We would sit right behind Bruce and his wife every Sunday. So on one occasion I asked if I could have breakfast with Bruce and I shared what was going on. He gave me some wonderful advice as to how to break the logjam and I think that had a little bit to do with our ultimately getting \$500,000 from the Save the Redwoods League and giving them the right to name groves. In the process we agreed with both the League and the Nature Conservancy to develop what we called an interpretive trail, which still exists, and to have periodic docent-led hikes along that trail for the general public. It was a matter of compromising left and right but it ultimately worked out and the regents approved the transaction and ultimately the university acquired all but 120 acres of the property in fee, subject to conservation easement language. The owners retained 120 acres in the middle but subject to a conservation easement as to what they could do with that 120 acres beyond having several cabins and using it periodically. And I think in general it's worked well.

There have been over the years, even while I was still active, some concerns from some of the owners about how much use the university was making of it or whether the university should proceed with some improvements that would facilitate use, and I think we've touched upon that in some of the prior negotiations.

But in the meantime there also was an adjacent piece of property called Flying M Ranch and when we first became involved that property was tentatively sold. As I recall, it was a hunting outfit in Texas that wanted to turn it into a place to hunt. And that was of considerable concern.

06-00:21:57

Burnett:

Yeah, I bet.

06-00:22:00

Samuelsen:

Fortunately, the Big Sur Land Trust, with the backing of David Packard, became interested and involved and was able to acquire that property when the tentative agreement with the hunting outfit did not work out. And as years have gone on, that property has been totally acquired by the Packard Family and my understanding is they have made some very generous commitments to the Natural Reserve System to ultimately transfer much of that property to the university and to allow the university to put some of its improvements on it, which has even better access from Highway 1 than does the Big Creek Reserve itself.

But one of my last meetings with David Packard in his home, shortly before he passed away, was to negotiate a hold harmless clause so that when the university did make use of his property it could not be at the risk of some kind of a lawsuit against Packard, which, for obvious reasons, he was concerned about, given his wealth and his notoriety. So we were able to work that out, as well.

This was one of the more satisfying acquisitions. Took a lot of time. I think I previously said that I flew to Los Angeles and explained it at length with a regent or two, Regent Bill Wilson for one, and he recommended that the regents go along with it.

06-00:24:03

Burnett:

And the Packard Holding was called the Flying—

06-00:24:06

Samuelsen:

Flying M Ranch. That was the prior designation. I don't know what it's called now, if anything. But it was also a satisfying acquisition. We've talked a lot about Ken Norris. He was a leading proponent of the acquisition because the site was going to be managed by the Santa Cruz campus. Ken became the founding faculty manager. It gave him a chance to complete the circle. He had founded the program but here was an opportunity for him to actually work on a site, put together a management plan, think about the use that might be made of it. He had a lot to do with the language that we worked out and I think I've alluded to that before, to make sure that this wasn't just a preserve, it was a reserve that was to be used for specific purposes, teaching and research.

06-00:25:18

Burnett:

And, as you mentioned, there were thirty unique, not ecosystems, but thirty unique—

06-00:25:24

Samuelsen:

It was more than thirty. And included underwater aspects because—

06-00:25:34

Burnett:

Because it's coastal, right?

06-00:25:35

Samuelsen:

Yes, it's coastal, so the property includes rights to some of the underwater type of habitats, as well. That's what makes it so valuable. Moreover, it's surrounded by a national forest and so there's opportunities for collaborative work in the forest, as well. It's a huge, huge piece of property. And later we'll talk about my involvement with the Save the Redwoods League. But even now, for me to come full circle and be involved with the Save the Redwoods League and recognize that my initial involvement with the League goes back to Big Creek, means a great deal. That's when I was invited to serve on the board of counselors. I thought, "I know quite a bit about this organization and appreciate what they did for the Natural Reserve System and would like to contribute to their objectives in the years to come."

06-00:26:35

Burnett:

And it's a much smaller organization than, say, the Nature Conservancy, which is massive, right? That's a multi-billion-dollar conservancy.

06-00:26:43

Samuelsen:

Well, it's now an international. That's right.

06-00:26:45

Burnett:

It's huge. Yeah.

06-00:26:47

Samuelsen:

That's right. Where the Save the Redwoods League is primarily involved here in California but has a rich history in its own right, going back to the University of California Berkeley. The early founders were largely Berkeley based. But we can get into that another time.

06-00:27:02

Burnett:

You've mentioned several times that the Cal connections seem to be really important, being able to appeal to people who had gone to the University of California and had studied there. So is there a real bond among alumni, that you can appeal to them and say, "This is for the University of California," and on that level?

06-00:27:28

Samuelsen:

Yes. Very definitely.

06-00:27:29

Burnett:

Yeah. And that's something you can—

06-00:27:32

Samuelsen:

Very definitely. But while I think about it, one of the last things I wanted to do before I retired as director was to spend a day and a night with one of Ken Norris's classes. And so I joined the students in doing what Ken used to call a niche hunt. Just standing or sitting next to a place for a while and watching all the interaction of the insects and the plants. It was just fabulous. I don't think I've mentioned this before but that night I gave a much briefer summary of what I just shared as to how the Big Creek Reserve came about to the

students. And afterwards, around a campfire, students came up to me and gave me a hug and said, “We had no sense that so much was involved in acquiring a site like this and we had no sense that the former owners would have the same kind of sensitivity to the values here and be interested in preserving that for future education, future research and teaching, as we, as students have.” It was a very special moment for me to experience that and I was able then to write to the former owners, tell them of my experience, and it was a way of thanking them, particularly those who had made significant gifts. And, of course, we now call it the Landels-Hill Big Creek Reserve. I’ve mentioned the involvement of Ed Landels as the lead owner and negotiator of the acquisition from the owners standpoint and then Ken Hill and his wife Dorothy provided \$300,000 towards the acquisition and so that’s why their name is on it, as well. And then we put a bench on the interpretative trail that thanks the Save the Redwoods League for its contribution. We subsequently had a wonderful dedication ceremony where we invited all the parties to a luncheon in the grove and thanked them in a variety of ways, including a wonderful tribute by Ken Norris.

06-00:30:18

Burnett:

It is always true, I think, that we need to be reminded of the contingency of history. Because when you look at something that’s an accomplished fact, it seems like it’s been there forever, for all you know. But history allows you to unpack the work that went in to make something possible. I don’t know if you can quantify it but I imagine most of the negotiation was in face-to-face meetings. Is that right?

06-00:30:54

Samuelson:

Yes.

06-00:30:55

Burnett:

So face-to-face meetings, many with multiple stakeholders. Sometimes you got them all together, sometimes you did one-on-one meetings with each stakeholder and then you’d come back together, bring everyone together.

06-00:31:07

Samuelson:

That’s right.

06-00:31:10

Burnett:

Letters, writing letters of invitation, updates, that kind of thing. Phone calls. Right. So I’m getting a sense of all of the work that’s involved, that is all of this people work but then negotiation involves a tremendous load of communication to bring everyone together, with its share of frustrations. How long did that take to establish from the very first time that that was open as a possibility to its legal establishment?

06-00:31:52

Samuelson:

Well, at least two years and maybe two-and-a-half, as I recall, something like that. And what you’re trying to do with all of these interactions is develop trust and listen as actively as you can as to the needs of the other parties and

try and figure out where you can compromise while still retaining the principles that are at the foundation of the program you're representing.

06-00:32:22

Burnett:

And a key element of trust, I think, is trying to understand why people are reluctant or afraid? What causes someone to be mistrustful? Was it always on the table or was it a process of discovery for you? It sounded like in the Save the Redwoods case, "Why are they resistant?" and you had to find out by talking to other people to figure out what the resistance was. Why are they holding out? It wasn't necessarily money; it wasn't necessarily something that would be obvious that you could fix with just getting another donor. It would be something that had to be talked out.

06-00:33:09

Samuelson:

That's right.

06-00:33:13

Burnett:

So a key element is working with people to make that communication smoother, easier, over the long term and, as you say, it takes time to do.

06-00:33:29

Samuelson:

There also comes a time when you have to say, "I really appreciate your point of view but I'm sorry, we just can't do that." You can't satisfy everybody. You can only compromise to a certain extent and you have to have a sense of "can you sell this to the Board of Regents" or "can you justify it in terms of the faculty needs." The list goes on and on. But you just have to at some point stand up and say, as a negotiator, "I'm sorry, that's it."

06-00:34:10

Burnett:

Right, right. And that's something that comes with experience, too, because you have to learn and recall what each stakeholder needs and those thresholds are changing over time, right? So that Cal has *less* money than it did before or this group is going to be *less* tolerant of changes in requirements for access, and it's a moving puzzle that you have to constantly figure out how to put together. And so this is probably also happening when other things are happening. Is there a sense of having to juggle balls in the air or were you able to devote a lot of your attention and time to this while it was happening during those two years? You had other things going on.

06-00:35:08

Samuelson:

Oh, sure. There were negotiations on other properties, as well, and we're going to probably talk next about the Granite Mountains. The negotiations there were ongoing at about the same time. As we talked earlier, it was a now-or-never proposition. That period of the seventies and the eighties, opportunities came our way and you needed to act on them then or they weren't going to happen. The timing was fortuitous. A lot of things fell in place. We weren't successful on all counts but I think we were fairly successful on most.

06-00:35:55

Burnett:

We spoke earlier about the regulatory climate, that that was, in a sense, a push factor for some of the resource industries to be, not malleable, but actually really proactive in reaching out and making property available if it would benefit them in terms of their relationship with the public, relationship with the state, and that was a moment to seize on to really bring those folks in.

06-00:36:31

Samuelsen:

Yes. That reminds me, speaking of regulations, that the Nature Conservancy went to the Coastal Commission to obtain a permit to build its visitor center in the center of the Big Creek Reserve and was not successful. And they decided not to pursue it any further. So they ended up turning over the forty acres they had reserved in our initial agreement to the university, along with the other acreage. So that was somewhat of a relief that we didn't have an influx of public use in the middle of the reserve. It would give us more flexibility as time went on.

06-00:37:17

Burnett:

So the Coastal Commission, I imagine, was involved from the get-go, to the extent that property went straight to the coast?

06-00:37:26

Samuelsen:

Well, not in terms of the acquisition but they certainly were involved, as they are today, on any development that you're going to pursue on the property. I obviously am not involved now but within the last year the university has been successful in getting a permit from the Coastal Commission to put some improvements on the Big Creek and/or Flying M Ranch property. That took a lot of effort to convince the Coastal Commission that that was in keeping with the regulations under which they operate.

06-00:38:08

Burnett:

So it's to the Nature Conservancy's credit that they did get—the visitor center was a big piece of it, right? They wanted that public access. And it doesn't mean they didn't have public access but a visitor's center would be a big part of that, I would think. But they still contributed the \$1.5 million for—

06-00:39:33

Samuelsen:

No, they helped raise the \$1.5 million.

06-00:38:37

Burnett:

Okay, right.

06-00:38:37

Samuelsen:

And, frankly, beyond the \$300,000 they cultivated from Ken and Dorothy Hill, I am not recalling how much beyond that they contributed directly. Because we were really doing this jointly with them by going to the Packard Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, and other donors. They certainly identified other individuals. I just don't recall the specifics. I also have a feeling that we set a goal of two million dollars for the fundraising and we fell short of that. We had enough for the acquisition but we were hoping also to

put together an endowment because of the need for ongoing support and we were not successful in raising that.

06-00:39:32

Burnett:

Is that something that materialized subsequently? Like in subsequent decades were they able to get an endowment for the Big Creek?

06-00:39:43

Samuelsen:

Not that I am aware of. Not that the university wouldn't welcome that if that were to come along. Which goes to the basic problem we have alluded to before about funding for day in and day out maintenance and improvements. The NRS in more recent times was able to obtain significant money from a state proposition that was matched. I don't know the details because it was way after my time. But they were able to match dollar-for-dollar the money that's required for the improvements. But I'm not privy to how they propose to maintain those improvements.

06-00:40:33

Burnett:

Right. So it's a cost borne by each campus—

06-00:40:38

Samuelsen:

Campus.

06-00:40:38

Burnett:

—that's responsible for that particular reserve or set of reserves.

06-00:40:42

Samuelsen:

That's right.

06-00:40:44

Burnett:

Well, as the budgets tighten over the decades, up to the present, that becomes a greater and greater challenge and you need more and more fundraising to help out with that.

06-00:40:54

Samuelsen:

That's right. Later on we'll get into the fifty million dollar campaign that the NRS is about ready to launch, and I'm going to play a modest role in that endeavor.

06-00:41:11

Burnett:

Well, we were speaking about the simultaneity of fundraising efforts and acquisition efforts. And so you were saying that around the same time, in the mid-1970s, you were also participating in the acquisition of the Granite Mountains Reserve. Do you want to talk a little bit about how that happens? Does that start before the Big Creek or is it around the same time?

06-00:41:41

Samuelsen:

It definitely started before Big Creek because it really goes back to the Norris brothers. I've talked a lot about Ken Norris. I'm not sure that I have paid appropriate tribute to his brother Bob, who was a professor of geology at

Santa Barbara, three years older than Ken, and, like Ken, played a very significant role in the development of the NRS. Bob was for many years the Santa Barbara representative on the university-wide advisory committee. He also served for many years as the reserve manager of the Santa Cruz Island Reserve. He oversaw other reserves that were managed by Santa Barbara. And, as I think I may have mentioned before, he served on I don't know how many review committees. He just was always available at my beck and call and I'm very, very grateful. But Ken and Bob used to spend a lot of time in the desert. And, as I recall, they had a 1926 Dodge pick-up truck and they would drive all over the desert in pursuing their interests. Ken was very interested in lizards.

06-00:43:07

Burnett:

Right, the iguana.

06-00:43:09

Samuelson:

Bob was always interested in geology. They acquired this vehicle in the 1940s. As I recall the story, Ken was out looking for a site for his lizards and he came upon the Granite Mountains and a spring that provided year round water. And, of course, water in the desert is terribly important. So he went to a title company or somehow figured out that this little area was owned by Southern Pacific Company. This goes back to the development of the Transcontinental Railroad when the federal government provided a checkerboard pattern of landholdings to the railroad industry. So Southern Pacific held the title to this little area. As Ken would tell the story and Bob would tell the story, they put on their coats and ties and went to San Francisco to meet with SP. This is before the Natural Land and Water Reserves System was established. They were successful in negotiating a ninety-day use agreement for one acre for a dollar a year. They used that to develop what, with great affection, became known as the Bunny Club. I may have mentioned this before but it's best that we not know how the—

06-00:44:55

Burnett:

Origin.

06-00:44:56

Samuelson:

—how the Bunny Club evolved in terms of lumber and rocks and windows and all, where that emanated. There were a lot of stories. So that was the beginning of the Norris's involvement. So when the reserve system was established, Ken put together a proposal to establish a Granite Mountains Reserve, one that would encompass not only upwards of three sections owned by Southern Pacific but a number of sections owned by the Bureau of Land Management, some inholdings owned by a fellow by the name of Art Parker, who was a rancher in the area. That started lengthy negotiations.

So Ken involved me at that stage to sit down with Southern Pacific and try to acquire a gift of these three sections or a partial gift, or if not a gift, a purchase. Southern Pacific would have none of it because they had in mind

consolidating sections of land they owned throughout California into something they could develop and turn into an investment and bring in some money to the company. I don't know how many meetings we had and we just could not break through even though we were talking about the values that would be derived by protecting this for future teachers and researchers and students.

But going back to the Ford Foundation Challenge Campaign. I talked about some of the amenities of that campaign over and beyond raising money. I think I mentioned that Shermer Sibley was our Northern California chairman, while serving as chairman of the board of PG&E. So one day I went to Shermer and I told him about our negotiation with Southern Pacific and asked if he might be willing to call the chairman of the board of Southern Pacific, Ben Biaggini by name, and see if something could be done to break this logjam. Shermer was successful. The next thing we know we're having these three sections appraised and we bought them. We were not successful in getting a gift. So we bought those three sections and all of a sudden the Natural Reserve System became the landlord of Ken and Bob Norris, who still had the use agreement for the Bunny Club. The three sections had one improvement—the Bunny Club—and Bob and Ken were very generous in allowing students and researchers from all over the country, all over the world to stay there and do their work.

06-00:48:29

Burnett:

It's pretty remote. Now, is this the same as the Sweeney Granite Mountains Desert Research Center?

06-00:48:27

Samuelson:

Yes.

06-00:48:38

Burnett:

So on the map it looks like that is at the bottom of Death Valley. Is that right? Something like that. It's beside Death Valley, isn't it?

06-00:48:50

Samuelson:

I think probably further west of Death Valley, maybe southwest. Yes, it's out in the middle of nowhere. I mean, I remember a nearby town of Amboy, that I think has a railroad station and not much else. But that was the beginning. It's a checkerboard ownership pattern so you still have BLM property interspersed with the SP holdings. So at about the same time we undertook negotiations with the Bureau of Land Management for a cooperative agreement and involved something like seven sections. We ultimately were able to negotiate a long-term cooperative agreement with BLM. So that was a second landowner. Still to be dealt with were these private holdings of this fellow, Art Parker. Ken Norris used to tell stories about standoffs with Art Parker, who had an interest in breeding and feeding cattle. He and Ken wouldn't always be on the same page. We started negotiations with Parker. I think he had something called Granite Cove, maybe 310 acres or so, and we finally reached

agreement to buy that for \$300,000. Then the question was “where’s that money going to come from?” We required resources over and beyond what we had brought in through the Ford Challenge Campaign.

One of my most memorable visits in terms of fundraising has to do with our friends from the Packard Foundation. Ken having the relationship he did with the Packards led me to meet with Julie Packard, one of David Packard’s daughters, who was then just in the beginning stages of developing the Monterey Aquarium on Monterey Bay. I met with her there to negotiate what turned out to be a \$100,000 grant from the Packard Foundation toward the acquisition of Granite Cove. The reason that visit is so memorable is that as we were talking David Packard walked in. I had met him before and we had a nice chat and the Monterey Aquarium was then under construction. He said, “Would you like to put on a hard hat and take a tour with me?” And, of course, David and Lucile Packard contributed the vast majority, if not the entirety, of the development of the aquarium and today his daughter Julie continues to be the president and chief executive officer. Well, that was a visit and tour I will never forget, as you can imagine.

06-00:52:15

Burnett:

And it was just under construction at that time.

06-00:52:18

Samuelson:

It was just under construction. That’s right. So that’s why we had to wear hardhats. Another contribution towards the \$300,000 that was memorable was from a woman by the name of Grace Vamos, who was the aunt of Maggie Drake, my longtime administrative assistant. I’ve talked about the many ways Maggie contributed. She obviously had told her aunt about the Natural Reserve System and about some of the acquisitions that we were pursuing. And Maggie was able to persuade her dear aunt to contribute \$40,000 toward that acquisition.

06-00:53:04

Burnett:

Wow.

06-00:30053

Samuelson:

That was just very, very special. And then there was a contribution, as I recall, from the Fleischmann Foundation based in Nevada. We’d been going back and forth with them about a potential contribution. But Starker Leopold—it always seems to come back to Ken and Starker—made a phone call and secured a significant grant from them, I think at least \$50,000, maybe more. In any event, we acquired Granite Cove. And then Art Parker also had another small parcel, and I forget the acreage, maybe twenty acres, that was called Dorner’s Camp. That was the last inholding. So we were able to negotiate the purchase of that. Subsequently that facility, which still is in existence—it houses students for overnight stay, has some meeting spaces— was named for Ken, Ken Norris. I believe it is called the Ken Norris Education and Research Center. So that’s a long way of saying that it took a lot of time and effort to

negotiate the Granite Mountains acquisition. Once again, I had the experience toward the end of my tenure to spend twenty-four hours with students at the Granite Mountain Reserve. I had the same experience I had at Big Creek in telling the story of the acquisition. The students were in disbelief the site hadn't always been available for teaching and research. The efforts paid dividends. And, of course, the reserve has the fingerprints of Ken and Bob Norris all over it.

06-00:55:06

Burnett:

Well, it's a very smart thing to do, to do an overnight with the students and get a feel for the reserve in action. Because then you can take that to donors, to prospective donors at some other place and say, "I know what it does for students and their learning, helping them to understand ecological relationships. This is very important; it has that teaching role." And you presumably, through your work with the faculty committees, got a real flavor for the kinds of science that were being done in these various reserves. It ranges from archeology to ecological research. There's any number, there's research on acid rain, climate change, the list goes on. And so you're able to, as you learn about what goes on in the research center, you're able to take that and fold that back into your development work, which is absolutely crucial, I would think. And when you were talking about sections, you mean in the acreage sense, or do you mean sections as in separate parcels of land?

06-00:56:28

Samuelson:

Well, these are 360-acre sections. So if you look at a map, BLM owns sections in a checkerboard pattern. The other acreage in the checkerboard are privately owned.

06-00:56:44

Burnett:

Okay. And is the mountain itself a kind of national park? Are the headwaters covered in terms of preservation?

06-00:56:53

Samuelson:

You mean the Bureau of Land Management?

06-00:56:55

Burnett:

Yeah. Does it own the land that forms the headwaters for the creek? Let me make that a broader question.

06-00:57:00

Samuelson:

Well, it was an underground—

06-00:57:04

Burnett:

Oh, it's an underground—

06-00:57:05

Samuelson:

It's a spring.

06-00:57:05

Burnett:

Oh, it's a spring. Okay.

06-00:57:07

Samuelsen: It's a spring and it's still there, it's still working.

06-00:57:11

Burnett: Wow. Okay. That's interesting.

06-00:57:12

Samuelsen: I'm not sure but I think subsequently they have dug some wells, particularly over at Granite Cove. I recall one spring in Granite Cove, whether that's adequate for the improvements that have been made over the years or whether they've had to dig a well, I'm not real sure.

06-00:57:30

Burnett: Okay. Maybe there's another way to ask that question more generally, and that is that when you have a parcel of land and you're talking about ecosystems—ecosystems are by definition typically fairly self-contained in terms of the relationships among the organisms. But nature is pretty porous, as well, or open, and there can be introductions from outside all the time. Is that something that they had to consider, the scientists and the advisors, when they're talking about a parcel of land? It sounds like they had to worry, like the Texas hunting range that threatened to be right adjacent to Big Creek. Is that an active part of the planning process when you're acquiring this? You have to worry about the surrounding property? And headwaters, for example. If there's a creek running through your parcel of land, if there's a mining operation up there, do you have to worry about contamination, pollution, those kinds of things?

06-00:58:40

Samuelsen: Very definitely. And, frankly, I think even more attention's going to have to be given to that in the years to come because so much of the land surrounding reserves is not in permanent protective status. Changes can occur, particularly in California. I think we're fortunate with sites like the Granite Mountains and Big Creek in that they are isolated, protected by the Forest Service in the case of Big Creek and the Bureau of Land Management in the case of the Granite Mountains. But not all the reserves are so fortunate. I think increasingly attention's going to have to be given to that. I just attended the annual meeting of the Save the Redwoods League and the League is giving more and more attention to lands surrounding the protected redwoods here in California. What role should the League play in either acquiring some of those adjacent lands or influencing the future management? It's becoming an important aspect. So I think you're suggesting something that's going to become more and more of a priority.

06-01:00:07

Burnett: Yeah, yeah. And I was reading, I think in Bodega Bay, there was an oil spill in '84 near the Bodega Marine Preserve and they had to handle that, as well. I'm sure they got assistance from the federal government for cleanup and things like that. But just because you have a reserve doesn't mean you're immune to those impacts. It's something they have to always guard against.

06-01:00:34

Samuelsen:

More recently, the Coal Oil Point Reserve at Santa Barbara was influenced by an oil line breaking and mucking up the shoreline. That's the second time that's occurred in recent memory. So that's another illustration of the type of influence the human population can have on these vital natural resources.

06-01:01:01

Burnett:

The silver lining in that, I suppose, is because these are research centers, it's also an opportunity.

06-01:01:09

Samuelsen:

That's right.

06-01:01:11

Burnett:

When they had the fire at Rat Creek they were like, "Yippee. We can go and study plant succession and we can understand these things." By the same token, you can learn about contamination. I was reading about the 2016 version of the Natural Reserve System and they've got a harmonized monitoring system across all of the reserves now and so they have sophisticated monitoring equipment and that has tremendous big data implications for the kind of research that will be done in the future and that has been done recently. So that's, I suppose, a positive effect of this, of what could be a really harmful set of events. I didn't want to cut you off there if you wanted to talk about the Granite Mountains.

06-01:02:10

Samuelsen:

I think I probably have pretty well painted the picture that was involved there. Maybe you want to move to the Valentine Reserve.

06-01:02:16

Burnett:

Yeah. I would like to ask about that. It sounds like a complex case. [laughter]

06-01:02:24

Samuelsen:

[laughter] Well, not quite as complex as the first two I've described. The Valentine Property is on the east side of the Sierra [Nevada Mountains] and we're talking now about three different acquisitions that now constitute the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve. The first was Valentine Camp, which is in the ski resort town of Mammoth Lakes, some 136-some acres. And the story there is that it was a small "Bohemian Grove" owned by a group of well-to-do businesspeople in Southern California for many, many years. And one of them was Ed Valentine, who I think had a connection with a large department store. His son eventually bought out all the other interests and was married to Carol Valentine. After he passed away Carol was living in Santa Barbara and while she would be visiting the 136 acres—they had a beautiful cabin there—every summer, she realized, as other owners were tending to do at that period, that, "Gosh, what's going to happen after I'm gone and what will be the implications in my estate and the like?" So she had heard from a member of our advisory committee for the Ford Foundation Campaign—again, it tends to come back to that—of this program called the Natural Land and Water

Reserve System. She then went to the chancellor of the Santa Barbara campus, who she knew, by the name of Vernon Cheadle, and asked if he thought the university would be interested in this property. The next thing I knew I had a call from either Vernon or one of his colleagues. The development director at the time was a classmate of mine from Berkeley by the name of Jim Cherry. Jim and Chancellor Cheadle and I started to collaborate on how we could acquire this property and what would be involved. It quickly became apparent that Carol was suggesting an outright gift of the property and an outright gift of a \$500,000 endowment to go with it. Pretty hard to turn that type of transaction down.

This was in the early seventies. And we've talked earlier about how I was being urged to slow down acquisitions, that the university had so many financial struggles that it might not be that we could continue with the growth of the system. As I think back about it, I think it was very fortuitous that we were being offered an outright gift of land plus an endowment to maintain it. Otherwise we might not have been able to justify it and work through the details.

There was a Valentine Foundation that had been established, too, and so I think technically the property was owned maybe 50 percent by Mrs. Valentine and 50 percent by the Valentine Foundation and it was the foundation, I think, that made the \$500,000 endowment possible. The foundation also had, as I recall, two or three parcels in Pasadena, my old hometown, that they wanted to donate, as well. And so we were able subsequently to sell those three parcels and add to the endowment. It really worked out well.

Another advantage I had in negotiating the final terms of the agreement—because we had to come up with restrictive language and how the site would be used and how Mrs. Valentine and her family would retain certain rights, as we did in Big Creek—was that her attorney was a fellow by the name of Maynard Toll, who I had known in my Berkeley days when he was president of the California Alumni Association. Dealing with an attorney who you already had connections with facilitated the negotiations. It helped he was a Berkeley graduate, of course. So that was the beginning.

Within I would say, a year or so I receives a call from Phil Pister. We've mentioned Phil several times before. By then I had been deeply involved in negotiating the acquisition of the Fish Slough property near Bishop, which Phil had brought to our attention. He said, "Roger, I just heard that the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab, not too far from Mammoth Lakes, is up for grabs. The US Fish & Wildlife Service no longer has use for it and I think you might be able to acquire it and perhaps manage it in connection with this new Valentine property you just acquired." (JRS: Even today, the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab is better known by its acronym, SNARL.) So that started negotiations with US Fish & Wildlife Service for the improvements on the property and it turned out that we could acquire those for about one dollar,

because it was excess property from the federal government. The underlying land, fifty acres, was owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. We had to figure out what kind of deal would they be willing to negotiate. Again, many meetings back and forth were required but it turned out their general manager was a Berkeley graduate by the name of Paul Lane. It was once again fortuitous. We worked out—I think it was a fifty-year lease with the understanding either party could cancel the lease with ten years notice. We were trying to retain, and I think we talked about this earlier, rights to the property for at least ten years. It was on an annual rolling basis. So at the end of a given year, the agreement was extended one year. This was designed to give researchers some assurance that if they were to start a research project they would have at least ten years to complete it. It was a matter of an underlying principle of the program. So that was the second acquisition.

The third occurred some years later when I think Dan Dawson, the reserve manager, said that a little green church across the road on Highway 395, owned by a Presbyterian church in Sacramento, was going to be sold. He said, “I think this would be an ideal site for an education center, a place where we could hold meetings, maybe lectures, and classes. Maybe tie it in with a K-12 program my wife is starting to develop with some proximity to the reserves.” So for \$1,500 we bought a church. It still is there but I understand it’s in the pathway of the Greater Mammoth Lakes Airport and has been condemned. It also has become rather excess to the needs of the reserve because in recent years they have been very fortunate in developing some magnificent classroom buildings on the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab property itself, which meet all those needs that initially we were trying to meet with the acquisition of the church. But when I go by, as I did this summer on my way to my annual encampments in the Sierra, I always pause and take a look at the church and think about that \$1,500 acquisition.

06-01:11:53

Burnett:

Well, hopefully it will be documented with lots of photographs and preserved in memories. Historic mitigation, I guess. Yeah. And so that was actually prior, these acquisitions were prior to the Big Creek and the—

06-01:12:10

Samuelsen:

I think so, as I recall. I think it was about '72, '73. We had a dedication ceremony on the Santa Barbara campus for the Valentine Reserve, the Santa Cruz Island Reserve, the Coal Oil Point Reserve, and I think the Carpinteria Marsh Reserve, all at one time, four for one, at about that time.

06-01:12:35

Burnett:

But these two, the SNARL and Valentine acquisition and the Granite Mountains Desert Research Center, these are two of maybe, depending on how you measure it, four to six eastern mountain areas, [whereas] the vast majority of the reserve properties are along the coast or near the coast.

06-01:13:05

Samuelsen: Yes.

06-01:13:07

Burnett: And so that's another feature that makes these particularly special.

06-01:13:12

Samuelsen: Yes.

06-01:13:13

Burnett: Was there an added personal satisfaction for you because of your mountaineering or does the mountaineering go hand-in-hand with the acquisition of these properties? Did you really cultivate a sense for backcountry backpacking and hiking as a result of doing these kinds of acquisitions?

06-01:13:35

Samuelsen: Well, it probably was simultaneous, although as we've discussed before, I had an interest going back to my Boy Scout days. But I'm sure there were times that I combined by backpacking with a visit or two with these reserves or with a donor, was able to combine that in some ways. And then, if truth be known, I prevailed upon Dan Dawson and his people once in a while to take my backpacking buddies and me up to a trailhead and otherwise take care of us.

06-01:14:14

Burnett: Oh, wonderful. Wonderful.

06-01:14:16

Samuelsen: But, of course, Dan and I were talking business the whole time so as to justify that. [laughter]

06-01:14:22

Burnett: Well, I mean, you just recently came back from backpacking in the Eastern Sierras, is that right?

06-01:14:28

Samuelsen: Well, we're now camping in cabins and taking day hikes. But yes.

06-01:14:35

Burnett: To a lot of people that's still roughing it, just to be clear. [laughter]

06-01:14:40

Samuelsen: [laughter] No, I just returned. It's been over forty years and a very satisfying experience.

06-01:14:45

Burnett: Wow. So these were some signature examples of the types of negotiations, the types of stakeholders that you had to bring in. And in Phil Pister's oral history he talks about the difficulties of Fish Slough, so I don't want to necessarily repeat his story. But you have automatically a different perspective on it because you're a different person. And so it stands as a kind of contrasting

example, perhaps, of a challenge, a particularly challenging acquisition or disappointment. I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about a couple of examples, if you would, about challenges in acquiring properties.

06-01:15:43

Samuelson:

We spent a lot of time on the Fish Slough project. And, of course, we were stimulated by Phil Pister, who had a passion for protecting the habitat in Fish Slough, which goes back to the time before LA Water & Power was drawing water from the Owens Valley to meet its needs in the metropolitan Los Angeles area. It's still in a fairly pristine condition. There were some inholdings that we were hoping to acquire with a view toward putting at least some of the Fish Slough property into the Natural Reserve System. I particularly recall some 200 acres that was owned by a gentleman by the name of Ed Wilson. We had it appraised. He wanted more than the appraisal. We came within not that much, maybe \$20,000, of reaching agreement. All of a sudden we heard that he had sold that property to two brothers by the name of Zack. I then started negotiations with the Zack brothers, one being an orthopedic surgeon, another being an anesthesiologist. This became very personal because they had operated on Phil Pister's wife and it did not go well. It had much to do with her living for many, many years as an invalid and recluse. Phil shared this with me. Phil is a very, very close friend today and in part it has to do with this journey that we shared. I had to balance obviously an emotional appeal with whether this was in the best interest of the university to pursue. With the concurrence of various faculty committees we decided to continue our negotiations. We weren't successful with the Zack brothers in acquiring their interest because they were a little bit skeptical about public institutions and felt that too much property was being taken off the property rolls, the tax rolls. They also felt this would be suitable for alfalfa production and they just could not appreciate some of the natural values. Very, very difficult negotiations ensued.

However, we were finally, and we played a major role in this, able to persuade the Bureau of Land Management to exchange a property with the Zack brothers, to give them property they could develop while consolidating BLM's holdings by taking this private inholding out of Fish Slough. This required an act of Congress. With the help of our Washington, DC office we were able to secure passage of that legislation. The exchange was consummated. But as part of all that, the Zack brothers wanted to make sure there was a water source. So I expended university funds in determining whether, through a test well, there was a water source.

There still was the question of how is this was going to fit in the Natural Reserve System. We did develop a memorandum of understanding while I still was director. It was an understanding about joint management, but we still were not sure whether we could actually allocate x number of acres to the NRS and keep the public out because there's a road right through the site and there's interest in the public in going there. As time went on, and this was

primarily after my time, the decision was made to have the university back off from active management and turn it entirely over to the Bureau of Land Management to manage as an area of critical environmental concern, and that's how it's being managed today. So the good news is that it's protected, it's being well-managed, there is public access. Phil's beloved pup fish have been protected. But I do have some disappointment, that, after all of that effort and energy, it was not possible to bring some of it into the NRS and have it considered one of the reserves. But I think there are good reasons for that. I understand that, but it's just a disappointment.

The other project that comes to mind goes back to the beginning of the Natural Reserve System when Ken Norris and the faculty identified, largely through the influence of his brother Bob Norris, the geologist, and a wonderful geologist at UCLA by the name of Clarence Hall, a property called Tick Canyon. This was a place where Bob and Clarence and others would take students to map the geology year-in and year-out. It was owned by US Borax Company. We spent many, many hours negotiating with US Borax to obtain it, either as a gift, by purchase, or whatever. And we came close. But there was one major problem and that is that it had been mined over the years by US Borax and there were outcroppings of boron and arsenic. The place was somewhat contaminated. I had to struggle with the general counsel's office as to how far we were willing to go to assume potential liability. We had long discussions with US Borax about their holding the university harmless. Well, they didn't want to do that. Would they do it in part? No. And over the years they cleaned it up, they got all sorts of sign-offs that they had pretty well taken care of cleaning up this contaminated area. Even to the end of my tenure there was the slim hope that we might be able to work this out to the satisfaction of all the parties involved, and particularly the general counsel's office and the Board of Regents. But we were not able to conclude negotiations. And then, subsequent to my time, a decision was made later by my successors that it was just too much potential liability to proceed. I'm disappointed because I know how disappointed Clarence and Bob and other geologists were and I would have liked to have had one of the reserves in the system dedicated to geology. Obviously you have the Granite Mountains and others, which have very fine geological features, but there was just something about this site that would have been special. I was also anxious for UCLA to have a significant reserve beyond the Stunt Ranch property in the Santa Monica Mountains that they could call their own and manage.

06-01:24:31

Burnett:

And they eventually sold that, too. Does UCLA have other significant reserves?

06-01:24:41

Samuelson:

Well, they do now because they're now managing the White Mountain Reserve, which is very significant. Of course, that occurred after my time. So they now are managing two reserves to my knowledge. (JRS: Stunt Ranch is

the second reserve; as reported earlier, it was acquired in negotiating the sale of the Jones property in the Santa Monica Mountains.) I might say that some of my disappointments have been overcome, White Mountain being one. The Angelo Reserve upon the south fork of the Eel River being another that did not materialize during my time, even though we spent a lot of time negotiating with the various parties involved. But I now have the satisfaction of realizing that both sites now are part of the system and maybe some of the preliminary work that we did ultimately paid dividends.

06-01:25:34

Burnett:

Yeah. Well, I think you said last time that some of these can take several decades to come to fruition and it's a question of being very patient. It's almost like in the Middle Ages when people would start working on a castle as children and knowing that they would not live to see its completion because it would take a hundred years to build. So you're really building out something for the future. And did you want to say something about Strawberry Canyon, as well? Was it part of that set of challenges?

06-01:26:12

Samuelson:

I may have touched upon this before. We always were hoping for each campus to have what we called a near-campus reserve. And I always hoped, maybe it's because I'm a Berkeley graduate, that we could bring at least portions of Strawberry Canyon into the reserve system as a near-campus reserve. But this was not ever possible, I think largely because the campus wanted to maintain its options for future improvements in Strawberry Canyon and wanted to maintain that control and not relinquish it to the Office of the President or the Board of Regents. So I understood the reasons but I was disappointed that there wasn't that opportunity. Fortunately there are now very active discussions underway about Berkeley assuming a new reserve over at Point Reyes. And while that's not next door it is close enough that it's within the framework of a near-campus reserve and I'm very excited that they're going to apparently acquire a building there which will be the headquarters and then have broad use of the Point Reyes National Seashore. This will be somewhat akin to the White Mountains where you have major improvements and have access to the surrounding acreage of the White Mountains or to the Yosemite Reserve that's now managed by UC Merced, where they have wonderful facilities in the Wawona area and have access to Yosemite and the surrounding national park. So it's an evolution of the system. You don't have to necessarily control all the land that you have use of. I think the model there goes back to the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab. I mean, that site is only fifty acres and, admittedly, they do a lot of work on the site but the research students there are working up and down the Sierra Range and Mono Lake and the like and it's very exciting to think of the access they have to those areas. But it couldn't happen if you didn't have a center of operations.

06-01:28:48

Burnett:

That's a really important aspect of this, I think, because it's not just acquiring parcels of land that have representative ecosystems. It is very much about establishing these conduits that bring the students out to these places and give them a railhead of some kind, some kind of a base of operations that facilitates the research. So it's infrastructural as much as it is about acquiring title and things like that. You have to be thinking, and you're always thinking when you're doing your fundraising about what kinds of improvement in infrastructure can be developed there, whether it's public access, but more importantly, I think for your purposes, the research access and the student access that enables the whole system to work. So when the NLWRS began, I think there were six or seven properties that got folded into it at the start between '65 and '67. By the mid-eighties, let's say, I think it's around twenty-six, something like that, twenty-two to twenty-six. I think this is an interesting document I have here, which is a celebration of the first twenty years of the Natural Reserve System. But I wanted to ask, there is a real shift, and maybe it's a shift in name only, but the NLWRS becomes the NRS in 1983, I think, or '84. Can you talk about that change? Is there a significance? Is there a story behind that or was it just a question of making it easier to say? [laughter]

06-01:30:52

Samuelson:

The story behind that is that I was invited to give a talk to the Santa Barbara Garden Club. And after my talk all of the questions had to do with water. People there assumed by my being director of the Natural Land and Water Reserve System, that I was an expert on water, and that somehow water resources were part and parcel of our portfolio. Santa Barbara was struggling with water issues at that time, scarcity of supplies. And so afterwards I shared that with my staff and with the faculty and said, "Maybe 'NLWRS' is misleading." And I think, too, it always had been a mouthful. And so then we started to talk about alternatives. And initially we came up with NAS, National Areas System or something like that, but realized that conflicted with one of the federal agencies. (JRS: National Academy of Sciences.) So then we came up with NRS, Natural Reserve System, and went to the Board of Regents for approval—there was no more significance than what I just outlined. But that's how we came upon that.

06-01:32:33

Burnett:

So this is coming up on the twentieth anniversary. And I did check and there were twenty-six reserves as part of the now-Natural Reserve System by 1985. There's a reason for the existence of this pamphlet. Can you talk a little bit about this celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Natural Reserve System and kind of what it meant for you personally looking back over what might seem like an implausible story of the development of the system?

06-01:33:16

Samuelson:

We decided to make quite a bit of the twentieth anniversary, and in part it was because we were continuing to suffer with lack of visibility, lack of recognition, lack of support. And so my staff convinced me to use some of our

discretionary funds to hire a wonderful photographer by the name of Galen Rowell to take pictures of some of our reserves and put together the brochure you have in front of you, to spend a little extra money and make it with four colors so it had greater visibility. We also decided to sponsor a lecture series. We brought five lecturers from around the country to give a talk in Berkeley one day and the next day a talk in UCLA and invite various and sundry supporters and faculty members and students to these lecturers. We had a wonderful photographer by the name of Robert Bateman give one of those. Tom Lovejoy was director of the Wildlife Society. Peter Raven was director of the Botanical Gardens in Saint Louis. People of that ilk. We also started a Friends of the Natural Reserve System or Natural Land and Water Reserves System, trying to generate not only at a system-wide level but at a reserve and campus level a group of supporters. Again trying to seek additional support for the program. Even retained a person on a part-time basis to help put that together. We pursued that for several years but just could not quite pull it off, in part because it was a system-wide program and we were at a disadvantage in attracting potential members—we brought in some money but not much. But yes, I think we were recognizing how far we'd come in twenty years but we were concerned about the future of the system and what we could do to generate, as I say, more visibility and support.

06-01:35:52

Burnett:

Well, there were some glimmers on the horizon. There were some grants, matching grants that were undertaken, something about the National Science Foundation. Was there support? I know there is now because the NRS touts how much—something like half a billion dollars of research money has been involved in research that was undertaken in the Natural Reserve System. But at that time, what was it like in the 1980s?

06-01:36:30

Samuelson:

I think we were realizing that these reserves needed support facilities. By then we had an associate director by the name of Ron Carroll, who was an eminent scientist in his own right and had connections with the National Science Foundation. Jeff Kennedy, our environmental planner, played a major role in this. They convinced me that there would be value in using some of the proceeds from the sale of the Jones property that I described at our last session as matching money for a program the National Science Foundation was undertaking for support facilities of the type we were seeking. So that led to several grants being made. We talked earlier about the Granite Mountains and one grant clearly was for Granite Cove after we acquired that property. I think these grants paved the way toward broadening our thinking about the importance of these facilities—that facilities not only would enhance the use of the Reserve System but facilities could be located and managed consistent with all the values that we were beholden to.

06-01:38:02

Burnett:

And as part of this process you're trying to understand the development of your development operations. You're trying to plan for the future. And this

was done formally, I think, so that there was an executive committee formed during the 1980s. Can you talk about that process of review and planning of the NRS as the 1980s unfold?

06-01:38:37

Samuelson:

Well, there were several efforts to do some long-term planning. But several that stand out you've alluded to. One, the executive committee that was made up of Mildred and Ken and a professor here at Berkeley named Carole Hickman. They put together a review of where we were and what were some of the needs. I think were particularly anxious about how to integrate the Natural Reserve System into the academic framework of the university and how to increase the visibility and what are the funding shortfalls for the various reserves, for the campus NRS offices, for the system-wide office. And then that was followed several years later by what I'll call an external review committee where we brought in three highly regarded ecologists, scientists from around the world, one was from Wales and another I think from the University of Pennsylvania, to do an objective review of where we were.

That was a difficult time for me because the thrust of that committee was that it was time for someone with academic credentials to become the director of the system. I tried not to be thin-skinned about it but there didn't seem to be a recognition of what I had done in my tenure as director, although I'm a non-scientist so I could understand where they were coming from.

That led to a decision by Vice President Farrell, with the advice of the executive committee and the university-wide NRS committee, to pursue a search for a new director. And Ken said, "Upon a new director I want you to become my special assistant." So I started to think, "Well, where's my career going to go from here and how might that turn out?" So a search was undertaken and there were three candidates who rose to the top of the list and the search committee proposed these to Vice President Farrell. The leading candidate was very concerned about the lack of support of the Natural Reserve System by the university, meaning he could see that there just was not enough support. My recollection is that he asked Vice President Farrell if he could meet with President David Gardner and plead the case, otherwise he was not going to take the position. I wasn't party to that discussion but it apparently did not go as this candidate hoped it would, so he withdrew. And then the search committee and Farrell, I guess, had some misgivings about the other candidates. By that time I had gone half-time as director. And we can come back to that. (JRS: I served for several years as both Director of the NRS and Special Assistant to the Vice President; the latter position involved property negotiations and fundraising for the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.) Ken said, "I want you to return as full-time director and we're going to call off this search." So that was the end result of that, as I call it, external review. It was rather hard for me to stomach.

06-01:42:47

Burnett: I bet.

06-01:42:50

Samuelsen: And so I was able to continue for maybe two more years as director. But during the last year or so of the time that I was director, a number of us thought, “Well, you know, there really is a need for more of an internal long-range plan, a blueprint for the future.” I don’t remember all the details of how the committee came to be but this had the support of Vice President Farrell. I’m sure he was the one who persuaded the chancellor at Riverside, by the name of Rosemary Schraer, to be the chair of this committee. Farrell appointed a committee that included representatives of each of the campuses, including the vice-chancellor at Davis, Larry Vanderhoef, who was later to become chancellor of the Davis campus, several deans, and some high-profile faculty. It was a blue-ribbon internal committee. They put together what I consider even today to be a magnificent report that I think paved the way for my successors and people involved to take the reserve system to the next level. It did include a recommendation that an academic director be recruited. By then I think I had come to well understand that that was in the best interest of the Natural Reserve System and my best interest would be served by stepping down and pursuing some other pursuits. As luck would have it, the university at about that time announced what they called VERIP, a what—

06-01:44:50

Burnett: It’s an early retirement—

06-01:44:51

Samuelsen: —volunteer early retirement incentive program or something like that.

06-01:44:55

Burnett: Yeah, right.

06-01:44:56

Samuelsen: I decided to take advantage of that, which gave me early retirement at the age of fifty-five. Not that I was going to not pursue something else. And as we will get into later, I had started by that time to get involved with the selection of a tenth campus in the San Joaquin Valley and it became rather evident that, even after taking early retirement, I might be able to continue on a part-time basis in helping that effort. But that’s a story in itself that we’ll get to at a later time.

So the ending of my tenure was a challenging one for me, personally, but as I look back I think what happened was for the best interests of all concerned and I’m just grateful that in the end we were able to leave behind this report from the committee handed by Chancellor Schraer. Regrettably, she died not too long after the report was completed, so she didn’t have a chance to see it implemented in its full extent. But I think we owe her a great debt.

06-01:46:16

Burnett:

Even if you hadn't taken early retirement, because of the nature of the Natural Reserve System—and this comes from all of the background interviews I did—the refrain was there may not—it ranges from there may not to there would not have been a Natural Reserve System without Roger Samuelsen. They really say that it's the character and the individual, the person, who was able to put that together. So it is an institution that's somewhat astride the university. I can always understand why the university thinks that a solution to something is to have a faculty member involved. What is always baffling to me is that there is an assumption that a trained scientist or a faculty member of some kind automatically has the abilities that are required to grow a system or to found one. And so that's not to say that academics are not entrepreneurial. They very often are very entrepreneurial and very successful in that kind of work. But it was smart, I think, to try to formalize something about what you had contributed and to learn. I imagine that you were involved in contributing to that, your knowledge and your experience, so that they could develop something for—because you would eventually retire at some point and they would need to figure out how to institutionalize that talent. I think that's always a burning question when you have any kind of institution that's really grown by one person who works together with a whole bunch of people, but is led by one person. How do you take that and turn it into some kind of protocol or something? And it's extremely difficult to do. And so I think they were facing that and it was probably smart that they did it. But I can understand why that would feel like that would be smart. At the very least, try to find someone who brings to the table—I think your legal training is important—but also your profound understanding of, negotiation is too crass an element. I think understanding the needs of different people and placing that as the center of the problem and how you bring those people together, that is, by definition, negotiation. But that's the real heart of it, I think. So that seems to be what you had brought to the table for those twenty-five years.

06-01:49:39

Samuelsen:

Well, you're very gracious and I am grateful for your thoughts about that.

06-01:49:45

Burnett:

But it sounds to me like there was a tremendous achievement during that period and it was recognized in the twentieth anniversary. And really all the people who were involved, a really great list of all the different functions of the Natural Reserve System, are in that twenty-year anniversary document. And you've recognized quite a few of them in the previous session. And so I wanted to ask you if, on your reflection, based on what you've seen about how the NRS has developed over time, how do you feel about your legacy? How would you describe it in terms of the direction that the Natural Reserve System went into until 2016 and on into the future? Not a tough question at all, I realize. [laughter]

06-01:50:51

Samuelson:

Oh, gosh. Well, I'm very pleased the way the system has evolved and I feel very fortunate that I'm now going to have some limited involvement with where it's going to go from here. As I mentioned earlier, a fiftieth anniversary, fifty million dollar campaign is about to be launched and President Napolitano has included me among those who have been asked to serve on the board of councilors for that effort. We have our first meeting later this month on the Blue Oaks Reserve and I'm looking forward to seeing that site for the first time. But a lot of time and effort has been put into formulating the needs. We've touched upon those needs previously. And I'm very impressed with the work that's been done. I'm looking forward to that. But it's also gratifying that at this stage of my life there seems to be some recognition of the role that I played, not the least of which is this oral history, which I never anticipated. But more recently, on a very personal note, my three kids on my eightieth birthday surprised me by collaborating with Peggy Fiedler, the current director, with whom I have a very good relationship—I think the world of Peggy. But they came up with a Samuelson scholarship for undergraduate research on the reserves. And, as I understand it, this is going to encourage some of the disadvantaged students who might not otherwise have an opportunity to do undergraduate research on reserves, to do their work and I am very honored to have my name associated with that and grateful to my three kids for their willingness to put some seed money into that. I have a feeling they have prevailed upon Jeane to do the same. But raising money for that is going to be part of this fifty million dollar campaign, as I understand it. So it's gratifying to be recognized. But I've tried to emphasize over and over again that I was only one of a number of people who brought us to where we are today and I may have played a small role in bringing these people together but we could not have done it without the faculty and the donors and the administrators and the staff people, all the people who helped me along the way.

06-01:53:58

Burnett:

I think it's only appropriate if you spend your career thanking people for their generosity and their participation and their investment personally and financially in the success of your endeavor, that at some point somebody should thank you. I think that's appropriate and it's wonderful that you're being recognized for that and I think that's a really, really great contribution to the history of the NRS.

06-01:54:27

Samuelson:

Thank you.

06-01:54:28

Burnett:

Well, let's continue next time in talking about the next phase of your career, with some overlap with the story that we've been looking at now. But let's explore that next time.

06-01:54:39

Samuelson: Thank you, Paul.

[End of Interview]

Interview 7: February 10, 2017

07-00:00:00

Burnett:

This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series, and it's Friday, February 10, and this is our seventh session, and we're here at the Bancroft Library at UC [University of California] Berkeley. So the last session we were talking about the decision about getting an academic person in as the head of the Natural Reserve System, the effort to find someone, the fact that that didn't quite go so well. You were asked back. So you're a hard person to replace. This is something that's happening at the end of the 1980s. But there are other things afoot at the end of the 1980s and I'm wondering if you can set the scene for us in terms of, shall we call them, population pressures on the UC system as a whole. What was happening that was leading the UCOP [University of California Office of The President] to make some new decisions about where to take things?

07-00:01:33

Samuelsen:

Well, first of all, I think it was a good period for the university from a budgetary standpoint. David Gardner had come in as president in 1983 or so and was able to negotiate with the governor, Governor [George] Deukmejian, significant increases in the budget for the university. So things were looking good at that time. The existing campuses were well-funded. There was a realization at about the same time that enrollment projections were going to outrun the capacity of the campuses to handle the demand in years to come. So my reading of the record is that the president authorized quite an extensive enrollment study and asked the campuses to review what they thought their build-out might be, keeping in mind the surrounding community, the availability of land, the possible feedback from the community as to how many more students and faculty they could absorb. The end result was a presentation to the Board of Regents in late 1988 that showed that within about ten or twelve years the likely enrollment demand was going to outrun the capacity of the university. And my recollection is that they projected maybe as many as 60,000 more students by year 2020. But that there would be some 20,000 that there would not be room for. So that started the quest for a new campus or actually up to three campuses were thought of at the time.

07-00:03:41

Burnett:

That's almost unimaginable today. Were there demographic shifts as well? Were there other considerations about where students were going to be living? Was there concern even then about the siting of these campuses? Did they not want to duplicate the location of the existing campuses, to reinforce that?

07-00:04:06

Samuelsen:

Well, the population of the state was clearly growing, particularly in the Central Valley and in the Los Angeles basin. I think there certainly was some consideration as to whether you could just handle future enrollment projections by expanding the existing campuses and whether that would be less expensive, assuming you could get through the environmental issues and

the growth concerns of the communities. But my recollection is that the feeling was that it would probably cost about the same amount to build a new campus or new campuses as it would to expand the existing campuses, given all the considerations, particularly if you were to start a new campus out in the middle of nowhere where you didn't have to buy or acquire expensive land or move people out of the way.

07-00:05:04

Burnett:

A clean slate. And they'd had that experience with other campuses, from the more recently built campuses. They'd been able to build up a city or a region at the same time that they build the university. The university is kind of the engine of that growth and that ends up being a real model. I suppose, that is on the table when they're thinking about these things. At this time you are still very much at the Natural Reserve System. At the same time I can see how you might be considered an asset if they were to go forward in thinking about siting a campus, thinking back to your earlier experiences, even though you were a young man at that point. But looking at campus [siting] and land acquisition. But your experience statewide with land acquisition and negotiations and all that, I can see that being a real asset to the university system. So you become involved in this project when they actually decide that they want to have another campus. How does that come about?

07-00:06:25

Samuelsen:

I actually volunteered. At that time I was starting to give thought as to how I wanted to spend the rest of my career. It was evident that I was not going to be staying on as director of the Natural Reserve System that much longer because of what we have discussed in the past. I also was approaching, I think, fifty-five, so I still had ten or more good years to go. I even went to a career counselor and sought help and went through a battery of tests, thinking that maybe something other than the University of California should be considered. Maybe going back to the practice of law, maybe some other form of public service. I still recall that the end result of that was: "you really are well fit for the University of California in terms of the satisfaction it gives you, the gifts you have, what you can contribute—if possible you should try and stay within the University of California." So about this time I had followed the enrollment projections and the call for up to three new campuses. I made an appointment with Vice President Ron Brady and asked him if there might be a possible role for me, either on a part-time basis or even a full-time basis, in the search for a new campus. I told him that I had come back full-time to the university in 1967 with the expectation that I was going to be involved with negotiating up to three campus sites. And we've covered that before. So the thought had occurred to me that maybe I could end my career where I thought it was going to start at the university.

I had not really understood at the time what the structure was for the search. He explained to me that the president had appointed a Site Selection Taskforce and an executive staff made up of administrators throughout the

Office of the President to staff the taskforce and to advise the administration. He asked if I would be interested in serving on that executive staff. Well, it turned out to be the executive staff was made up of people like myself who had full-time jobs and were asked to meet once a week from 3:00 to 5:00 as a committee and take on various tasks on top of what they were doing in their full-time jobs. I accepted the invitation, not knowing what it might lead to. As with all my colleagues, this became just an overwhelming assignment because we were having to work weekends and evenings and somehow putting in time to travel or meet with owners of prospective sites or county officials and the like. Somehow we were also traveling and taking care of our regular jobs.

07-00:10:04

Burnett: And this is in 1989, is that right?

07-00:10:05

Samuelsen: Yes.

07-00:10:07

Burnett: I want to continue along this thread but I also want to ask you, how old were you at this time when the writing was on the wall with respect to the Natural Reserve System? Do you remember how old you were at that time?

07-00:10:21

Samuelsen: Well, I think I must have been fifty-three or so.

07-00:10:24

Burnett: So definitely not old enough to retire.

07-00:10:28

Samuelsen: That's right.

07-00:10:28

Burnett: But old enough to have some apprehension. Looking back, I wonder why you were worried at all. I wonder why you hired a career consultant? But it's scary, is it not? I wonder if you could say something about what that's like, because this is something that people face. That's a dead zone career-wise for a lot of people when they're made redundant or when they're asked to change careers or reconsider and they're in their late forties, early fifties. They can't retire but they have to retool for something else. It's a scary moment. I wonder if you could say something about what that's like. And you took really proactive steps. It's no surprise that you were able to find a new niche. Is there some advice you can give to people going through that time in those circumstances?

07-00:11:44

Samuelsen: Well, it was a difficult time. I would say throughout the eighties I applied for a number of jobs, both within the university and outside the university, thinking that while I just loved my work as director of the Natural Reserve System, it probably would be best for the system and for me that I not plan on doing that the rest of my career. And you're always wanting to make as much

of an impression and an impact as you can on whatever you're doing to gain the satisfaction. I did have a fallback position in the sense that during that period Vice President Jim Kendrick asked me, or we negotiated an arrangement where I would go half-time as director of the Natural Reserve System and half-time as his special assistant. In part we were trying to free up money to hire an associate director with an academic background. I've mentioned earlier Ron Carroll. And that's where we got the money to do that. But, again, I was taking on more than I could handle. All of a sudden I had two full-time jobs during that period, and yet I knew that if time went on and I left the directorship of the Natural Reserve System, with the encouragement of Vice President Kendrick and then his successor, Vice President Ken Farrell, I could stay on as special assistant and there always was plenty to do.

07-00:13:25

But somehow that just didn't match my satisfaction antennae. I just felt that I wanted to do something more. And so advice to others? I guess persistence. Allow things to unfold as they might and not try to jump too quickly into the first opportunity, to do some soul searching. And that's what the counselor helped me to do. Just trust. As luck would have it, when I was going through all this, I had no idea the university was contemplating an early retirement program. So when that came onboard I decided to take early retirement in 1991, but with the clear understanding with Vice President Brady and my colleagues on the executive staff that I would stay on in some kind of a consulting capacity. I did that for two days a week initially. And getting a little bit ahead of myself, eventually two days became three days and then became four days and ultimately some years later I was advised that I really needed to un-retire, come back full-time, which I did the last three or four years of my career. But, again, I couldn't have known that that was going to evolve, but just trusted that it would. It also gave me a chance, that is, the early retirement, to have some flexible time to catch my breath, spend time with Jeane [Samuelsen], spend time with my kids, and to explore other options.

07-00:15:25

Burnett:

And they were supportive throughout, as well? I mean, that makes a difference.

07-00:15:27

Samuelsen:

Very definitely.

07-00:15:30

Burnett:

It can be an economic crisis but perhaps it's more fundamental, in a sense, and certainly in your case, that it was kind of an existential problem, right. Or not an existential problem but you talked about soul searching and the meaning of work. And when work is demanding it's perhaps easy to lose sight of the "why" and you're just focused on the "how" all the time. That changed for you, opened up a space where you could contemplate the "why" again and reengage on a new level.

07-00:16:17

Samuelson:

Well, I might just dwell on the exercise I went through with Dick Knowdell, the career counselor. He asked me to describe one endeavor that I had undertaken in each decade of my life up to that point and to ponder what I enjoyed doing about that, what satisfaction I derived, what lessons I learned from it. And it really was the composite of those experiences over, say, four decades that contributed to his advising me that the University of California was the right place. I've talked to so many people over the years, particularly classmates from law school, who did not gain that level of satisfaction in what they did, even though they were contributing very much to their clientele. So I feel fortunate that I was able to find my niche.

07-00:17:27

Burnett:

And it's clear. You love Cal. [laughter] You are a fan; you're a booster. You are a champion of University of California Berkeley, the University of California system. And I think if I'm not mistaken, there's an enthusiasm for public education in this state. There's something special about it. It's something I encounter here as a transplant not only from another state but from another country. I can see that it's a dream with which you had direct contact. You had direct contact with Clark Kerr, who was the author of this master plan and the electric dreams of the late fifties and sixties and seventies about what a public education in California could mean for California, for the United States, and for the world. And I think it's a romance for you that's hard to get away from, I think. And I think that's maybe what you worked through with your counselor, that the University of California system was where you needed to be engaged. And that doesn't come without cost. So here you are. You're working your day job at the Natural Reserve System and you're working on the Site Selection Task Force [executive staff], which is composed of people who are also doing their day jobs and you're asked to contemplate something completely new. So how does that become operationalized? Because I think you're starting with a number of goals and some ideals and then almost immediately practical considerations and roll out. Can you take us back to those early meetings with these people? Who are some of these people and what were the conversations like in those weekly meetings?

07-00:19:48

Samuelson:

I was privileged to be a part of it. The chair of the executive staff was Becky DeKalb, who was special assistant to Vice President Brady. And unlike the rest of us she devoted quite a bit of her time, if not all of her time, to this endeavor and she did an extraordinary job not only convening us on a weekly basis but following up, making assignments, summarizing our sessions, just keeping us on our toes. And then other members, the vice chair of the group, was Gary DeWeese, who was from the real estate office. He obviously had land negotiating experience. Karen Merritt was from the academic planning side of the ledger. Chris Adams was a planner. Jack Zimmerman was the environmentalist, handled a lot of the EIR [environmental impact report] endeavors. Jeff Shaw and Ron Kolb were from university relations. Ron was our spokesperson. Jesse was wonderful working with government agencies

and contacting them. Then we had Jan Behrsin from the general counsel's office. (JRS: At some point, Trudy Heinecke, Director of Capital Planning in the Office of the President, joined us. She was invaluable in preparing budgets and undertaking planning exercises in the Valley focused on building a sustainable campus and community. Others involved with environmental issues in the early stages of site selection were Elaine Bild and Jennifer Hernandez.) We covered quite the waterfront in terms of expertise. Our approach was very collegial. We enjoyed being with each other. We trusted one another. I think all of us felt this was an opportunity of a lifetime. And we were willing to devote the hours required because we realized how important this decision was and what an important role that we had.

But prior to my time, just months before I actually joined the group, they had worked with the site selection task force—and I'll come back to the Site Selection Task Force in a minute—to select a consultant to advise on the whole process. And that was the Bechtel Corporation in collaboration with Stanford Research Institute and an organization called the Architects Collaborative. The consultants were commissioned to respond to a working paper the executive staff put together on the requirements for a new campus and to flesh out a process that involved six steps and some thirty-eight factors. My very first recollection of involvement with executive staff was going with members of staff to San Francisco, to the Bechtel offices, and pouring over the draft they had put together on this process. We immediately realized that they were coming at this from a very corporate standpoint. They were used to siting power plants or dams or non-educational type of things. And almost from the beginning there was a tension between those of us with the University of California background had in mind and what Bechtel from a more corporate standpoint had in mind. Nevertheless, with a lot of back and forth, polishing the criteria, polishing the factors, polishing the process, eventually the Site Selection Task Force recommended to the president, who recommended to the regents, that the process, the so-called Bechtel Report, should be adopted as the guideline for how we proceeded.

Let me come back to the Site Selection Task Force because they were very important to this whole process. They were made up of three regents, three vice presidents, two chancellors, and one representative of the academic council. The membership varied from time to time depending upon people stepping aside and being replaced and the like. But for the most part that group was the key advisory group to the president throughout and our job as executive staff was to provide them with factual information which they would use in making their decisions and recommendations as appropriate. We will get back to that as time goes on. They would largely accept the recommendations of the executive staff because we spent a lot of time putting them together.

07-00:25:23

Burnett:

Right. This is what [Rebecca] DeKalb says. So there's the Site Selection Task Force, which is this representation of kind of the governance of this operation and they have the expertise at the chancellor level, some of the more recent campuses, for example, recently built campuses. But the executive staff is the research operation.

07-00:25:55

Samuelsen:

That's right.

07-00:25:56

Burnett:

So you're learning about what is out there and also learning about the process while you're doing the process, right. With any new institution, and I did interviews with the Getty Institute, Getty Conservation Research Institute, which is part of the larger Getty, and they talked about developing the Conservation Institute while the Institute was being founded. And so they spoke about piloting an airplane while it's being built, as it's taking off from the runway. So there's this sense of tremendous chaos and ordering during that process of chaos. So you're constantly making order out of chaos, it seems.

07-00:26:53

Samuelsen:

That's right, that's right. And you're learning in the process. A lot of this we were inventing out of whole cloth because in the late 1980s, early 1990s it was an entirely different endeavor to site up to three campuses than it was, say, in the early 1960s when the last three campuses were created. First of all, in the 1960s there wasn't the Environmental Protection Agency, wasn't the Federal Endangered Species Act. There wasn't the Clean Water Act. There wasn't the California Environmental Quality Act. So we had to work within an entirely different environment. And on top of that population growth had really taken over so available sites were becoming more and more scarce. The fiscal climate was becoming more and more complex and critical. So we had to weigh all these and work within the framework of the Bechtel Report but think about refinements and also anticipate the questions that the Site Selection Task Force and ultimately the regents would want answered having to do with water, infrastructure, community planning, all the other issues that were before us.

07-00:28:36

Burnett:

There's a changing fiscal climate. We can talk about that in a moment. But what's also striking about that period, compared with the 1960s, is a change in the Zeitgeist around the role of government in the economy and that, I imagine, must have changed the conversations a little bit because as the three campuses were being conceived and built in the late fifties, early sixties, it was the enthusiasm for a large state, meaning state in the generic sense, a large state influence on the economy as an engine of growth in the economy. The Great Society. That you can push the needle on a whole number of social problems. This optimism at the beginning of the 1960s that fueled the growth

of those campuses has not only taken a hit by the end of the 1980s, but there is a strong counter narrative. As Ronald Reagan said in the middle of the 1970s, "Government isn't the solution, it's the problem." And so you're dealing with that. You're dealing with a growing public skepticism, an engineered conversation that government is wasteful, private solutions should be sought to government, what had been considered to be the purview of government. And that's very strong at the end of the 1980s. You've had two terms of Ronald Reagan and now you're in the [President George] HW Bush administration at the federal level. And also at that time, I don't know if we're getting ahead of ourselves, but just put that out there that there is a change in the political conversation about the role of the government in the United States and in California. So that's—

07-00:30:44

Samuelson:

I also think in the role and place of the University of California, in the 1960s, as we've covered before, the university could do no wrong. It had tremendous support from Governor Pat Brown and from the legislature. Many, many of the legislators were University of California graduates. They understood the University of California, they supported it. But that really started to change in the decades to follow and by the time we're talking, late 1980s, early 1990s, the university was really struggling to get its fair share of the budget. It was competing more and more with prisons and K-12 and the many other needs of the state. Tuition had come into play. So the environment had changed greatly for the university.

07-00:31:48

Burnett:

And that was a challenge that had to be met. And I imagine that the Bechtel report was extremely useful, even if as a foil for what you ended up doing. The Bechtel Corporation did have experience building not just power plants but whole cities in Saudi Arabia, for example. And so just the planning around bringing in the physical plant of an institution on time and on budget, they have that reputation. And so they also have the reputation of dealing with the regulatory space in the United States and they know about dealing with EPA requirements and clean water requirements and all of that. Was that a useful architecture for the site selection executive staff as they were going forward, or were parts of it junked? Saying, "No, we're not going to do that." Are there things that you just decided right off the bat, "That's the way Bechtel would do it but we're going to do it differently." Or was it more processual than that?

07-00:33:05

Samuelson:

Well, it's a little of all of what you just described. I do think the effort to go outside and get an outside consultant was hopefully to make the process as objective and non-political as possible. To find a way to really search the entire state initially, and not only just the Central Valley, for the best site or sites possible to serve the needs of the university as opposed to relying strictly on proposals that might be made from various communities that might be in their best interests but not necessarily in the best interests of the university. So there was a purpose to be served and I think just setting forth the six steps at

the outset and the factors to be considered was a framework with which we could work. But the six steps really just narrowed it down to, as I recall, eight final sites and then we pretty much took it from there. But I should say, in all candor, that early on things deteriorated with Bechtel and personalities and their methodology, to the point where the university terminated the agreement and the staff in essence took over the entire process, albeit in consultation with the Site Selection Task Force, the president, and the administration and ultimately the regents. But we continued to use that framework. It just became too difficult to have to keep going back and forth and have the differences we had when in essence what was evolving was really pretty much what the staff was creating, along the lines we have already discussed.

07-00:35:18

Burnett:

So the Bechtel approach was more top down? It was more data-driven?

07-00:35:24

Samuelsen:

Yes.

07-00:35:26

Burnett:

“Here are the optimal sites according to these thirty-eight criteria. We’ve already researched this and worked this out. We don’t actually need to talk to anyone about it, and so here are your choices.” And there was pushback.

07-00:35:41

Samuelsen:

It was much more objective, I think, than subjective. But as time went on, I think more and more we realized that while trying to be as objective as possible you really had to be subjective. There were a lot of nuances. And you couldn’t just grade things poor, good, and excellent, or “go or no go,” which was the essence of the Bechtel approach. You had to bring in some other factors, as well. In the end, as we will get to later on, those more subjective nuances, albeit with a particular goal in mind—we had definite factors that needed to be brought to the forefront but it was a judgment that had to be made that wasn’t necessarily based upon poor, good, or excellent or “go or no go.” I think we started out with a number of sites—I think the Bechtel folks initially identified maybe 200 sites throughout the entire state that might be possible. Well, it certainly helped to winnow those down by applying go/no go and immediately eliminating a whole bunch of them. But part of what was happening, too, was that this was becoming just overwhelming for the staff, to think statewide with all of the interactions with the parties involved. And I think that contributed as much as anything to the decision—I think it was in about 1990, within a year or two after the process started—to say, “Wait a minute, this is too much. Let’s concentrate on just one region, the central region,” that was technically inclusive of Monterey County and San Luis Obispo County, but in essence really meant the Central Valley. And that’s when we started to concentrate entirely on that region and ended up with eighty-five sites that eventually were narrowed down.

07-00:37:52

Burnett:

There's a refrain in the history of science and the history of the United States, this kind of tension between technocracy and democracy. An argument with respect to democratic planning, right, that democratic planning is scientific but you have values injected into the process and you have participation sort of earmarked in the process, and that it takes into account the subjective [perspectives] of different groups of people and that the University of California, as a kind of democratic institution, certainly one that's supported by democratic institutions, you'd think that there would be a bit more of that in the balance sheet of the planning process. And so I wonder about that with respect to, say, the eighty-five-site level. That's already when Bechtel's out, right, when you had eighty-five sites. They had 200 sites and they were winnowing down with their, basically, systems analysis. And you get to about eighty-five sites. In talking to people I was trying to figure out, were these solicitations? Was there an open bid at a certain point where people were invited? Counties? Were counties invited across California, saying, "Hey, would you like to have a University of California campus in your county? Call us." How did it work?

07-00:39:36

Samuelson:

Well, again, a little bit of all of what you just described. Some of the sites were part of what Bechtel initially identified. Some were just volunteered by individuals or property owners who heard about the site selection process. Yes, I think the counties and communities were encouraged to come forth with proposals they thought might be viable. We even went over a list of existing university properties and wondered whether they might be appropriate for the site. There's something called Kearney Park, west of Fresno, that is indeed a county park but at least at the time was under lease to the county or city or maybe county and city, but had the potential to be at least a core of a site. So we were open to whatever sites might be out there. Then the challenge was how do you winnow those down and that's a story in itself in the sense that we literally divided up the staff in twos and we divided up the eighty-five sites and we went out over a three-day period with an evaluation sheet we had worked up. We looked out our windshields and got as close as we could and made an evaluation of whether these sites would pass muster on the sheet that we had. It was on the basis of those evaluations—we went back and forth comparing notes, refining and the like afterwards—that we ultimately made recommendations to the Site Selection Task Force on what ended up to be twenty sites.

But looking ahead to the ultimate site, I might note that the two of our colleagues who went out to what ultimately was selected, the Lake Yosemite site, didn't give it all excellent marks. We had again poor, good, excellent. But my recollection in looking through the files is that with regard to access they gave it a good because it was really out in the middle of nowhere. It was serviced by two-lane roads. It was some six miles from Highway 99. And then on visual, again, they were looking at it through a windshield from afar. They

gave it a fair. I think I said “poor” before but I meant “fair.” So when we went to the Site Selection Task Force we said, “This is a site that we think has enough other attributes it ought to be continued but it’s really your decision.” Unlike some of the other twenty sites or so where we said, “Clearly this ought to be advanced because it had all excellents.” And the Site Selection Task Force decided to continue that site among the twenty. That’s one of the many what-ifs. It could have gone either way. Had it gone the other way, we wouldn’t have UC Merced where it is today. But that was a type of process we were pursuing. It was all being done, again, in a very open, collegial way. We would have discussions among us, even arguments amongst us, but we would be resolved to come out with a consensus. Or if we couldn’t come out with a consensus we would say to the SSTF, “We really think you ought to make this decision.”

07-00:44:03

Burnett:

There’s a raw triage that takes place, I imagine. Let’s say a site needs to have water because there are going to be tremendous demands. You could truck water in, I suppose. You could do a Bechtel job of an irrigation ditch or something like that, a conduit or something, aqueduct. But at a certain point you run up into competing criteria. So, for example, access. You want it to be located near a highway, fairly near a highway. That’s for road access. You have to think of your population. So commuters, commuter students who are coming from a catchment area. So you’re thinking of a population catchment area. So you want to be able to draw, say, X number of potential students from what you’ve already decided is an underserved area. So you’re focusing on the Central Valley? And then at a certain point you might consider something like, well, if someone says, “Oh, that’s not as accessible,” one of the other competing criteria might be, “Well, that’s the point, that it’s not as accessible as these other areas because other areas are already well-served.” So you do want it to be a little bit off the beaten path because you want to capture that basin, that population, that catchment area of potential students. So I guess the question that eventually comes out of that long-winded preamble is what were the conversations like around your “customer base?” Your student population? Who are the students of the future of the tenth campus in those conversations?

07-00:46:17

Samuelson:

I think from the get-go the feeling was this should be another general campus of the university, which means both undergraduate and graduate students, and should hopefully attract, as with other campuses, students from all over the state and, indeed, from all over the country, if not internationally. But clearly there was also a desire to increase the number of students coming from the San Joaquin Valley. As you said, those students were really underserved and for whatever reason, be it social or economic, were only entering the University of California at about half the rate as the students from other parts of the state and that just was not acceptable. Many were minorities. Many came from families that had never been to college. I think the feeling was that

just having a campus somewhere in the Valley was going to be enough to attract those students over a period of time. And that they wouldn't necessarily come just from, say, the Merced area or the Fresno area and the like. But part of the strategy, too, was to combine a new campus with some other learning centers throughout the Valley, where they could have more local contact with students, be it through recruitment offices or programs that might be geared to them, readily accessible. So it was a combination of those factors.

07-00:48:05
Burnett:

That's the Kerr dream, I suppose, is a system with these tiers and that if someone goes to the community college they could have a chance to transfer out to either the state system or to the UC system. There has to be a conduit to catch all those people with ambition and talent and the means to do so and to make that the fulcrum of what is supposed to be an open and democratic educational institution. What's striking to me is although it's supposed to be a general campus, and I think this was explicit at a certain point, not an ag [agricultural] college, right. They do not want a college of agriculture, in part because the Central Valley already has one. It's CSU Fresno. And also because agricultural functions are already well integrated into UC Davis and UC Riverside.

07-00:49:15
Samuelsen:

That's right. We also have the Kearney Agriculture Center in Parlier. And we have cooperative extension in each of the county offices. So I think the feeling was agriculture had been covered. There probably was a feeling, too, that we would face resistance from the Farm Bureau and others if we were to take agricultural lands, even though we might be serving the agricultural community. So for a number of reasons that was the feeling. And, frankly, it gave us more flexibility to look for prospective sites, so you didn't necessarily have agricultural lands part of the campus.

07-00:50:02
Burnett:

Yeah. At the same time, all that said, it reminds me of the ideals and the situation of land grant institutions. So you've got these state agricultural and mechanical colleges that are plopped down in the middle of each state. It has that ring to it, although I know it's not that. The idea for the situation of the locality, the idea of serving a population of the state, an underserved population of the state, being of use to them, but in a new way. In a sense it's perhaps the first recognition in the United States of needing to provide educational opportunity to a rural area, that is non-agricultural, that is outward looking, that is focused on—I know we're getting ahead of ourselves here but I think it's a research institution. It's meant to draw people in the fields of engineering. It's really important. So science and engineering is going to be a real focus, although the college ends up being structured in a unique way. And I wonder about that. It's got that spirit of a land grant institution in terms of service to a state, service to the middle of a state, to a predominantly agricultural population, at least in terms of the outset and the ideal. But

recognizing that it's going to be much more on the mechanical and less on the agricultural side, and it's going to provide opportunities to be a twenty-first century institution. Can we talk about the other aspect to this, which is kind of the long view? There was a phrase that came up in the conversations around the purpose of this institution. Can you talk about how people approached thinking about this campus in terms of that long view?

07-00:52:31

Samuelson:

I think when we say that the Valley was underserved by the university it goes way beyond students. You've touched upon that. And I think the research initiatives of the university are already serving the Valley well. I'm thinking of the Sierra Nevada Research Institute which is very strong in the environmental area. My sense is that some of the programs in engineering are serving agriculture in ways that are beyond my total understanding. It's not that agriculture is not being served, it's just being served in a different way.

And then there is just this continual need to educate students for education's sake in the arts as well as in the sciences and to produce as well rounded a student as possible. I think that has always been at the cornerstone of the planning for this new campus. It encompasses the idea of a general campus. That goes back to Clark Kerr and his description of what is entailed with as the concept of a general campus.

07-00:54:07

Burnett:

It may also have gotten a boost from—because if it had just been the idealism of Clark Kerr it may not necessarily have survived the Reagan area. But another boost comes from a kind of more conservative economic bent. Where those who study innovation are coming up and saying, around this time and ever since, that we have to be somewhat agnostic when it comes to education and higher education particularly. We don't know where the next big thing is going to come from decade to decade. And so we need to prepare people generally to think, to be creative, to be inspired, because if we just make it a technical training institute we'll never advance. And I think that's coming into play in conversations about higher education at this time, even though people are terrified that the university's gradually becoming beholden to private interests and that the open inquiry of science is going to be corrupted by it. There is this kind of counter-narrative saying that by all means we want the universities to inspire economic growth and innovation, but you can't do it by foreclosing the discussion about what we're going to look at or what we're going to explore.

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Samuelson:

That's right.

07-00:55:30

Burnett:

And so that might have been a boosting factor to the direction that the university was to take.

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Samuelson:

I also think you want to maintain maximum flexibility for the faculty to create their own programs and initiatives. The beauty of the University of California is that it's a system-wide, but its several campuses are each quite different both physically and programmatically. And I think that was one of the arguments for having a new campus or more than one campus rather than just having an extension of an existing campus. This would give the faculty more flexibility to develop their own interests, draw in their own research grants, draw in their own graduate students and meet the needs as they saw them.

07-00:56:39

Burnett:

Well, it's also, I think, in play. There is this phrase "the 300-year decision." I don't know who actually coins it. I don't know if it's Peltason or where it comes up. Can you talk a little bit about that phrase?

07-00:57:00

Samuelson:

Well, it's certainly one that I've used over the years and kept in mind as we were going through this process, thinking this was a 300-year decision. It often would come up as we would compare this new campus, wherever it might be, with UCLA or Berkeley or Irvine, where you may be out in the middle of nowhere at the outset or be barren of trees, as Irvine was. You want to meet the needs of the 20,000 students who might not otherwise have a place in the next number of years, as I described earlier, but you also want to think about how this campus might evolve fifty, a hundred, three hundred years from now and take a long term view. Lake Yosemite, sure, it's somewhat removed from Merced right now. Merced is still growing. But you have to try to envision what that might look like 300 years from now and whether there's enough land, enough infrastructure, enough water to meet those needs.

07-00:58:28

Burnett:

Right, without question. These are certainly not fly-by-night institutions; they are ones that are meant to serve an economy that is growing and a population that is growing. You're operating on the expectation that notwithstanding temporary downturns, that there is a long view to take. That's a segue to my next set of questions. At that time, while all of this is going on, there is a recession in the United States. It dips into recession for about three quarters in 1990. But the story of the recession in the United States is that the economy is persistently sluggish through to the end of 1992. And the other piece of it that was considered to be very shocking to people was that it was a jobless recovery. So 1.6 million jobs are shed from the economy, really affecting the coasts, the West Coast and the Mid-Atlantic and New England areas. A lot of manufacturing jobs lost; a lot of tech jobs lost. So Boeing gets hit in Southern California. So not only do you have line workers out of work, you've got engineers out of work, you've got medical people out of work. You've got a whole malaise. It's [widespread] white-collar unemployment for the first time really post-World War II. It's a new beast that people are not familiar with and they're just developing a language around it at this time. And that's something that's impacting the United States. It's impacting the state of

California and it has an impact on the UC system, as well. How does that story affect the planning for the tenth campus?

07-01:00:45

Samuelson:

It had a huge impact. The university was experiencing cuts so the campuses were saying, "Wait a minute. We're having to absorb cuts and yet you're still talking about a new campus?" So internally there were huge debates as to whether the process should continue. And having invested what we had in the process, the question was to what extent should we either slow it down or forget about it all together. And it even led, in 1993 or so, to the regents deciding to suspend the process all together. That was not well received in the Valley. It was not well received by legislators who represent the Valley because they felt that they were owed this campus that had long been promised.

I'll just digress while I think about it. Going back to the early sixties while those three campuses were established, there also was quite a bit of talk about even a fourth campus. And there were even sites that were looked at the time in the San Joaquin Valley. And so expectations went way, way back in the Valley for a campus that would serve the needs that we have described.

07-01:02:20

Burnett:

So there was a long memory there and a sense that—

07-01:02:22

Samuelson:

A long, long memory. But anyway, that suspension, and I well recall the meeting of the Board of Regents and the representatives of the various sites being there—we were then down to three—being so disheartened. How could this happen? Ultimately that was resolved through an agreement that was reached with the state legislature and the governor to put some fifty million dollars back into the state budget than what the governor had proposed and to put in an additional \$1.5 million to cover the environmental impact report that was required for the next step of the site selection process—if, and only if, the regents agreed to resume the process. So that required maybe three or four months of negotiations. In the meantime the executive staff was continuing its contacts with the communities and, gosh, I don't know how many meetings I must have had with some of the landowners, the communities, and I'm sure my colleagues did the same, reassuring them that we're doing all we can, we're keeping the process going. Ever so discreetly we would say, "Just hang in there. We'll see if this works out."

07-01:03:54

Burnett:

Obviously in 1993 the search is suspended. Was there a pall hanging over the process during that recession? So starting even in nineteen—were people worried that the axe might fall? Was there talk of the axe falling prior to 1993 or was it more a question of the changeover of the president from David Gardner to Jack Peltason in 1992, '93, right? Nineteen ninety-two, I guess.

07-01:04:32

Samuelsen:

No, I don't think the change of presidency was a factor but I do think that everyone was well aware of what was happening in the economy and I think the communities were well aware that this endeavor might falter. We certainly were accused, either publicly or privately, of dragging our feet. I think we all were trying to find various ways of continuing with the review process behind the scenes but also not building up expectations that could not be realized. And that continued even after the site was selected. In 1995 we were still struggling. The University of California was still struggling with its finances and there still was the big question as to whether the campus would ever evolve. We'll get into this later on, I'm sure. But had it not been the political maneuvering of members of the legislature and of Congress and the persistent contacts made by the Merced community—this is, again, after that site was selected—we might not have a campus even today.

07-01:06:07

Burnett:

Yeah. There's a real sense of contingency in this story. There were several junctures at which it might have been scrapped. That was on the table. And certainly the two new campuses, that did not get off the ground, right?
[laughter]

07-01:06:28

Samuelsen:

Right.

07-01:06:28

Burnett:

Definitely just the one tenth campus. So this was—

07-01:06:32

Samuelsen:

I think the economic turndown that you described probably played a role, too, in realizing that three campuses was totally unrealistic. That, together with the workload that I mentioned earlier and the need to focus just on one and be lucky if we could pull off the one.

07-01:06:51

Burnett:

Yeah. So for the executive staff of the Site Selection Task Force Committee, that's about twenty people, is that right?

07-01:07:06

Samuelsen:

No, I would say more like ten.

07-01:07:08

Burnett:

Ten people. So ten people who were not working full-time. Becky DeKalb was working on this pretty much full-time and there was some administrative support staff?

07-01:07:22

Samuelsen:

Very little.

07-01:07:22

Burnett:

Very little. Okay. So there were ten people—

07-01:07:24

Samuelson: My administrative assistant, Maggie Drake, I've talked about her before, was also having to support my site-selection efforts on top of her regular job and I owe her a great deal for that, as I alluded to before.

07-01:07:41

Burnett: So dividing into groups of two. So these five teams of people on this research staff going out to initially eighty-five sites, doing a 360, looking at what's available, checking off the boxes of the criteria to winnow it down to twenty, right?

07-01:08:05

Samuelson: Right.

07-01:08:06

Burnett: And then down to eight. There's a feedback process where you're reaching into these communities. You're talking to people, you're doing evaluations. You are then reporting back to the committee your findings and then you're having an elimination meeting basically every once in a while?

07-01:08:25

Samuelson: That's right.

07-01:08:26

Burnett: You say, "We have a deadline here. We're going to make a cut," and then you're going to make another cut and another cut.

07-01:08:33

Samuelson: That's right.

07-01:08:33

Burnett: So you make about three, I guess. You go eighty-five to twenty, twenty to eight.

07-01:08:37

Samuelson: Eight to three.

07-01:08:40

Burnett: To three.

07-01:08:40

Samuelson: That's right. And we were following the steps of the Bechtel report in doing this. So there was a logic to how we proceeded—so we would, in keeping with the Bechtel report, apply different criteria and different factors for each of the steps along the way. But as I suggested earlier, we would have to modify some of the criteria to meet the needs as we saw them. It was a matter of refinement. It was not just meeting from 3:00 to 5:00 once a week. That's where we would all bring it together and report. But then we would agree on assignments that we would take on before we met the week following or we would compare notes by email or by phone call or by separate meetings and the like. This is in addition to the trips we were taking to the Valley and

meeting with folks or meeting with consultants. Incidentally, consultants came into play, too, when we got to twenty sites because we had outside consultants who were screened and hired to help us in addressing whatever the criteria was, the factors and criteria to get it down to eight. And so each of us, again, as an additional assignment, took on the liaison with a given consultant. Gary DeWeese and I were responsible for the consultant who helped us on property issues, title searches, easements, that type of thing. We would interact back and forth, again on top of our other full-time jobs, to bring this all to a meaningful conclusion in time to make a recommendation to the Site Selection Task Force as to which of the twenty sites ought to be advanced to the next stage, which ended to be eight sites. (JRS: procedurally, throughout the process, the SSTF, acting upon the recommendations of the executive staff, would make recommendations to the President; he in turn would confer with several key regents before making recommendations to the Board of Regents for final decisions.)

07-01:11:02

Burnett:

I imagine that your legal expertise and your Natural Reserve System expertise comes into play more at different stages of this. I imagine it's really crucial once you're down to three and you're starting to talk about land. I mean, you're talking about land the whole time but it becomes more important at those times.

07-01:11:29

Samuelson:

Yes. And it came into play, say, when we were down to eight and we made that public and we started to meet with the landowners and had to negotiate agreements for access so consultants could go on the land and do whatever studies they had in mind, be it biological or other—

07-01:11:57

Burnett:

[Environmental] impact work. Yeah.

07-01:11:59

Samuelson:

Then we started discussions on option agreements. So my legal background in those negotiations certainly helped, although, as with the Natural Reserve System, I always did it with the full consultation and advice and final say of somebody from the general counsel's office, who usually was Jan Behrsin but might have been other attorneys from time to time.

07-01:12:29

Burnett:

And so you mentioned when we went public with this. What is and is not public in this process of going—because you said some people were entrepreneurial and found out about the process and then made a proposal, even back when it was eighty-five sites. So how did the public awareness of the process and even the existence of this process work? How were people made aware? Were there official notifications that went out? Did you notify each time we've made a winnowing process? "Now it's only twenty." You would notify those people who've been eliminated obviously. So when you

said it went down to three and there was public notification, what was the nature of that public notification?

07-01:13:27

Samuelson:

Why don't we go back to eight, because I think that's the first time we went public with sites that clearly were being advanced. (JRS: the eight sites were Don Pedro in Tuolumne County, Mape's Ranch in Stanislaus County, Lake Yosemite in Merced County, Table Mountain in Madera County, Academy, Watts Valley and Trimmer Springs in Fresno County, and Frazier Valley in Tulare County.) I don't think we ever went public with the eighty-five or the twenty. We did that more internally. And I don't believe we took the twenty to the Board of Regents. We did take it to the Site Selection Task Force and they, with some modifications, approved the twenty. But it was only when we went to the eight that we went to the Board of Regents. Once that decision was made, obviously our press people put out a press release. The president addressed the press in the press conference following the regents meeting. But I also recall going to a battery of phones. Again, the executive staff was there and we divided up the list of owners of these eight sites to call them by phone and let them know that their site had been selected and what we anticipated would be the next step. Maybe setting up a follow-up meeting, that type of thing.

And then our press folks put together a newsletter throughout this entire process that went to a wide distribution and gave updates on not only the sites but some of the hearings that were being scheduled, some of the next steps that were being contemplated. Just tried to keep the dream alive and inform people of as much as possible. It's always a judgment as to how much detail to publicize and how much not to. And then over and beyond that were meetings we were having with the property owners and with the counties and the communities where we would meet one-on-one and we would try our best to keep them informed as to what we thought was happening, what we might need from them in the future.

07-01:15:54

Burnett:

I imagine it went both ways, too. I imagine there were enthusiasts, we could call them, who were calling you and saying, "We have a committee and we would like to meet with you about what we can offer in terms of our site," and I imagine that took place a fair bit.

07-01:16:13

Samuelson:

Sure. And, again, we would divide that up among the members of the executive staff. Each of us had our own areas of responsibility and, as luck would have it, I had a significant liaison role with Merced and the Merced community, not knowing that was going to be the ultimate site. I also had similar relationships with one of the owners of the Academy site and the owners of the Watts Valley site and the Frazier Valley site. These are among the eight final. So I think Gary and I divided the sites up half and half insofar as property issues were concerned.

07-01:17:01

Burnett:

Okay. Well, let me pose this as a question. I imagine there's public pressure on the regents during this process, general pressure about the pace of how this is going, pressure on whether it would go or not go in general, and then specific pressure and specific opinions that were beginning to be formed among the regents, boosters for one site over another. What was the communication like between the regents and the Site Selection Taskforce Committee and the executive staff of the SSTF?

07-01:18:06

Samuelson:

As I said before, three members of the Board of Regents were on the Site Selection Task Force. So they obviously had the lead. I can't really speak too much beyond that with regard to general involvement because my sense is that other members of the board pretty well deferred to those three regents, feeling this was going to be a long process, that they were involved day in and day out, and if they had any questions they would go to them. President Gardner was very careful before he went to the regents with a recommendation, based upon what input he had from the Site Selection Task Force, to meet with at least two of the leaders of the regents, I think the chairman of the board, and the chairman of the finance committee, to brief them and make sure they were comfortable with the recommendations. (JRS: He also met with the chairman of the educational policy committee.) President Gardner was a master at keeping the regents in the loop and knowing exactly how much information they needed and making sure there was a consensus in the end.

From the executive staff standpoint, I continued to marvel, at least from my standpoint, as to how independent we were. I never felt any pressure from the regents, from the president, from the Site Selection Task Force to go any particular direction or to make any particular inquiry. I felt we were removed from that political infighting that might or might not have been going on. And, frankly, it was only years later when I had side conversations with Bob Carpenter at Merced—Bob and I became good friends and are still good friends—that he shared with me to what extent his committee did go to individual members of the regents over the years to plead their case. We'll get into that, I'm sure, later. But we tried very hard, the executive staff, to maintain our objectivity. I just appreciate the fact that we were able to do this in ways that we felt were in the best interest of the university. And not because we were trying to satisfy any particular political leaning or any particular site.

07-01:21:05

Burnett:

That is extraordinary and a model for this kind of work because it is so consequential. This will have an impact on whatever community is chosen and will not have an impact on all the communities that are not selected. And it's high stakes, I imagine. And we find out later that regents did have favorites. But you didn't find out about it, which is the nice thing, right? That you weren't meant to know and that you were allowed to do your work and get to the bottom according to the criteria that had been laid out.

07-01:21:51

Samuelson:

We will cover this later, but I ended up drafting for the president the recommendation to the Board of Regents for the final selection. And so I obviously was very much involved with all the nuances at the time. But I went into the regents meeting itself having no idea, not even an inclination, of what the outcome might be. I was very surprised that it was as overwhelming for Lake Yosemite over Table Mountain as it was, fourteen to five. I thought it was going to be a closer vote, as was the Site Selection Task Force's vote. The SSTF didn't technically vote but it was clear it was five to four. That was clear. I attended that meeting. Maybe I was kidding myself but I just stayed neutral to the extent that I could.

07-01:22:55

Burnett:

That seemed to be the spirit of the operation. It seemed that people hewed to that. My understanding is that when you get to three, you have three really good choices, right, and that there are reasons that the others get eliminated. At the level of eight, were there some outliers that just seemed to be not quite right? Or were there eight good choices? Even at the level of eight, were there eight really good choices for a Central Valley campus?

07-01:23:38

Samuelson:

As you put it, I think there definitely were outliers. They met the criteria and the steps that we have discussed before from an objective standpoint but two of the sites, just to illustrate, were just way, way out in the boonies. Don Pedro is on its way to Yosemite, off Highway 120. It's just miles from anywhere. It met the criteria. It was going to be part of a planned development if that development ever occurred. But, oh, my gosh. A somewhat attractive site but it just was too far from everything. Likewise, the site we called Frazier Valley, it was in Tulare County, was way out in the middle of nowhere. Way beyond Porterville. And it met the criteria up to that point. So it qualified for the eight but no way would you be able to have a successful campus that far out. I'm sure we'll get into this later but it just, on reflection, has made me wonder about the process that we followed and whether we spent a lot of time and resources following that process as opposed to what I suggested earlier, a much more subjective type of approach where you would clearly have factors to consider but not have to go through all the steps that we did in order to ultimately come up to the three that really were viable sites.

07-01:25:33

Burnett:

Well, I think you could have, just as I think you could have followed the Bechtel process with systems analysis. We would site UC whatever in the same place that we put an Amazon warehouse depot. It's got this many miles from this number of people and it's got water. We can build on stable ground and all of these kinds of objective factors. You could conversely do it in a subjective fashion but then you're vulnerable on the democratic side. It's technocratic and it's democratic and so you would be vulnerable down the—"you" meaning the University of California system, might down the road or even immediately be vulnerable to accusations of favoritism. Show us how

you came to this decision. And you could show them, even now, and twenty years and a hundred years from now, you can show this trail of dull, endless, tedious work. I shouldn't say that because I think we talked off-camera about—it was stressful, too, right? Can you talk a little bit about the workload, some of the drama around the amount of work? This is arguably busier than you've ever been.

07-01:27:07

Samuelsen:

That's right.

07-01:27:08

Burnett:

And the same is true for everybody else on the executive staff. So can you talk a little bit about the challenges of this? But maybe, before we get to that, maybe comment on that democratic versus—did the process insulate the decision-makers from any accusation that there was favoritism or you didn't actually look carefully at each site or you didn't take each proposal seriously? "It was a foregone conclusion that you were going to"—no one can say that based on what you did, it seems to me.

07-01:27:47

Samuelsen:

I think you make a very good point that we were vulnerable. And I think we met the test pretty well in so far as objectivity. But isn't it interesting to compare the times in which we were making this decision vis-à-vis the early sixties, where basically it was a small group of regents and President Kerr and some of his vice presidents who were thinking about, "Well, where should the next campus be?" They thought, "Well, generally there ought to be one south of San Francisco, along the coast, and generally in the eastern part of Los Angeles and there should be one in San Diego." Irvine and San Diego were really the only sites considered at that time. They were able to make those choices without an open competition or too much publicity. In part it was because, as I said before, of the stature of the University of California at that time, the relationship that the university had with the people. But how things have changed! Some of the legislation that I described earlier, like the California Environmental Quality Act, played a role in that. I also think there is a desire for more transparency today. There's more oversight, there's more questioning. Budget restraints have caused more questions to be asked about how you're spending the money and how does this weigh vis-à-vis other needs of the state. So it's a different period of time.

07-01:29:44

Burnett:

Well, it's also California, too. This is a stakeholder factory. We mass produce stakeholders in this state. I don't mean to be flippant about it. I think it's great that in this state we take very seriously the voices from different communities that didn't have a voice before. The disability rights movement started here. We take seriously things now that before were invisible. And we've made them visible and put them into the process and all those considerations have to be debated and considered and, if possible, met, balancing however many

stakeholders against the others. So that's something that's just now part of the process and it's a kind of a California story.

Unfortunately you were then burdened with that. It gave you and your colleagues some sleepless nights trying to make sure that every voice was heard and every community was consulted and had an opportunity. Because of its slowness, that actually ended up being an advantage to various stakeholders because they had time, they were notified. We have a huge problem in the country with opacity, with not informing people of plans, and then using the facts on the ground to say, "Well, we're this far along. Are you really going to get in the way of this now?" And you can forestall a lot of that discontent that we're seeing in a number of cases now by being open. It is a kind of California process and is something that's worth thinking about, I think. So your staff is working. Tell me about the maps. I don't know if this is further on in your story but I remember you suggesting something about at a certain point you littered the floor with maps. [laughter]

07-01:32:25

Samuelson:

I think I was trying to illustrate the pressure we were under and the long hours we were working. The story of the maps that I probably shared with you off-camera was spending a weekend at home and having maps of several of the sites that we were considering and just spreading them all over the front room floor. They were too big to put on tables. And having to explain to Jeane why I was doing this on what should have been a weekend, a time of relaxation. You asked me about the pressure. Yes, it took a toll. And, of course, I only had to experience that for, say, the two years or so before I took early retirement. Then I had much more time to devote to it. I think one of the reasons I started to increase my time was that I had more time to give than some of my colleagues. And eventually when Becky took maternity leave I stepped into her shoes. That was as we were approaching the final decision in 1995. That's why I'm the one who sat in with the Site Selection Task Force during its final deliberations, so I could take notes because I was the one that was going to be drafting the regents item. If Becky were still there she probably would have written it. I stepped into that role. I had the flexibility to do that. So there were long hours, long days. And I certainly recall some times when it got the better of us, where tempers flared—

07-01:34:25

Burnett:

I'll bet.

07-01:34:25

Samuelson:

—and things were said that, if you had been a little more rested, you wouldn't have said. The flipside of this was that, as I suggested earlier, we really respected and valued each other. I'm talking now about the executive staff. We knew how to have fun on occasion. There was one time Chris Adams invited us and our spouses to a second home he has in Inverness—he and his wife—and it was a social gathering. Gary DeWeese would go salmon fishing every year and we would always send him up to Alaska with a promise that he

would bring back salmon and have it at our next staff meeting to enjoy. And then we had times where we would have fun with poetry and songs and things that kept us going. But it was the underlying commitment we all had to something much bigger than us that kept us going. And we recognized what a responsibility we had for future generations of students and the future of our state and the San Joaquin Valley.

07-01:35:58

Burnett:

Yeah. It is an awesome responsibility and it must have been a driving force for people on the staff and everyone involved.

07-01:36:08

Samuelsen:

Other people were having to pick up their side of it, too, starting with our families, my wife, my staff at the Natural Reserve System. Goes way beyond Maggie [Drake, Samuelsen's assistant with the Natural Reserve System]. They were having to do more than they might have otherwise. Some things were not getting done and I was feeling that pressure from my colleagues at the Natural Reserve System. So there was a toll to all of this and I didn't take that lightly.

07-01:36:42

Burnett:

At the Natural Reserve System you were brought back full-time out of retirement and is it for—

07-01:36:50

Samuelsen:

No, this was before retirement. I was brought back full-time after the search for a new director failed. And so I came back for about two years as full-time director of the Natural Reserve System and then I took early retirement. I was then brought back as special consultant to the Site Selection Task Force or whatever my title was on a part-time basis. This was after my tenure with the Natural Reserve System had terminated.

07-01:37:23

Burnett:

Okay. So that would have been 1991, '92?

07-01:37:27

Samuelsen:

Yes, yes.

07-01:37:30

Burnett:

So there's 1991, '92. You take an early retirement and you're kind of doing two days a week and then the search is suspended in 1993 by Jack Peltason, the new president. And for how long was that suspended?

07-01:37:48

Samuelsen:

I think it was only for about three months, two or three months.

07-01:37:52

Burnett:

Oh, okay. But it was the drama and the shock of the suspension and the implications for all of the stakeholders and all of the candidates and the

concern and the worry and the pressure that must have built as a result of that. I imagine that's why it became unsuspended after a while. [laughter]

07-01:38:13

Samuelson: Well, that's right.

07-01:38:16

Burnett: The pressure was, "Come on, let's get it rolling."

07-01:38:20

Samuelson: As I suggested earlier, it became part of the negotiation that the president and Vice President Baker and others, Larry Hershman in particular, were having with the state for the totality of the university's budget. I said earlier, they were able to get fifty million dollars back in that they weren't otherwise going to have. So the stakes were pretty high.

07-01:38:41

Burnett: In Jack Peltason's oral history, he spoke of it in no uncertain terms. He called it: "We were at the edge of a financial cliff." So that's one phrase from him. But on the other hand, he said, "Of the fiscal problems," he said—I'm paraphrasing but he said they're always temporary. So what happened with the suspension is that people were thinking, "Well, we have to react to this budget shortfall. We have to react." But they don't realize that there're going to be boom times, as well. I wonder, thinking back to that time period and reading around it, it was maybe the first time where people were beginning to question whether or not this was a new normal, where they were talking about a more or less permanent contraction. It's not the first time. People were talking about that in the thirties, in the Great Depression. But after World War II this had just been a boom time. It had been a boom time for the United States, barring a couple of recessions. But they were always considered to be blips, very temporary things and the United States would come back up. But in the early 1990s, there was this concern — is this a kind of new permanent situation? But Peltason also said, "Universities are built for the centuries." He said, "There are these fiscal problems, they're going to be temporary," so he was confident. This oral history is done in the late nineties and so he's with the hindsight of the tech boom that is already fully underway at that time. But there was a concern that there might not be a tenth campus. The enthusiasts and the supporters banded together and they were able to keep it going. So tracking that with your career, 1993 there's the three-month suspension and things are back on and you are out of retirement and ramping up to a kind of full-time commitment to the process. When is that? When does that happen and then the actual final site selection is 1995, is that right? So it's the two years prior? So 1993 to '95 you're basically morning, noon, and night doing this? Is that right?

07-01:41:31

Samuelson: I would say from 1991 to about 1993 I was doing it two days a week, although I didn't keep track of time. I think I was spending more time than that. It was

at a time when email was becoming more and more in play and so I had my computer and I would work on my computer at home and send messages back and forth to the staff or make phone calls. Then I would go into Oakland for meetings. It was the beginning of opportunities that were opening up to work at home from time to time. But about that time, too, I had become involved with a not-for-profit called the Center for Living Skills based in Lafayette. The staff there would go into high schools and teach classes or lead classes on personal qualities and empowerment and self-esteem for students. I became chairman of the board and then our executive director stepped aside and one thing led to another and I became the executive director of the Center for Living Skills. So for three years I was literally working 50 percent time as director for this not-for-profit and 50 percent on the site selection process. I was going back and forth, spending half my day in Oakland and half my day in Lafayette in the offices of the Center for Living Skills. That took me up to about the time the final decision was made in 1995. And that was when I decided I just couldn't keep doing both and so I left the directorship of the Center for Living Skills and started to spend more time at the university. I don't know exactly when I subsequently went full-time but I would guess it would have been in about 1997, 1998, something like that. I just recall there being at least three years I was full-time but I was working 60 percent time and then 75 percent time prior to going full-time.

07-01:44:10

Burnett: Yeah. You get more and more—

07-01:44:12

Samuelsen: More and more.

07-01:44:13

Burnett: —engrossed and drawn in.

07-01:44:13

Samuelsen: And I think someone in the personnel office, human resources office, said, "Samuelsen, as we look at the regulations, you can't continue this level of work unless you un-retire." And so I was happy to do that, and it worked out very well.

07-01:44:32

Burnett: Yes, yes. Oh, that's a nice précis of the nineties as it unfolds. I had no idea that you had undertaken this kind of voluntary position at the Center for Living Skills.

07-01:44:52

Samuelsen: Well, I was paid.

07-01:44:54

Burnett: Oh, you were paid. Okay.

07-01:44:55

Samuelson:

I was paid when I was executive director. I was a volunteer as chairman of the board and then I had to work out with the members of the board of directors how to leave the board and become the part-time executive director.

07-01:45:12

Burnett:

And so not only are you involved in the planning for a site for the future of higher education in California, you're also engaged with the public schools at the K-12 level, is that right?

07-01:45:32

Samuelson:

Right, right. Well, particularly in Oakland and Richmond, some of the underserved areas. It was a wonderful program and it met one of my commitments.

07-01:45:47

Burnett:

Were there things that you learned in that process that made you reflect on education generally? Because education has been your lifeblood and your engagement and commitment to giving students access to educational opportunities. Those are underserved cities and they have a lot of challenges. What did you take away from that experience that helped you in your work?

07-01:46:32

Samuelson:

Well, it certainly started with gratitude for all the wonderful advantages I had had. Then I think gratitude for the opportunity I was now finding both at the high school level and the college level to hopefully contribute to helping students who do come from these disadvantaged backgrounds have more of the opportunities and benefits I was fortunate to have. So it was an interesting tie-in with the two positions I had because at one level I was working with high school kids who were the future students of the University of California. I was also working with communities and educators who were going to someday hopefully provide higher educational opportunities for this same category of students who deserved a better education than they otherwise would receive.

07-01:47:43

Burnett:

And as it turns out, not to take us up to the present too much, but a significant number of UC Merced students come from the Bay Area and from the Los Angeles basin area. A significant number also come from the Central Valley.

07-01:48:07

Samuelson:

I think it's about one-third, one-third, one-third from what I understand.

07-01:48:11

Burnett:

That's right. Yeah. And so it does provide educational opportunity to folks from some of those communities, one would hope. And so we're getting down to a discussion of the final three, which is relatively involved. So I'm wondering if we shouldn't save that for the next session and we can go into it in some detail and then talk about the larger story of the final selection of the tenth campus.

07-01:48:49

Samuelson: Thank you.

[End of Interview]

Interview 8: February 17, 2017

08-00:00:00

Burnett: This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series. This is our eighth session. It is Friday, February 17, 2017 and we're here at the Bancroft Library. Last session we talked a little bit about your role in the selection of the final campus site. Got a little bit ahead of ourselves. But before we return to that I want to see if you might introduce the three finalists. We talked about the process of winnowing down. When we came down to three sites, when did that happen and can you describe what the sites were and why they were good candidates?

08-00:01:05

Samuelsen: I believe they were selected in about 1992, maybe 1991 and from north to south, Lake Yosemite was on the outskirts of Merced, about six miles from downtown Merced. We were offered by the owner, and we'll get back to that later, perhaps, two thousand acres on the seven thousand acre site they owned. The site is rather treeless. It's used for grazing land. Rolling hills, a backdrop of the Sierra. As I say, it's on the outskirts of Merced.

08-00:01:54

Burnett: It was used for grazing. So was it farmland?

08-00:02:01

Samuelsen: It was farmland.

08-00:02:02

Burnett: It was farmland. Okay, okay.

08-00:02:04

Samuelsen: But not from an agricultural standpoint because it is just, as I said, grassland. But the owners wanted to produce income to meet their need for producing money for scholarships and this was the best way that they could do that.

08-00:02:24

Burnett: And this is the Virginia Smith Trust, is that right?

08-00:02:27

Samuelsen: This is the Virginia Smith Trust.

08-00:02:28

Burnett: So they were already in place and this land had been set in the trust with the purpose of serving educational needs, right? When it was bequeathed was that the intention?

08-00:02:48

Samuelsen: Well, it was bequeathed by Virginia Smith and upon her death the board of education of the county was designed as the trustees to administer her intent, which was to produce scholarships for graduates of high schools in the City of Merced to go on to college, be it public or private. But she also provided that

this would be a fairly short-term use. I forget the exact timeframe, but, say, fifteen, twenty years, something like that, after which she expected the property would be sold. So the Virginia Smith Trust trustees actually tried to sell the property before the university became involved, had an agreement to sell. Fortunately, as things turned out, escrow fell through and the property became available. So that's the Merced site.

Madera County, going further south, had what we called the Table Mountain site. And it was identified as a portion of some, golly, fifteen thousand acres, a rather large parcel from which we would select two thousand. That property, while technically in Madera, was about the same distance from downtown Fresno, about twenty miles or so, as the Fresno County site that we'll get to in a moment, the Academy site. Table Mountain was bounded by the San Joaquin River, which is the boundary between Fresno County and Madero County. On the west it's bounded by Highway 41 that leads to the southern entrance to Yosemite. And then on the north by either a state or a county highway, 145, as I recall. But it had a feature, an outcropping that would have been a nice backdrop to a campus. And it was again pretty much in agricultural use. The principal property we looked at, owned by a person by the name of Larry Freels, was a pistachio, and I think still is a pistachio orchard. But elsewhere on the site there were vineyards and grassland. It was owned by maybe as many as twelve different owners, which made property negotiations very complex.

08-00:05:59

Burnett:

Well, of the fifteen thousand acres, right, so if you only needed two thousand, that would presumably narrow it down to working with a smaller number? Or no?

08-00:06:12

Samuelson:

Yes. I think we narrowed it down to three to five thousand acres. We concentrated on the owners within that area and particularly Mr. Freels and a couple other of the larger landowners.

08-00:06:31

Burnett:

So there's land ownership issues in that instance. The land was not free in the way that it was for the Merced site, is that right?

08-00:06:47

Samuelson:

That's right. And so we spent a lot of time, and I say we—I think Gary DeWeese from the treasurer's office had the lead on this—trying to put something together either with the owners or with the county, thinking that the county might be able to assemble some kind of a package that would result in the university receiving two thousand acres at a nominal cost. And that would be through issuing bonds or putting together some kind of a special district. There was a lot of back and forth as to exactly what that would entail. While good intentions were expressed, they never firmed up an exact way of doing it, which I think played a role ultimately in the final decision.

08-00:07:44

Burnett:

Right. So just not being able to negotiate a deal at all is one thing. And in the ballpark, what was UC looking at in terms of cost for that site? Do you remember roughly what that would have cost if they had—I guess you can't say because they didn't come to an agreement. [laughter]

08-00:08:05

Samuelson:

I think Gary was asked at the regents meeting what he thought the ballpark might be. As I recall, he said twelve to twenty million dollars to negotiate the two thousand acres. Not that the university was going to put that up, but somebody was going to have to come up with it. Certainly there were those internally who argued that that was not that much money when you think in terms of the construction costs, the infrastructure costs that would be entailed if the campus were to actually be constructed there. But the university had made it very clear from the outset that it wanted the two thousand acres, wherever it was going to be, to be obtained at a nominal cost.

08-00:08:58

Burnett:

Even though it is a nominal cost, it's a relatively insignificant cost compared to the total cost of planning and building a new campus, but the timing of it, when they were looking at suspending the project indefinitely, and they did for several months, when people were concerned, even when they were going ahead with the investigation of the three sites, in the press the repeated refrain was the University of California is planning and investigating these three sites, but there is no timeline for the actual planning and construction of the campus. There is no sense of when this is going to ever be constructed. And that was signaling, I think, a kind of frustration. When I talk about the press I'm talking about the *Fresno Bee* and the Central Valley press. You can sense the frustration and the concern that they had, that here we are, these communities, vying for what could be an incredible boon, an economic boon and a social boon to this region, and yet there's no firm commitment from the state that this is ever going to happen. It must have been a pretty, almost tense atmosphere. That's the sense I get from the press and maybe I'm looking a little bit later in the timeline when there is that suspension and there is that concern about the budget shortfalls and so forth. But yeah, it would seem that the Merced site, with the offer of free land, is very, very appealing, just to get out of the gate.

08-00:11:21

Samuelson:

Yes. The Merced site provided much more flexibility. But I think the university was starting to say publicly that the likely start of a new campus may be ten to fifteen years away. That's a long time. And it would be one thing for the Lake Yosemite site to provide, as they ultimately did, an option agreement that gave the university up to ten years to exercise at no cost. But it was quite a different thing for a group of private landowners to tie up their property that long and not pursue alternatives to development or sale or that type of thing they might have in mind. And so that played a role in the Table

Mountain site but it also played a big role in the Academy site. And we might just turn to that site for a moment.

There we had fewer landowners, maybe six or seven. But still they were reluctant to either donate their property or sell the property along the lines we have just discussed. The Academy site was on Highway 168 that leads from downtown Fresno out to Shaver Lake and Huntington Lake. It's in the foothills. The two principal owners, Knox Blasingame and Alice Carleton, were caught unaware when we called them when the eight sites were selected for further study. We talked about those phone calls earlier. But they had no idea that their site was under consideration. So those phone calls were a matter of introducing them to the University of California, to our quest for a tenth campus, and we asked if we could sit down and talk about whether they would be amenable to our acquiring your property. I might elaborate a little later about my interaction with Alice Carleton because I had the lead in becoming acquainted with her and holding her hand during those several years. It was tough going.

08-00:14:17

Burnett:

What was the nature of their surprise? Because they had made the final eight, right? But they were not involved in the bid or the candidacy?

08-00:14:32

Samuelsen:

That's right. Well, recall that we started out, going back to the Bechtel study, that Bechtel identified a number of sites around the state and then ultimately around the Valley for us to consider based upon their own study of maps. Then those were augmented by suggestions that were made by private owners when they heard about the site selection process or counties or committees like at Merced. But there were definitely sites that had not been advocated by anybody but had been identified primarily by Bechtel as having the potential to build a campus.

08-00:15:30

Burnett:

So [this communication problem] is a legacy of the top-down approach that started the whole thing. That's fascinating.

08-00:15:38

Samuelsen:

It is.

08-00:15:39

Burnett:

This is the final three and one of the three sites has a principal property owner who is surprised by their candidacy. That's pretty astonishing. [laughter]

08-00:15:59

Samuelsen:

That's right.

08-00:16:02

Burnett:

Okay. It's a striking contrast because we've spoken to Bob Carpenter and others about Merced and with hindsight we were kind of more invested in

knowing about the history of Merced. It's a striking contrast in terms of the level of investment of the Merced community in actively courting and seeking the favor of the process, of the regents, of working hard to demonstrate the importance of the site, its meeting of the criteria and so on. And this is just kind of a shocking difference.

08-00:17:01

Samuelson:

Well, then we had to bring the counties along to be supportive of a proposed site and think in terms of the community planning that would be required, the access roads that would be required, the infrastructure that would be required. And so a lot of time was spent handholding county officials in the planning department and on up to the board of supervisors level. There were two other sites in Fresno County that were in the final eight. I don't recall how each of them was brought to our attention, although one of the sites, we called Trimmer Springs, had actually been identified by the university back in the sixties as a prospective site and, had the university proceeded with a fourth campus at that time, I think both that site, Trimmer Springs, and what we have just identified as the Table Mountain site in Madera County, those two I think would have been at the top of the list of those that might have, at that time, been established as a tenth campus.

08-00:18:36

Burnett:

So we've identified the basic contours of the three sites. Table Mountain and Academy, if I'm not mistaken, seem to be more accessible, at least the way they were painted in the press. They were turning Route 168 into more of a highway and so there—

08-00:19:11

Samuelson:

Yes, I think there were plans to expand Route 168. But keep in mind, the Academy site, I don't know if I mentioned this, was itself about twenty-two miles from downtown Fresno. I think it was ten miles from Clovis, which was the nearest big city. So there would have been the establishment of a new Academy community surrounding that site had it been selected.

08-00:19:43

Burnett:

Well, let's turn to talk about the history from below or the bottom-up. We've talked a little bit about each site in terms of the basic contours and the basic differences. With respect to Merced, it's unique because of its community. And I wonder if we can talk about how you got to know the Merced—I guess I could call them the Merced Boosters. But that's actually not right because there actually is a group called the Boosters.

08-00:20:33

Samuelson:

That's right.

08-00:20:33

Burnett:

Okay. And they're different from—[laughter]

08-00:20:35

Samuelsen: From the committee.

08-00:20:38

Burnett:

My impression of this, it struck me as a bit like the Old West. There's a community and the railroad is coming through in this area and there are these communities that wanted to vie for [the chance to be] the railhead. And I was struck by meeting Bob Carpenter and hearing him tell the stories of that community. Can you talk a little bit about how you first encountered them and what the story was in terms of what set them apart from other organizations that were advocating for other sites?

08-00:21:22

Samuelsen:

Well, there are two legs to the story, I suppose. One is the Virginia Smith Trust leg and the other would be Bob Carpenter and the committee that he headed in such an exceptional manner. We might start with the Virginia Smith side because they learned, even before we started the site process, that there was the possibility of a tenth campus. And that's kind of an interesting story in itself. And it has to do with a gentleman by the name of Keith Shaffer who at the time lived at Santa Cruz and played a role in the early development of the Santa Cruz campus. He was very close to Dean McHenry, the founding chancellor at Santa Cruz. He learned from one of McHenry's colleagues, Dan Aldrich, not the founding chancellor at Irvine but the son of the founding chancellor at Irvine, by the same name, who was on the development staff of the Santa Cruz campus, that the university might be thinking in terms of a tenth campus. Keith said, "Well, gosh, I know of some property in Merced. I was born and raised in Merced. But I know of some property there that might be available. Do you think the university would be interested?" The reason that Keith knew about that property is that the brother of his wife was married to a member of the Merced Board of Education by the name of Bettylou George. And as I said before, the board of education had a secondary role of serving as trustees of the Virginia Smith Trust. Obviously Keith and Bettylou had talked over the years and he was aware that the trustees had put the property up for sale and then pulled it off the market. So as I have heard the story, Keith lived across the street in Santa Cruz to the vice chancellor for university relations by the name of Terry Jones. He told Terry Jones about this and Terry Jones wrote Vice President Bill Baker and told him about the Merced site. So this is probably in the mid-1980s, maybe 1987. But before the university went public. It led to Bettylou George and the trustees deciding to hold off for a couple of years putting the Virginia Smith Trust property back on the market, thinking that maybe they could make a conveyance to the university for a new campus, hold on to the balance of the seven thousand acres they owned, and realize tremendous financial returns from the development of the surrounding community. I might just say parenthetically that a number of years ago we were very fortunate to have one of your colleagues, your former colleagues, Suzanne Riess, travel to Merced and sit down around a luncheon table with a number of people who were involved at the time and conduct an informal oral history. It may be that we'll want to

attach to my oral history a copy of the transcript which I have. In attendance were Keith Shaffer and his wife Elinor, Bettylou George, Dan Aldrich, Bob Carpenter, Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, the founding chancellor, and Jim Erickson, the former vice-chancellor for university relations from Merced, and myself. It goes on and on about how this background played such a role in the ultimate selection of the site. So that's kind of the Virginia Smith side.

08-00:26:31

Burnett:

But there are also these early contacts that make information available back and forth, right? That there is this site that's available and it's a possibility, is it something that could be considered. And there's information flowing about what would need to be done, right. It's my understanding that when the UC Merced committee was founded there are a couple of pieces to this. I think Jim Edmondson was the initial sort of leader and mentor of the group. He was a business manager of Merced College, had done a bunch of projects at the Castle Air Force Base, which we'll come to. But apparently the representative at the California Assembly, Tony Coelho, he informed Bob Carpenter, who becomes the chair of this group, of the state's decision to move forward on the tenth campus. And he suggested, "You should put a committee together." This would be a good thing. And so there is this support and really good ideas about planning, organization, and really following the [selection] process. But there's almost a native organizational impetus there. That's the sense I got from Bob Carpenter. These are the local leaders who come together to talk about organizing where a picnic table is going to go, basically. And so they're already inclined to—what did he say? He said something like, "They're the people you go to if you want to get something done." And he listed them off. And he was interviewed in another context. They were local business leaders, heads of the local colleges, a couple of attorneys, an architect, later, a member of the Farm Bureau. So basically a lot of leaders from the different kind of economic facets of that county and that area. And one of the things they do early on is to take note of the Bechtel report. And I found that really fascinating, that they looked at the Bechtel report. This was originally the planning guide for the Site Selection Taskforce and the research staff. And they took it, the Merced group, and they said, "Okay, how do we meet this criterion, how do we meet that criterion?" And I found that a really fascinating story of their engagement early on, early on in this process. And that's why I thought it was so striking when you described the Academy site. They got a phone call and they were surprised. That's the landowner. Surely there was a local committee. Or wasn't there?

08-00:29:58

Samuelson:

There was. Madera also had a local committee. I didn't have as much interaction with them as I did Merced because, as luck would have it, I was designated the principal contact with Bob Carpenter and the UC Merced and maybe that's why I became so close to them. But yes, the other counties had support committees. For example, Tulare County had a very fine committee that promoted the Frazier Valley site. But going back to your comments, I

think Merced was just always one step ahead. They just anticipated what the needs might be, what it would take. It's rather amazing all the initiatives they pursued. I think it was again before the university announced that the site selection was going to be underway in '89 that—you mentioned Congressman Coelho. He got wind of the fact that the university might be expanding and contacted a member of the board of supervisors and eventually twisted arms to get Bob Carpenter to agree to gather, as you've described, what I think were some twenty or so community leaders to volunteer their efforts to promote the site. And this was a very active committee that met as often as weekly. They put together some concept plans even before we were clear on what the timeframe might be and the site-selection process might be. As you've said, they took each of the thirty-eight factors from the Bechtel report and asked themselves, "Okay, what kind of information is the university likely to request to respond to each of these factors? How do we measure what are our strengths, what are our weaknesses, what do we need to respond when the time comes?" And they even put together a publication early on that identified each of these thirty-eight criteria and gave a preliminary view of why they felt they were well-positioned to meet those criteria.

08-00:32:47

Burnett:

So organization, advocacy, developing an argument for Merced as a top candidate.

08-00:32:57

Samuelson:

Yes. And you asked me how I first became acquainted with them. I still recall a memorable barbeque in Jim and Lu Edmondson's backyard that involved some of these community leaders. The entire executive staff was invited. And so we just hobnobbed and became acquainted. It was a typical late afternoon warm valley evening. A lot of socializing. It certainly got them off to a good start in so far as how the executive staff felt welcomed and how cooperative we felt these folks would be as we pursued the process. And this is really early on.

08-00:34:03

Burnett:

And this continued, too. I think you brought Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien to Merced. Do you want to tell that story about going to a restaurant, wasn't it?

08-00:34:17

Samuelson:

Bob Carpenter and I, of course, have many stories to tell. And he has his version and I have mine. But I think that this one has been collaborated. This goes back to the Site Selection Task Force. At times the membership would evolve. In this case Mike Heyman stepped down as chancellor (JRS: of the Berkeley campus) and so his place on the Site Selection Task Force was taken by Chang-Lin Tien. We at that stage were down to three sites. Becky DeKalb and I arranged to take him on a visit to the three sites, and an opportunity to meet at least one representative of each site to talk a little bit about the support of the community, the attributes of the community, as well as the site itself. So when we got to Lake Yosemite we climbed into a jeep, a four-wheel drive

jeep that Bob Carpenter was driving. There was Chang-Lin in the front. I think Becky and I were in the back. We rambled out to the site. And this was the third of the three sites to visit. It was getting to be late afternoon. I had made a commitment to Chang-Lin that I would get him back to Berkeley in time for a 5:30, six o'clock reception. As we were driving off the site and back to our cars I said to Bob Carpenter, "You think you could call ahead to Leny's and ask them if they could prepare us some lattes for us to just pickup on the fly because I know it's been a long day and I need to drive and I need to make sure that I can stay awake." Bob was well aware that anytime I came to Merced I would always stop first at Leny's to get my latte, early morning or late afternoon. So Bob—

08-00:36:46

Burnett:

This is a railroad car diner, is that right?

08-00:38:47

Samuelsen:

That's pretty much so. It was a coffee shop that had wonderful bakery goods and the like. Bob said, "Oh, gosh, that will be fine. So I'll just call my son and ask him to make the arrangements." So he called his son on the cell phone and asked if he could call Leny's. When we arrived at Leny's I suggested to Chang-Lin he might like to come in just to stretch his legs. And so the two of us walk in. The three or four waitresses were all dressed up in blue and gold with UC Merced hats. They had anticipated that I would want to stop by Leny's for a latte. This is just an example of how Carpenter and that committee always was one step ahead. They would anticipate to make us feel more welcome, to wave the flag. Well, believe me, that made an impression on Chang-Lin Tien. It certainly did on me.

08-00:37:58

Burnett:

Well, I want to underscore this because I thought these stories were very interesting. But the meaning of them didn't become clear to me until I went through the press from this period, from the *Fresno Bee* and so on, as we get into the period of the environmental assessment. So can we put a pin in that for now. Are we at the point, do you think, where we can talk about the environmental impact report? Or is it going to mess with your storyline?

08-00:38:43

Samuelsen:

Well, we certainly can talk about the environmental impact report. But I think we need to distinguish that from some of the very serious environmental issues that arose after the site was selected.

08-00:38:57

Burnett:

Yes, yes.

08-00:38:59

Samuelsen:

Which is a story onto itself. But going to the environmental impact report, we've already talked about how the state put up \$1.5 million back in '93 to restart the site selection process and ensure that an environmental impact report could be financed. I might back up a little bit and say that at about that

time we had to go to the regents, having done further studies and absorbed the input of consultants as to the various factors that were at play at that time, and recommend to the Board of Regents, after having processed the recommendations through the Site Selection Task Force and the president, what sites should be continued for the purposes of the EIR. And a little interesting sideline to that is that the Site Selection Task Force, upon our recommendation, recommended to the president, who recommended to the Board of Regents, that only two sites be advanced, Lake Yosemite and Academy, Academy being the Fresno County site.

08-00:40:29

Burnett:

Not Table Mountain?

08-00:40:32

Samuelson:

And not Table Mountain. So we went to the Board of Regents. And, mind you, the Board of Regents in the University of California normally adopts whatever recommendation the president makes without too much change. But in this case, as the discussion evolved, some of the regents realized that in doing an EIR you have to look at alternative sites. One of the alternative sites would be Table Mountain. Another would be downtown Fresno and others were identified. That's just part of the EIR process. So the regents decided to amend the recommendation of the president and put Table Mountain back on the table. That's one of the many "what ifs," as you look back, that evolved during the process. So once that decision was made, then it was a matter of finding a consultant to do the EIR, which is what is normally done, and to work through the analysis to the point where, when the regents in 1995 made their decision, they had to review the EIR, review the findings of the EIR and formally accept the report, one way or the other, which they did.

08-00:42:12

Burnett:

So in 1993 there's 1.5 million for the environmental studies. February 1994 there are scoping sessions in the areas where residents—there are hearings, in effect, where residents could suggest environmental aspects to be studied and air their concerns.

08-00:42:35

Samuelson:

And that's in keeping with how an EIR is normally conducted and those were hearings—colleagues of mine from the executive staff attended those, arranged for them. I don't recall attending any myself because that was, again, somewhat out of my bailiwick. But I was well aware that those sessions were going on at various points in the Valley.

08-00:43:07

Burnett:

Right. And in September of '94 the UC Regents announced that eight factors will help them decide on the right site by May 1995. Environmental issues are one of them but there are also issues of access for students, the community profile. What will this do to the community in terms of job opportunities? The community support, which is what we just talked about. Site aesthetics. Does

it look good? Site development costs, land availability, and water supply. So there are all these factors that are being considered. But one of the things that comes out of this process is the emergence of naysayers at every site, it seems. Because you talked about boosters. We talked about the community enthusiasm at the Lake Yosemite/Merced site. Can you talk a little bit about the people who didn't want a tenth campus at their site? Who doesn't want a UC campus?

08-00:44:38

Samuelsen:

Well, when we talk about the final three sites, Academy was really the only one that led to severe opposition and that was largely from Native Americans who were concerned about the archeological values that were on that site. I think in the end that was a major factor that led to Academy not being advanced as one of the final two sites. At Merced there was initial concern by the Farm Bureau. But, again, I think through the adroit efforts of Bob Carpenter and the committee, they were able to largely mitigate that. One of the ways they did so was to actually bring the Farm Bureau onto their committee so they could deliberate with the other community leaders on the various aspects and try to find ways of minimizing the potential loss of farmland, which obviously was the biggest concern to the Farm Bureau.

08-00:45:56

Burnett:

So it's in this process that opposition emerges just according to various concerns. But this is going to change a community. There's going to be more traffic; there's going to be more pollution. There's going to be *more*—so those concerns need to be addressed.

08-00:46:17

Samuelsen:

Yes. But I would contrast this with some of the other eight sites that we talked about earlier. You and I had a chance to drive by the Mapes Ranch site when we visited not too long ago. I still recall driving from Modesto out the ten miles or so to Mapes Ranch, with sign after sign after sign saying, "No growth, no UC." UC with a circle and a cross, that type of thing. And likewise, there were concerns expressed about some of the other eight sites.

I don't recall Table Mountain having formal opposition. Now, certainly the landowners were very reluctant. Particularly Mr. Freels was quite reluctant. He went back and forth and, even at one point when we were down to three sites and the Site Selection Task Force was making a visit to the three sites, we were not able to gain access to the Freels property. So we had a meeting on a bluff in a private home overlooking the property so that the Site Selection Task Force could go out on the patio and look down and get a sense of the pistachio grove and the surrounding acreage. That was in part a factor of negotiations having broken down. Some of the factors you mentioned earlier in terms of the budget crunch and the uncertainty as to when the university was going to proceed were also at play. Was this really worth the effort?

08-00:48:13

Burnett:

Right, right. To underscore the stakes, all of these regions have unemployment rates that are more than double the California state average. There were even concerns voiced that UC students would compete for minimum-wage jobs that would otherwise be held by [members of] the local community. So there was a bit of town and gown before there was even a university there, before there was a gown.

08-00:48:52

Samuelsen:

That's right.

08-00:48:57

Burnett:

And there was some hardship there. In 1994 the Merced Public Library system was slated to close. Nineteen libraries. It was an eighty-year-old public system and they were going to close it. I don't know if it did or it reopened or if they eventually got support. But that was just a story around at the time. And I think another impetus, especially from the Merced group, was the announced closure of Castle Air Force Base, which was a real economic linchpin for Merced County. And that was announced in 1990. It's a closure that was phased and was completed right around the time that they eventually decided on the final campus in 1995. That was four thousand jobs. Four thousand pretty good jobs. So there's a kind of cyclical farm economy. There's migratory, somewhat transient, cyclical labor. You have some real economic forces leaving some of those areas. And so the stakes are really high. And at the same time there was opposition. So it's interesting. You can understand there are particular groups that have particular issues. So [for] the Native American groups, there were 115 burial sites or archeological sites on the Academy site and that made it a no-go for them.

08-00:50:48

Samuelsen:

But I'm sure that Carpenter and his committee in Merced, in order to placate those who might have had reservations, were arguing that to bring the campus to Merced would be a positive in terms of turning the economy around and would bring jobs, would bring culture, would bring population growth that was needed. But I think they also were very effective in meeting with groups of citizens and responding to their questions, bringing the community along. They were also very effective in arranging with the local paper to have people pose for pictures and have quotes as to why they felt the community should support a UC Merced. So that was just part of their looking ahead and facing the reality of the obstacles that they were facing.

But if I can tell another Carpenter story, which has to do with the closure of Castle and the fact that when we first started this process Castle was very active and they had a flight pattern that circled around over Merced. The B-52 bombers with eight engines and noise was a real concern. I recall being at a luncheon in downtown Merced when Vice President Bill Baker was speaking, and he was interrupted about every three to five minutes with the sound of these bombers. I don't know how the community could possibly

accommodate themselves to that. We were concerned enough that we hired a noise consultant to go out to near the Lake Yosemite site and take readings. Bob Carpenter and I were there with the noise consultant. Bob made the statement that these bombers always went in the same pattern. They would circle around and it would be at the outskirts of the campus site but not right over the campus site. So as we were looking overhead at the bombers, all of a sudden one came right over our heads. And rather than circle to the right around the city of Merced, it circled to the left, right over the campus site. I'm sure Bob Carpenter blanched at the experience we had. Well, as luck would have it, just when we were narrowing the sites down from eight to three, it was announced that Castle was being closed. And so the noise problem dissipated just like that. I have often kidded Bob that he undoubtedly, knowing how adept that committee he headed was, arranged for that. He says, "Well, sometimes I'm given credit for more than I deserve."

08-00:54:33

Burnett:

Right. [laughter] The environmental impact reports, there's kind of a surprising conclusion. Because, as you said, they had to include other sites just to do the environmental impact process. The best site from an environmental perspective was a site that was not identified by the Site Selection Task Force. The downtown Fresno site was considered to be the least impactful on the environment. Can you talk a little bit about that? That was surprising to me. It seems to engender a little filigree of history on its own. Can you talk a little bit about that story and why that happened and what it led to?

08-00:55:34

Samuelson:

Well, I think the reason it had less environmental impact is that it was already in a developed part of Fresno. It would not be growth-conducive. It would not take farmland. It's interesting in retrospect as to whether it might have advanced further had it been advocated by, say, the city and county of Fresno. It came back on the ledger late in the game. I think the assemblyman from that area, Jim Costa by name, if I recall—

08-00:56:20

Burnett:

That's right.

08-00:56:21

Samuelson:

—advocated it as a last minute entry. It was in somewhat of a blighted area and this would be a chance to restore that area, bring new life to the surrounding community. And it's interesting. If you go back to that original Bechtel report, at that time, as we have discussed, we were contemplating three campuses around the state. There was specific reference to different campus configurations, what they called a low density and a middle density and a high density. I think there was the thought behind that that maybe, if you're going to establish three campuses, in order to have a variety, you might want to have a couple out in an open and require a two thousand acre area, but you might want to think about something in downtown Fresno or downtown

San Francisco or downtown Los Angeles, something like New York University that we're familiar with and other institutions that have been very successful in terms of interaction with the surrounding community. But somehow that never evolved into a definite proposal until late in the game. It came back on the horizon when it was identified as an alternative site for EIR purposes. I think we all struggled with coming up with alternative sites that would make the EIR viable and meaningful. That's just part of the process that we went through. I was really interested in reviewing Wayne Kennedy's oral history in preparing for my oral history. He came in late in the game but he was the chairman of the Site Selection Task Force when the final recommendation was made to the president in 1995. In retrospect he wonders if a downtown Fresno site might have been a better choice. But that's hindsight. And that's after many, many years when the Merced site had to work through its environmental issues and reconfigure the location of the site and we will get to that later.

08-00:59:12
Burnett:

Yes. It is interesting. It did seem to sort of light a fire. They hastily put together last-minute proposals. "We got this imprimatur from the environmental impact report; maybe we can do this." And so Jim Costa cites the Santa Barbara model. He talks about it. You can convert an existing state school. I don't know if he was talking about turning CSU Fresno into a UC or just piggybacking on it. And there was even a council member, Fresno City Council Member Bob Lung, who proposed to approve fifty-eight million dollars to lure UC to downtown Fresno. That was in November 30th of '94. So this is all one thing. And I think the response from the regents was the environmental impact is one of these eight criteria that I mentioned before. "And, as far as we're concerned, with the three sites that we chose, that we selected," meaning the Site Selection Task Force actually said, "it's a toss-up." That was in a news report in August of 1994. And so they folded this into the eight-criteria plan for narrowing it down to a single site by May 1995, right. And this is on the heels of a report of projected student growth of 45,000 students by 2005. So they felt like there's a real impetus, that sooner or later something needs to be done to turn the valve on the population growth of students in California. So there's this dark horse. The Site Selection Task Force hears a pitch from Fresno City for a downtown campus but that doesn't seem to go anywhere. And there's a last minute promotion of Academy because the Academy folks felt that they were dealt an unfair blow by the identification of the 115 Native American sites, because they argued that their report was so thorough, they, by doing due diligence and finding these sites, the other sites were not as diligent in identifying Native American sites. And, in fact, the maps for the sites were not accurate. And so other sites appeared to have fewer burial sites or archeological sites than they actually did. What was your reaction to some of those claims of last-minute efforts to get on the scene or to be considered and not excluded?

08-01:02:30

Samuelson:

Well, we had consultants who looked carefully at all three sites from an environmental standpoint, including archeological sites, and felt that they did a thorough job on all three sites, treated all three sites the same, that this more than met the test. I think there had been a separate report that had been produced for the Academy site. I don't recall the exact details. So the proponents of that site were trying to compare that study with the studies we had done. But, as I say, we felt we treated those sites very equally. As I've suggested all along, we just tried to be as fair and objective as possible. It was difficult to do that. We certainly had times when the Merced folks didn't think they were being treated fairly and in keeping with what we had announced publicly. We would make representation that the sites had to have an option agreement in place by a certain date and then that date would come and go and Merced would sometimes argue, "Well, gosh, we complied with that. How can you continue to consider Academy and Table Mountain? They're not able to produce an option agreement at nominal cost for ten years." So we would have to find ways of explaining why—because of the economy or the slowness of the process or the fact that, at several stages, we had to hold off on negotiations because we're just so uncertain when this campus is going to come online. We had to modify the rules. You can argue fairness or unfairness but I think we were trying to be as objective as we could.

08-01:04:49

Burnett:

That seems to be the dilemma, wasn't it? That for some of those folks that must have felt like the cart was before the horse, because how can you narrow down a site when you can't promise that anything's going to be built there?

08-01:05:09

Samuelson:

That's right.

08-01:05:10

Burnett:

And that kind of automatically favors the one that can wait, the one that can afford to wait. You can see from a property perspective it makes sense. It seems to be really cut and dried. What's interesting from the perspective of the press at the time, even really late—so this is March 1st and 2nd 1995. There's another round of public hearings on the three sites because they're getting close to really narrowing it down. There's a last minute promotion of Academy. Then on March 4th Academy is eliminated. The report in the *Fresno Bee* is that Table Mountain is the new favorite. Way late in this process, in terms of the press that has been following this all the way through, they're not aware that Merced is going to be the lead. Then there's a scare, in May 1995 there's a report that the 2005 enrollment projections were overestimating student enrollment and there was an outside consultant group saying in fact the UC system could absorb, after all, could absorb all of these new students and therefore you don't need a new campus. So I don't know, how did that feel when you've been invested in this process for years and there's such uncertainty about whether it's even going to happen? You're negotiating a concrete commitment and you're asking for a concrete

commitment from a community and there's no guarantee that anything's going to happen at all, ever, in a sense, right? I mean, not ever, but when there are consultant groups saying, "Hey, you don't really need this thing for the next ten years," that's impactful, I imagine.

08-01:07:33

Samuelson:

I think there was always a feeling it was going to happen at some point. Admittedly there was uncertainty when the University said publicly, as President Peltason said on the very day the final selection was made, that it could likely be ten to fifteen years off, but I think there still was a feeling that it would happen eventually. Secondly, we had put in so much time and effort and resources to selecting a site, it was in the best interests of the state and the university to at least have an option to proceed and not face the prospect of starting this all over again. But it was just a very volatile time for the state with the economy being the way it was and, yes, I think it did impact enrollments. Those had to be recalibrated. It was a far cry from the late 1980s when, again, the financial situation of the state was much more favorable and there definitely were projections that were calling for the need that we described earlier by 1999, 2000 to accommodate more students. But it made it very difficult in interacting with the communities and landowners and trying to reassure them, trying to understand what concerns they had. And it certainly impacted the ability of, say, the county of Fresno and the county of Madera, to proceed beyond just generally stated resolutions as to what they were willing to do to assure that our objective of having two thousand acres at a nominal value could be realized. I could understand that.

08-01:09:56

Burnett:

As a historian I think the clear driving factor in the Merced case seems to be initially the closure of the base. Because it's announced fairly early. Nineteen ninety is the announcement and then it's phased in. So there's that loss there coupled with this commitment. And you can see it. The committee smoothed over, as you said, the differences. There was some tension, I understand, between the county board of supervisors and the city, too, right. And that's not unusual. I don't know if you can confirm this, that may have been in evidence in the other sites, as well. There were county and city issues, there were jurisdictional issues. But the committee apparently sat down with the county board of supervisors and the city and said, "Are we going to do this or not? And if we are we need to have everyone on board and we need to work this out because this is bigger than little jurisdictions." They had faith that they were going to do it. And they had to, I think, because if you lose that economic force of the Air Force base you need to replace it somehow. That dovetailed with the availability of the land. And so they just said the driving need to replace an economic loss with an economic boon of this free land and they then harnessed the community to move forward and really, really commit. I understand that they had annual fundraisers. Can you talk a little bit about that? Did you know about this at the time, that they would have a dinner or something, a big outdoor dinner, something like that?

08-01:12:19

Samuelson:

I attended them, so I was well aware. [laughter] They would have fundraisers out at the fairgrounds that would raise quite a bit of money. I think in total they may have raised \$250,000 if I recall, not at any one fundraiser, but in the accumulation of all the fundraisers. It also had the benefit of building community support. But this was not to pay the committee members or the attorneys, all of whom were donating their services. I believe Ken Robbins, the attorney for Virginia Smith Trust and for the Merced Irrigation District, did that *pro bono* as a contribution to the community. But eventually I think they were able to hire public relations folks up in Sacramento to help gain support in the legislature and in the governor's office.

08-01:13:37

Burnett:

Yeah. Once they had made the finals.

08-01:13:38

Samuelson:

Once they were finally selected. That comes later. They put together publications and brochures. That obviously cost money. Bob Carpenter, for example, would travel up and down the state visiting with regents or legislators or university officials and would never be reimbursed. It was, again, just remarkable what these folks did.

08-01:14:06

Burnett:

Didn't they see Willie Brown?

08-01:14:08

Samuelson:

Yes.

08-01:14:09

Burnett:

They went to see him, as well.

08-01:14:11

Samuelson:

They made arrangements because Willie Brown was speaker of the assembly and therefore an *ex officio* member of the Board of Regents. He would have a vote. So arrangements were made for Bob Carpenter to meet him in Sacramento. It was a very brief conversation from what Bob reports but it was effective. I think Bob was basically trying to emphasize how much Merced wanted this campus and emphasize the free land or make whatever other arguments he may have had. Another attachment in my oral history ought to be the transcript of what Bob Carpenter dictated several years ago, just freelancing, and it's just amazing the stories that he tells. One story that he tells is that when it came down to that very final meeting in 1995, word was received that Willie Brown would only be able to attend the meeting if arrangements could be made to fly him to San Francisco. And sure enough Bob made arrangements for an operator of a private plane to pick up Willie Brown, get him to the meeting. He voted for Merced and then had to leave for some other commitment. But it's just, again, an example of the ingenuity of the committee.

I want to come back just quickly to what you commented about, city and county, and the effort that Bob and the committee made to bring them together to speak with one voice. And I think this point was made during the final deliberations by the Board of Regents, that there was somehow a feeling that if Merced were selected the campus would become a reality. I think that influenced some of the regents. Alice Gonzales, I think, is the one who made that comment. It certainly was a feeling I had in working on this process over the years as I worked directly with Merced and a little less directly with Madera and Fresno. But the experience I had in watching the interaction of the public officials and people like Carpenter and the volunteers gave you a sense that, notwithstanding some of the obstacles that you and I have been discussing in terms of the fiscal constraints and the enrollment pullbacks, somehow if this campus was ever going to get off the ground it could happen in Merced and might not at the other sites had they been selected.

08-01:17:26

Burnett:

And there's one more piece, maybe a couple more pieces. There's one more piece certainly on the property side. In addition to the two thousand acres that would be made available for the site, there's a Virginia Smith site and there's the Cyril Smith Trust, as well. And that land had generated income that was meant to go to scholarships at Marquette University. But arrangements were made, were offered, that both trusts had proposed a joint development of ten thousand acres, with the university system pocketing 10 percent of the proceeds. And so the development of this land, according to Merced officials, and I'm quoting a March 3, 1995 news article, Merced officials said the project could generate about \$340 million, with the UC therefore reaping about thirty-four million dollars. So as an additional incentive. While the package was attractive, according to the Task Force member Daniel Simmons, the money represented would be a fraction of the UC's operating budget. It wasn't a complete cementer of a deal. And as it turns out later on, they weren't able to realize that. In your view, was that an additional incentive or was that really not that significant compared with just the availability of the land?

08-01:19:18

Samuelson:

Yes, I think it was very definitely an incentive and was mentioned in the regents item. It was presented in May of 1995 and certainly argued by some of the regents as a reason for going there. We had talked early on with the Virginia Smith Trust about the possibility of a joint development. Not only development but a planning and development agreement and had discussions with both Virginia Smith Trustees and the Cyril Smith Trustees about that possibility. The Cyril Smith Trustees had jurisdiction over four thousand acres and the Virginia Smith property they had seven thousand. If the campus was two thousand that would leave five thousand. So you had the five and the four. That comes up to, say, nine thousand acres. The thought would be not only to potentially generate some income for the campus, as well as, of course, for the trusts in pursuing their charitable purposes, but also to be engaged in the

planning of the surrounding area, the campus community. I think we were sensitive from the very beginning to the importance of having an integrated community next to the campus. Certainly our existing campuses benefit from that to the extent they exist. Santa Cruz suffers, I think, by not having a community immediately adjacent to its acreage. But that's another story. And so we were very excited with that possibility. It didn't turn out quite the way we anticipated, although I still think, as years have gone on and the campus site has been somewhat changed, there is the prospect, since the university now owns adjacent to the campus some twelve hundred acres or more, that there still is a possibility the university's going to be influencing how that community evolves, be it for cultural centers or restaurants or laundries. The things that students and faculty need, want to walk to to augment their academic education.

08-01:22:14

Burnett:

Before we get to the actual decision, moment of decision, there were any number of moments that you can pick, moments of frustration, moments of contingency. Sometimes things just aligned well. Are there stories that you would like to recount? We move from President Peltason to Richard Atkinson during this time, don't we?

08-01:22:58

Samuelsen:

No, because President Peltason was part of the selection of 1995 so he was very, very much at the forefront at that time. President Atkinson took office after the site was selected.

08-01:23:19

Burnett:

Okay. So the decision comes down in May of 1995. Once that decision comes down, I know there were some sour grapes in the press. I think the *Fresno Bee* wrote a snarky article about how long it takes to drive from Fresno to the Yosemite site, things like that, that it's six miles off of the highway on poorly paved roads. Are people going to really want to go there? So there's a bit of negative feelings. But the decision is made. And what's next for Roger Samuelsen? How did you feel once that site was confirmed? And what was next in line for you in doing the next stages of work? Because there was more work to be done once the site was selected.

08-01:24:28

Samuelsen:

It wasn't clear what additional role I would have. Again, I'm in a retirement mode, working on a part-time basis. I think the president and his advisers needed time to think through, okay, now that we have a site where do we go from here? How should we organize this? How can we maintain some momentum but keep in mind that we're not going to be in a position to open this campus anywhere near the timeframe that had originally been discussed? And in my conversations with Vice President Kennedy, he invited me to stay on and to assume the chairmanship of what we called a working group, which was somewhat akin to the executive staff that we had during site selection but had a somewhat different configuration. And so, as we did with the executive

staff, we would meet once a week or so. We would make assignments. That covered a range of possibilities but clearly we had to finalize the agreement with the Virginia Smith Trust since the selection of that site was dependent upon their agreeing to an option agreement that, by a date certain, would give us up to ten years to proceed. There was a lot of work to be done with the county and city of Merced. Where do we go from here in so far as community planning? What about the joint planning agreement with the two trusts that you and I discussed a moment ago? How do we proceed on that? So that started me on a course of working more and more hours and picking up more and more of the responsibility. And, again, I had the flexibility that the other folks didn't have, being retired and having time to devote to this. The others, of course, as in the case of the executive staff, had full-time jobs that were otherwise occupying their time.

08-01:27:10

Burnett:

Yeah. I suppose there's that argument, that you were available. But to be honest, who better to undertake property negotiations on behalf of the University of California dealing with issues of multiple stakeholders, possible environmental issues, all those things? Is that not what you had been doing roughly since the 1960s? So there's a certain amount of built-in human capital, as it were, on the Samuelsen front. So I think that you're really, really ready, uniquely prepared, perhaps, to undertake some of these things. And I don't know. There's so many pieces to this. What was happening on the front of where the money was going to come from, even from what you were undertaking at that stage in planning? Was there enough funding available to continue moving through this process of legal negotiations? You mentioned earlier that they were not going to be able to bring a campus together anywhere near the timeline that they had originally planned. What was the original timeline? What were they thinking? Once they selected a site, how long were they initially hoping to take to bring it online?

08-01:28:58

Samuelsen:

Well, when site selection started in 1989 it was going to be 1999. It was going to be ten years. Nobody anticipated site selection was going to take as long as it did. No one anticipated the downturn in the economy in the early 1990s. And so as I said before, when the site was actually selected in '95, by then reality had come to the forefront. So we knew it was a number of years off.

08-01:29:32

Burnett:

Right, right. It reset the clock.

08-01:29:33

Samuelsen:

But I suppose we ought to talk a little bit about that final selection. I was fortunate to staff the Site Selection Task Force, which made its recommendations to the president and that's when we had a split of viewpoints. (JRS: members of the Site Selection Task Force at the time were Regents Clair Burgener and Alice Gonzales, Vice Presidents Wayne Kennedy [chair], Walter Massey, and William [Bill] Baker, Chancellors Chang-Lin

Tien and Charles [Chuck] Young, and Academic Council Chair Daniel Simmons.) While a formal vote wasn't taken, it was clearly five to four, pretty close, and it was because of that closeness that President Peltason felt he had to take both the sites to the Board of Regents and not make a single recommendation. I was fortunate to sit in on those deliberations. It was an all-day meeting of the Site Selection Task Force. In the morning colleagues of mine made presentations on the eight factors that you mentioned earlier. And by then we had produced what I have here, called the Selection Factors Report, half-an-inch, and the staff responded to questions that members of the Site Selection Task Force had. Then after lunch the other members of the executive staff were excused. Since I was going to write the regents item I was asked to stay, along with the general counsel of the university, Jim Holst, and then an environmental attorney by the name of Clem Shute. Ironically, Clem Shute and I were in law school together, were classmates, were friends. He came back into my life and did a wonderful job of advising us on the EIR that we've talked about. But he also took notes, as I did, during the deliberations and gave me afterwards an attorney/client privilege document that summarized in detail the deliberations of the Site Selection Task Force, which I really needed in order to write a regents item that not only was based on facts and process but was evenly divided between the Table Mountain site and the Lake Yosemite site because I wanted to be as objective and fair as I could.

A little sidebar is that I had to prepare that regents item in utter secrecy. President Peltason told me of his desire to take both sites to the regents. And certainly Vice President Kennedy, my boss, would have known about that because he was the chairman of the Site Selection Task Force. I was asked not to share the deliberations or the outcome with members of the executive staff or with anybody. I would work on the document and then go in on weekends or when nobody else was around to run off copies that I could work on because the printer was in a different part of the office, not right next to me as you would experience today. So for several weeks I was working on it in consultation with Clem Shute and with an attorney from the general counsel's office by the name of Steve Drown. They helped me on writing it in a way that would meet the legal requirements of an EIR, would pass muster if it were ever challenged. You really need to be an expert in environmental law in order to know how to proceed along those lines. In a way, my legal training helped but I also was highly dependent upon Clem and Steve to guide me.

I did do one thing, notwithstanding the confidentiality. Just prior to finalizing the item I asked Gary DeWeese to join me and I asked him to treat this confidentially. But I said, "I want to make sure that I have phrased the recommendation," which would be the basis of the decision, "in a way that, from your experience, because you've dealt with property negotiations even more than I have, that you feel is adequate to take it to the next step, which is to enter into an option agreement with the successful site." And so he helped me phrase the final wording in that regard.

08-01:34:41

Burnett: As a kind of check and balance to make sure “am I really being objective?” Is that the question you had for him?

08-01:34:47

Samuelson: Yes.

08-01:34:48

Burnett: Or is it in addition to the procedural steps so that it would not be interpreted as favoring one or the other? Were you worried about an internal bias? Did you think that you—

08-01:35:02

Samuelson: No. I just wanted to make sure that those of us who would carry out the regents action had the authority that we needed. It is actually the president who would be given the authority because the regents action would provide that the option agreement would be entered in the next year-and-a-half or whatever for a ten-year period in a manner and on terms that were acceptable to the president. But obviously Gary and I would end up negotiating this with the help of the general counsel and recommend to the president that he sign it, which we ultimately did.

08-01:35:53

Burnett: Okay. So this is the report that went to the regents?

08-01:36:05

Samuelson: Yes. We call them an item for action. As I think I've said earlier, I had prepared many during my tenure with the Natural Reserve System. And so this was an item for action where the president makes a recommendation to the Board of Regents to take action. They could either approve that or amend it or disapprove it. In this case, because the vote of the Site Selection Task Force was so close and because it was rather clear that three of those voting for Lake Yosemite were either regents or standing in for regents in the case of Walter Hoadley—because he had been a former regent and then stayed on in the Site Selection Task Force—it made it untenable, I think, for President Peltason not to take Lake Yosemite as well as Table Mountain to the Board of Regents, let them decide between the two, even though the SSTF vote had been five to four in favor of Table Mountain. I've often wondered had one of those four votes for Lake Yosemite gone the other way, so that President Peltason had from the Task Force a six to three vote rather than five to four, might he have made a different recommendation? It would only be a recommendation but certainly, as I've said earlier, when the president makes a recommendation it holds a lot of weight. Because it usually represents not only his views but he's had input from his advisors, the vice presidents, the chancellors, general counsel. As I said earlier, more often than not the recommendation of the president is approved.

08-01:38:08

Burnett:

So that vote is interesting. Why do you think Table Mountain, why do you think it was close in that way? I know that it was and I know that in the press they were favoring Table Mountain. But from your perspective why do you think it held more appeal to those people?

08-01:38:35

Samuelson:

Both sites had wonderful attributes and I think those favoring Table Mountain liked the proximity to Fresno: a much larger population with more cultural amenities, more housing for faculty, the potential for maybe more fund development. I think they felt that it was more on what you might call a potential growth corridor. I've described Highway Forty-One. There was evidence that there was going to be growth out that way. The Valley Children's Hospital had moved out there from downtown Fresno to that area. I think they felt that it might have more aesthetic qualities—

08-01:39:37

Burnett:

It was a beautiful site.

08-01:39:39

Samuelson:

—than Lake Yosemite. It was a beautiful site. Its proximity to the San Joaquin River and the rock outcropping I mentioned earlier. And obviously they felt that some of the issues we've discussed already about land acquisition could be overcome if the regents decided on that site. Somehow they felt the county or the powers that be would find a way to acquire that for a nominal cost. And then I think they might have felt that the Lake Yosemite site was too remote, was not necessarily in a growth corridor, didn't have the proximity to a major population area, based on the issues you suggested earlier about the state of the economy. On the other hand the advocates of Lake Yosemite obviously found much to their liking there. They found some wonderful amenities to the landscape. Particularly at the time we were zeroing in more near the hilltop with commanding views of the Sierra and more interesting topography than the site that was ultimately chosen. They certainly felt that it provided the flexibility that was needed in uncertain times and gave the regents much more flexibility when you think about seven thousand acres, as to where you ultimately would locate the two thousand acres after further planning and further deliberations. And we've talked earlier about the possibility of the joint development agreement. Certainly the prospect of producing income for scholarships if the campus were to go there that in due course might serve not just graduates from the high schools in the City of Merced. There was a lot of talk about going to the courts and allowing the trust to expand the potential beneficiaries throughout the entire Central Valley. That was one of the thrusts of putting a campus there, was to increase the rate of enrollment from the Valley. That was a real attraction. So there were pros and cons for both sites. And I think I can say, without sharing too many confidences, that it was so close that it was almost a tie. As I say, no votes were taken but it was clear the deciding viewpoint was in the hands of the provost at the time of the university, Walter Massey, who went on to become president of Morehouse

College. Provost Massey could not decide until the last minute. He was going back and forth as arguments were being made.

08-01:43:35

Burnett:

And you watched those deliberations and it was exactly as you described, these wonderful attributes that each site had and you have to use a crystal ball to the best of your ability. What would be the best outcome for the Central Valley?

08-01:43:55

Samuelsen:

That's right, and in the long-term. We talked earlier about a 300-year decision. Well, even if it were a fifty-year-decision, it was different than a two-year decision. How might this evolve over a period of time? Only time will tell. But there were strong feelings that were expressed in a very thoughtful way on both sides. There even was concern expressed during the deliberations as to whether any site should be selected, the fear being that, once a site is selected, pressure would build to proceed. As we look back, that's exactly what happened. The legislators from the Valley were not going to allow the university to drag its feet ten to fifteen years or longer once that site was selected. And so there was quite a discussion about that. Would it be better to not select any site at that stage, again put everything on hold? It was a pivotal meeting. Then I had an opportunity to sit down with President Peltason and Wayne Kennedy, the vice president for administration, and perhaps others following the SSTF meeting and watch President Peltason deliberate, "Okay, now that I have this input and I know how the two regents feel about it and I know the arguments that are being made, what should I do?" He made, I think, the only decision he could make. I was very fortunate to become close to President Peltason during that process and had tremendous respect for him.

08-01:46:06

Burnett:

Reading about his statements in his oral history about the campus, it's clear that he was thinking about the long-term and he was just very philosophical about budget shortfalls. He just said, there are budget shortfalls and there are booms and somehow we managed to build an entire system of higher education over 130 years. So let's be philosophical here. I think it required some leadership on his part and some guts at that time to be able to move forward.

08-01:46:59

Samuelsen:

Yes, yes.

08-01:47:01

Burnett:

Well, perhaps we should pause there at that cliffhanger [laughter] and we'll return to talk about once we have the site selected. We'll continue talking about what unfolds and how your role grows in that process.

08-01:47:20

Samuelsen:

Thank you. [End of Interview]

Interview 9: March 16, 2017

09-00:00:00

Burnett: This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series. This is our ninth session on Thursday, March 16, 2017 and we're here in the Bancroft Library. And the last time we talked, the takeaway from that last little bit of our conversation was the really tight, really narrow difference between the pros and the cons in the initial discussions of the Site Selection Task Force. There are great reasons for Table Mountain, there are great reasons for Yosemite. And I want to make sure I understand this correctly, that President Peltason asked for the preparation of the recommendation for the two sites. Wanted a really clear explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of each of those two sites.

09-00:01:28

Samuelsen: That's correct.

09-00:01:29

Burnett: And so then what's the next step in terms of getting it before the regents?

09-00:01:36

Samuelsen: Before any meeting of the Board of Regents the Office of the President sends a packet of material to the board with what are called items for action or items for information. The items for action usually, in fact always, include a recommendation from the president which he or she has obviously developed in consultation with other members of the staff or a campus, if a campus is involved. And so my job was to prepare the item for action that really presented these two favorable sites for a final decision by the board.

09-00:02:29

Burnett: And so when this goes before the regents, were you in attendance of those sessions of regents?

09-00:02:43

Samuelsen: Yes. I think the entire executive staff was there. Since I had drafted the item and processed it, I had a particular interest in how it was going to be received. But, again, typical of any item going before the regents, the president or one of his vice presidents or a chancellor makes an initial oral presentation. In the case of this item, President Peltason turned it over to Vice President Kennedy, who was the chairman of the Site Selection Task Force, who elaborated further, trying to be fairly brief because obviously the regents have presumably read the more detailed written documentation. But in this case Vice President Kennedy then turned it over to representatives of the two contending sites. They had been invited to make brief presentations probably totaling twenty minutes, thirty minutes apiece. And then the matter was turned over to the regents for any comments or questions they may have.

09-00:04:06

Burnett:

That must have been incredibly high-stakes for these people going before the regents. I can't imagine. What's riding on that is billions of dollars of development for a regent or for a district. It all turns for them on this twenty minutes speech.

09-00:04:31

Samuelson:

Yes. I must say that, in looking back, I think the Lake Yosemite representatives did a far superior job in their presentation than the advocates for Table Mountain. But at that stage you don't know whether minds have been made up. As I think I've said before, I had no idea going in how the vote might turn out. I have since learned that people like Bob Carpenter had called upon fourteen different members of the Board of Regents personally to advocate the Merced site. I'm sure advocates of the Table Mountain site also did what they could to advocate their sites behind the scenes. I think very influential was the facts that Regents Burgener and Gonzalez were on the Site Selection Task Force, and had followed the entire process with great care. They both came out very strongly right off the bat, after the presentation from the representatives from the two sites, in favor of Lake Yosemite. And one highlight of Regent Burgener's presentation was that he got a hold of a whole bunch of postcards that elementary school kids from Merced area had written to the regents advocating that site. And he held them up with great glee and as a way of saying the community is really behind this site.

09-00:06:28

Burnett:

That's kind of a Mr.-Smith-Goes-to-Washington moment.

09-00:06:32

Samuelson:

Exactly. And it was a fun moment. But then members of the board who were in favor of Table Mountain also advocated reasons for selecting that site. And as I look back over the minutes and as I recall that day, the entire meeting didn't take that long. Presentations were made and then they turned to a vote, which, again, makes me think that most minds perhaps were already made up. Of interest to me is that President Peltason, who as president has a vote as a member of the Board of Regents and ex officio member, he voted for Table Mountain. And after the vote came down fourteen to five and it was a roll call vote, so people were rather clear as to who voted on what side, President Peltason asked that his vote be changed to Lake Yosemite as a gesture of goodwill toward that site and asked that the decision of the Board of Regents be made unanimous in favor of that site. So that's how it turned out. Obviously those who had driven up from Merced were absolutely delighted and those who had driven up from the Madera/Fresno area were quite disappointed.

09-00:08:10

Burnett:

But there was early on this sense that once the decision is made it's important to show support. I can't remember who was protesting or complaining about the decision but I think one of the political leaders said that it's like running

after a train that's left the station. We need to move forward now. The decision has been made and we need to see this as a boon for the entire Central Valley. It's no longer this district versus that district. It is an economic boon for that whole area. Not just economic but educational and a progressive move for the future of the Central Valley. Is that how it seemed to play out for you in terms of the residual rancor or ill will that was felt towards the Merced?

09-00:09:23

Samuelsen:

It took time and a lot of handholding. I think there were those who somehow felt that it was the wrong decision or that they had not been fairly treated in the process. What followed in the years after was a real effort by the university to reach out to the entire Valley to find ways of meeting the needs of people who were not close to Merced and that led to the development of the Fresno Center. We literally leased and ultimately acquired a major building on West Shaw with the University of California name and logo at its front, and developed learning centers in Modesto, in Bakersfield to give people a feeling that the University of California was accessible to them even though they were far removed from Merced. And there was an advisory committee that was set up with Bill Baker, Vice President Baker, as the convener. He would meet with representatives of the various parts of the San Joaquin Valley from time-to-time to keep them engaged to the extent possible, to get input as to what they would like to see the university do in not only developing UC Merced but developing these learning centers.

09-00:11:13

Burnett:

So that's baked into the planning from the get-go. There was this awareness of discontent or awareness of a kind of divisiveness atmosphere. I don't want to overstate it but that's what I was reading in the press. It seemed like there were some naysayers. We talked last session about complaints from various different angles, apparitional peoples concerns about sacred sites and the case of Academy and environmental concerns, which are ongoing. But economic concerns about whether one district is going to get left behind while another flourishes. And so you and others were deeply involved in establishing institutional satellite units of a UC Merced to be that would signal a kind of two-way street. These centers were, of course, meant to eventually serve in an educational sense. But were they kind of two-way conduits, where there were points where people could have input and you could feed that back into the system and figure out how to best serve these elements, these communities?

09-00:12:49

Samuelsen:

Yes. And I recall public forums that were held after the site was selected throughout the Valley, inviting people to come and express their views and to be brought up to date on our planning efforts. And then the politicians became involved, too. Congressman Condit represented the Merced/Modesto area. But he called—

09-00:13:22

Burnett: Is that Gary Condit?

09-00:13:24

Samuelson: Gary Condit. He called shortly after the site was selected for a forum that would include all the stakeholders. In part he was, I think, trying to keep the pressure on the university to actually build the campus since there was a certain amount of iffiness involved given the fiscal situation and the questionable enrollment figures that were starting to come out.

09-00:14:02

Burnett: Yeah. I recall that, too. Where is the driving force for the creation of this campus? Is it the university that is the break on this? Doesn't the university itself then depend on the state to provide the funding? What appeal can be made to the Office of the President to fund any of this? Is it just a question of their willingness to build and once they have that commitment to build then they can take that to the legislature and say, "Here, the University of California is going to build this and it's going to build it relatively soon. We need money. Can you help us?" Is that the order in which they understood the role of lobbying? I don't know if that question makes sense.

09-00:14:57

Samuelson: Oh, I think the initiative comes from a number of different sources. It certainly did in this case. The university obviously was concerned about funding its existing campuses. Purposefully provided in the regents action was that the site that was selected needed to provide an option agreement that would be extended out to ten to twelve years for the university to exercise, knowing that it was going to take time to sort through all of the planning issues that were involved and particularly the funding issues, to hopefully assure that the existing campuses would get what they needed but there also would be funding for the new campus. So you have the university on the one hand but you have Congressman Condit, you have Assemblyman Cardoza. You have Senator Monteith. You have eventually Governor Davis and Lieutenant Governor Bustamante, both of whom were members of the Board of Regents, who were saying, "Hey, we need to move ahead on this. Don't drag your feet. We'll provide some funding to fuel your effort." But all that takes time to work through. It was a couple of years before they did authorize initial planning money and then they boosted that up in subsequent years. Because up until the time planning money was set aside, again the university was handling this with existing staff. And with a number of folks—at this time I was retired so I was working entirely on the site—they had other jobs for which they were responsible. So we continued internally in the same way we had handled site selection, although we called it the working group. But I was the chairman of that group and we would meet every other week, make assignments. But the work was really being done in the context of the other work that the members of the working group were already doing. And they had to allocate that time in consultation with their respective vice presidents in any way they could, just to keep the whole thing going.

09-00:17:53

Burnett: The unanimous vote of the regents is in the middle of 1995, is that right?

09-00:18:03

Samuelson: May of 1995.

09-00:18:06

Burnett: Okay. And then the development of the working group, of which you are the head, is about a year later, is that right?

09-00:18:17

Samuelson: Mm-hmm.

09-00:18:18

Burnett: Okay. So there's stuff in play. None of this happens instantaneously. In March 1996 there was a rumor that the University of California had backed off of the 2005 start date. And the University of California had to state categorically that, no, we remain committed and we remain committed to this timeline. So there was a skittishness about that. The times would suggest that there was a reason to be skittish and nervous about it because in 1993 Peltason had said, "We're at the edge of a financial cliff." There were budget concerns. There was less money for higher education, more money for building prisons. That was the chief economic activity [by the state] it seems in places like the Central Valley, was building prisons as opposed to building universities. So there are different priorities being exercised by the state at that time. And so people were not sure of the degree of commitment. We talked about boosters in Merced but there are boosters at the state level.

09-00:19:35

Samuelson: That's right. But I also think that after the site was selected, all the parties involved stepped back, took a deep breath, and evaluated, "Okay. Where do we go from here? How do we organize ourselves to the next step? Where's the funding going to come from?" And it's not just the university. It is the County of Merced, it's the Virginia Smith Trust and the Cyril Smith Trust. I recall shortly after the selection was made, spending maybe a half a day with the Virginia Smith trustees at a workshop, as they were trying to think through, "How are we going to handle this? We've been an educational trust. Our only role up to now has been to create scholarships and allocate scholarships to high school students in Merced. But now, if we're going to develop our land, are we going to need to hire staff, consultants, become involved with a developer? How do we transition into this?" And likewise the county. They realized they had a huge responsibility for updating their general plan, for getting involved with habitat preservation and mitigation. How are they going to organize to do that? Who's going to be in charge? You have the supervisors involved. You have the administrative officer involved. You have the planning officer involved. I think for much of 1995, the balance of that year, all the parties were trying to think through how best to proceed.

But meanwhile there were all sorts of meetings going on between the parties. As I said, I met with the Virginia Smith trustees and I certainly met with the county. Some of my colleagues like Chris Adams and Trudy Heinecke were holding meetings with various people. Incidentally, about that time we're getting a new president, Dick Atkinson, who wasn't part of all the site selection and now all of a sudden we are asking what are his priorities, how does he want to proceed. I'm sure that behind the scenes there was a lot of thought as to how best to organize for this. And that led sometime in early 1996, within a year or so, to the president deciding to establish a steering committee made up of Provost Jud King and Vice President Baker and Vice President Kennedy and to bring on board a provost for academic planning who turned out to be Dan Simmons from the Davis campus. He was part of that steering group. (JRS: over time, Vice President Bruce Darling replaced Baker and Vice Provost [and future Chancellor] Carol Tomlinson-Keasey replaced Simmons; and over time, Vice President Larry Hershman and General Counsel Jim Holst joined the group.) And then simultaneously the president confirmed the working group made up of some of us senior administrators to do the work that I described earlier. (JRS: members of the working group were Chris Adams, Mark Aydelotte, Brad Barber, Todd Greenspan, Karen Merritt, Meredith Michaels, Joe Castro [future president of Fresno State], Trudy Heinecke, and Roger Samuelson [chair].) The laundry list was long. There was a lot more going on behind the scenes than people realized. I remember running into regents or community leaders and their asking, "What's going on? We don't hear anything," type of thing. Well, there was a lot going on and we had to learn to make periodic reports to the various parties, keep people in the loop, give them a sense of satisfaction we weren't just sitting on our heels.

09-00:24:02

Burnett:

Yeah. That was important.

09-00:24:05

Samuelson:

And certainly Bob Carpenter and his committee were very anxious. They were transitioning into a committee that wanted to make sure that this campus was actually going to be built. So they had to organized themselves. Should we hire a lobbyist to help in Sacramento? How do we keep pressure on the university? How do we not lose? We just don't want to sit back and say, "Oh, boy, our site's been selected." We want to make sure that if they're going to open in 2005, which was the announced date, they've got to get going.

09-00:24:44

Burnett:

The operative word seems to be momentum. I think you've mentioned that before. And there is this sense that once the announcement comes you might think that there would automatically be a ball rolling forward. But it's more like Sisyphus than a ball rolling downhill. It's more like it's a whole bunch of groups that have to work together to push a ball uphill to get this thing going. I think we're leaving the part of the story that's about direct opposition for

various reasons. It's more like there's the inertia of multiple competing state commitments, government commitments in times of economic uncertainty.

09-00:25:42

Samuelson: Yes.

09-00:25:43

Burnett: And there's a need then to push together in the same direction and that's a key rule. There must have been leaders emerge—I don't know if Dan Simmons was like that—but there must have been key leaders who were successful in kind of pushing forward, like Bob Carpenter in Merced. People who are enthusiastic and persistent and who persevere through periods of uncertainty.

09-00:26:15

Samuelson: That's right. The appointment of Dan Simmons was significant to the Valley because they saw that as a first step to the university saying, "Yes, we're serious. We're proceeding." Dan's job was largely to develop an academic plan for the new campus and he assembled from the various general campuses of the university an outstanding group of faculty. They had staff like Karen Merritt helping put together what was really the foundational academic plan. Because without that, how are you going to hire faculty, how are you going to organize the campus academically? What are the particular areas you want to emphasize given the site and the times? Dan worked on that for about a year. But I think he also, going back to our earlier comment, was trying to find initiatives that could be taken in the short term, along the lines that I suggested. He approached several of the campuses that had university extension classes and asked if they could they schedule classes in the Valley.

09-00:27:40

Burnett: To begin to have a presence, you mean?

09-00:27:40

Samuelson: To again have a presence. That was one of the functions of the Fresno Center, so that people would have a place they could come and take extension classes. I think he initiated discussions with Fresno State University for new joint doctoral programs. He started what ended up to be the Sierra Nevada Research Institute by gathering people who could conceptualize something like that, which would ultimately be part of the new campus. And then when he was succeeded by Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, she continued along the same lines. She came about a year later as a vice provost for academic initiatives. One of her many initiatives was what we have just talked about with regard to UC Merced.

09-00:28:40

Burnett: It stands, I think, in some contrast to the building of the campuses in the early sixties, where it seems like there was a budget and they built it. I'm not an expert on that process. This seemed to be a very deliberate process of scaling. So you begin small and you begin by offering something small that's connected to existing educational institutions. So there's kind of buy-in by the

educational institutions that are neighboring. They feel like they can contribute something and that they're involved. And that students, there can be some kind of UC Merced student. Although they weren't, right? The people who were doing a joint PhD program, it would be granted through CSU Fresno, for example. It would have that.

09-00:29:42

Samuelson:

Well, a combination of one of the existing university campuses and Fresno State.

09-00:29:48

Burnett:

Right, right. But it was very important to begin offering something so that you create a set of facts on the ground? That's kind of what they were thinking? Yeah. That leads to people thinking that this is real. It's going to happen but it's almost like a gradual—I don't know why this is coming to mind—but a gradual build-up of a military operation. I know that sounds like a sinister comparison. But you build a kind of small camp to begin organizing things and doing surveys to see what can be the larger institution eventually when it does come. But there was this need to provide something real there. And that's the role of the working group, to begin reaching out. Can you talk a little bit about your role in that and some of the people that you began to work with? I guess, first of all, there had to be some money, right? There was a five million dollar budget bonus for planning for 1997-98. Just to give the listeners a sense of this. So in October of 1996 Senator Barbara Boxer and a number of representatives announced their support behind providing funds for the UC Merced campus, including things like roads. So they're just [talking about] the basic infrastructure. Yes, there needs to be planning and kind of some handholding and reassurance. But just some of the concrete things, like there needs to be a road or a better improved road for access to the campus site.

09-00:31:58

Samuelson:

Boxer and Condit worked together to get some significant funding from the federal government to begin the planning of a major road or parkway, as I think they called it, that would connect Highway 99 to the vicinity of the campus. That parkway, since that time, has actually been realized. But it had to start somewhere. Everyone was trying to help in whatever way they could. So it was a matter of trying to coordinate all of this so that people could talk to one another, that you didn't get too far out in front of either the academic planning that the university was undertaking or the physical planning. I had to work in tandem with first Dan and then Carol. This is before Carol was named senior associate to the president. She and Dan were focused on the academic side and I was focused with my working group on the physical side. That just entailed a whole series of issues, starting with negotiating the final option agreement with the Virginia Smith Trust to negotiating shared agreements on costing out various studies that had to be undertaken with the county to opening a first office on the Merced College. So, again, the office would give us some presence in the Valley and in the Merced area where people know,

“Oh, yes, if you have any questions you can go to that office and get answers.”

09-00:34:02

Burnett:

Just to back up for a moment here. Cruz Bustamante, the house speaker and regent, appoints a committee, I think this is in '96, to find dollars for Merced. Basically there's an assembly committee that is founded [California State Assembly]. They eventually succeed in securing fifty million dollars in state funds. That's mostly for the studies—it's not to build roads or anything like that. It is mostly to actually just study the various aspects of the problem of designing and building a campus and getting permission from the various levels to do so. There are legal questions, there are environmental questions, there are community questions and this all needs to be studied and reported on so that things can be permitted. Do I have that roughly right? What is the ultimate purpose of a lot of these evaluations and studies?

09-00:35:14

Samuelson:

What was the figure you gave?

09-00:35:17

Burnett:

Fifty million dollars for in-state funds to mostly, I think, pay for environmental impact reports and things like that. On top of that there was a five-million-dollar, and then it later became ten million—five-million-dollar budget bonus just for planning. So that's kind of the stuff that you and others were doing on the ground. There needed to be the fuel, the financial fuel, to do the kind of work that you were doing. As you said, a lot of people have been working almost pro bono, in addition to their regular day jobs, as part of the University of California. And so there was a need to really provide the funding so that this kind of on-the-ground work could take place.

09-00:36:10

Samuelson:

I'm probably not the one to ask about the precise funding agenda because we had a wonderful vice president by the name of Larry Hershman, a colleague of mine by the name of Trudy Heinecke and our state representative, Steve Arditti, who negotiated with the legislature and with Lieutenant Governor Bustamante and with Governor Davis on all those funds. But I can say that, yes, early on we realized that we were going to have to undertake studies by consultants to meet the regulatory environment under the Clean Water Act and the authority of the Corps of Engineers to authorize us to proceed. Over and beyond that there also was a need to bring on staff that could help us in a whole variety of planning efforts. This was a huge undertaking. So some of that money was going for additional staffing, either in the Valley or in the Office of the President where some of us were still housed.

09-00:37:40

Burnett:

That's great. I wanted to ask about that. So walk me through on the ground what happens. Do you move out there effectively? I know you were commuting. I understand. But effectively what does it look like on the ground

in terms of, did you acquire some facilities to be out there to plan things on a day-to-day basis?

09-00:38:03

Samuelson:

I think initially we hired part-time public-relations-type people to respond to questions. A number of us maintain offices in Oakland but would travel rather frequently, like two or three times a week, down to Merced where we might spend a night. Eventually some of my colleagues, like Trudy Heinecke and Chris Adams, literally moved into apartments and stayed during the week and they would come home on weekends. So there were a variety of ways to handle this. I think Karen Merritt in academic affairs did the same thing at some stage. For personal reasons I decided not to do that. Had a young family and I wanted to be at home as much as I could. But I also was fortunate to be right next door to Vice President Kennedy's office, so I had ready access to Vice President Kennedy, who was my boss. Later on, when we moved to a new building in Oakland, where the Office of the President is now, my office was not only right next to Vice President Kennedy but was right down the hall from President Atkinson. So that would afford an opportunity for him to stop by from time to time and ask me how things were coming along and for briefing him as best I could.

09-00:39:42

Burnett:

As much as you were involved in kind of planning the facilities and making arrangements. So dealing with legal arrangements. The studies that would need to be done to get the way clear to building kind of a physical plant. You're also this kind of point person between the university system and what's happening on the ground as far as that kind of work is concerned. is that right?

09-00:40:17

Samuelson:

Well, particularly with the Virginia Smith Trust, the Cyril Smith Trust, the county with regard to habitat conservation efforts, and continual contact with Bob Carpenter and his committee. Those were primary responsibilities that I had. But I would say, too, as the chairman of the working group, I wanted to be in close proximity to the other members of that group so that we could converse and stay in touch. Also, going back to my experience with the Natural Reserve System, I was more of a facilitator than anything. I would spend a lot of time working with members of the general counsel's staff on legal issues or the budget office on budget issues and try to get as many parties involved as possible to collaborate and draw upon their strengths and skills.

09-00:41:34

Burnett:

On the land front, how did this rank as a land problem—not including all the stuff that happens later—but as a kind of legal land problem compared to the cases that you worked with for the Natural Reserve System?

09-00:41:54

Samuelson:

Well, this was a very straightforward negotiation with the Virginia Smith Trust, in part because the trustees and their attorney, Ken Robbins, were very, very nice people. But in part because this was a clean deal. We finally said the University could select two thousand acres among a certain set area of 2,550 acres within ten to twelve years, There was an option agreement for a nominal amount and we agreed to pay ten thousand dollars just to make it a binding type of agreement. But it was a far cry from what would have been involved had Table Mountain been selected. That would have been an extremely complex, difficult transaction.

09-00:42:53

Burnett:

Multiple property owners. Multiple covenants.

09-00:42:56

Samuelson:

Multiple. No gifts on the horizon and the likelihood a special district would have to be established in order to make it all possible and have the land come to the university without any particular expense, which was a condition that we had placed. So the negotiations for the Lake Yosemite site went through without too much of a hitch. We had a few little issues we had to work out, particularly a land swap with the Cyril Smith Trust for 160 acres to make it possible for the university to acquire the property it really wanted. But, of course, this was all several years before the site was ultimately changed from those two thousand acres. That's another story later on down the line. But in so far as those negotiations, that was very straightforward.

09-00:44:07

Burnett:

It's worth kind of exploring what people were assuming was going to happen or hoping was going to happen during that time because it is this two thousand acres of ultimately a ten-thousand-acre site. The numbers start to come in about anticipated economic impact on the Valley and on this area. They start coming up with like 563 million dollars a year of economic impact in terms of directly employed staff and faculty, students living there spending money, all the indirect jobs that are going to be added. And then it climbs in a fairly short order to a billion dollars a year. And it seemed like all of that was predicated on this development of land around there, that there was going to be all of these shopping districts and there were going to be all kinds of building and all kinds of housing was going to be developed. Is that some of the climate that you were hearing about from the community when you were reaching out to people, when you were hearing feedback from the community? Was there a lot of booster excitement around the prospect of the development of the campus at that time or was it just too far in the future? Because this is coming through the press and I don't have a clear sense of what people were thinking at the time. If you read that in the newspaper I think you'd get kind of excited. You'd say, "Well, that's half a billion and now it's a billion dollars a year." And that's a fair amount of impact on a place that just had an Air Force base close a few years ago. And so I can see how people would get excited about that kind of land deal. But was that really the case in terms of the legal

agreement? Because it seemed like there was two thousand acres devoted to the university and then that other land was going to be held in trust and sold off to developers and then that would be folded into a kind of scholarship program. Had that already fallen by the wayside at that point, by 1996-97?

09-00:46:45

Samuelsen:

Oh, no. I think a major factor in the regents selecting Lake Yosemite was the prospect that some kind of a joint planning and development agreement could be reached with the Virginia Smith Trust for the balance of their property. I think there even was the possibility that we might get the Cyril Smith Trust with its four thousand acres to join in and participate with them in some kind of a joint planning and development arrangement. We separated out an agreement from the option agreement purposefully because that was clearly the authority the regents had given the president, to enter into that option agreement. But I think it was very clear in discussions that I was having with Ken Robbins and others that we wanted to start negotiations on a joint planning and development agreement soon after the option agreement had been executed. And indeed we did. We spent the next number of years with extensive negotiations on that and retained outside counsel, Noel Nellis of the Orrick firm, to help us. We had a member of the general counsel's office, James Agate, involved as well. (JRS: An important addition to our team by then was Bob Hatheway. Bob assisted me on a number of real estate transactions, including the lease of the Fresno Center. Following my retirement, he was instrumental in forging the agreement for the ultimate campus site, one that involved a significant grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and a phase-out of what had been a golf club on the Virginia Smith Trust property.) We met extensively and came up with a pretty good framework. Again, though, during my time, before I retired, it still was in the context of the site being on the original two thousand acres—the hilltop site.

09-00:48:52

Burnett:

Yeah, the sweet spot.

09-00:48:53

Samuelsen:

It was only toward the end of my tenure that we started to think that maybe that site wasn't realistic, that we would need to move it down closer to Lake Yosemite, what was called the lake site. There even was some suggestion that we might have to move it down to where it ended up, the golf course site. That was all evolving during the late 1990s. Of course, the end result was that it was indeed the golf course site. But up until that time I think the full expectation was we would find some way to become involved with a joint planning and development effort on perhaps a fifty/fifty basis. We'd set up a special corporation to actually own the property and make the decisions with representation from both the Virginia Smith Trust and the university. Ultimately we came upon the idea of selecting a fifth member to serve as chair of the board of directors and break a tie if indeed that was required. But we were very sensitive to the development of the area because of the expectation

that it was going to produce scholarship money for students from the city of Merced and probably create enough money that they would have to go to court and have their mission changed so that it could cover the entire San Joaquin Valley—the trustees were receptive to that. We even talked in terms of perhaps their setting aside a certain amount of the income for scholarships to go just to students attending UC Merced. They were receptive to that. So these were all very well meaning negotiations that went back and forth over quite a period of time. But also there was, from the get-go, a real interest on the university's part to follow the models of Irvine and Davis and be involved in the development and character of the community that was going to be right next door. There is still a very strong interest because not only do you want to have facilities for your students and faculty and accommodations, but it would be nice to have shared museums or shared restaurants or shared whatever it might be to meet their needs. And, too, finally, Irvine is an example of trying to attract adjacent to the campus or near the campus businesses or industries that can interact with faculty and serve each others interests.

09-00:52:39

Burnett:

A kind of Stanford model in the sort of Frederick Terman—get the kind of economic spinoff activity. That's the dream, right? A lot of university developers. If we could do what Stanford did...

09-00:52:52

Samuelsen:

Well, that's the dream. In those early days, after the site was selected, some of us literally met with people at Stanford and met with some other institutions just to learn, "If you were in our shoes, what would you do?" And we brought experts in from other campuses to advise us. So there was a lot of thinking going on as to how to maximize this opportunity.

09-00:53:37

Burnett:

Yeah. And just a sense of economic health. You want the university to be generative of economic health in the community and you want the campus to be surrounded by that because that is just a better social and economic atmosphere. There are some nightmares, for example, on the East Coast of university towns that have long had this terrible relationship with the town that feeds and supports it, that have longstanding ancient agreements where they contribute no local taxes, for example. There's extreme poverty right next to a university. And I've been to campuses, studied at campuses like that. It's really unpleasant as you step off the campus and they've got security access passes just to get into a building. When I came to the University of California Berkeley, for example, which is surrounded by pockets of poverty, all the buildings are open. You can walk in. You can see a real kind of bunker mentality in other universities in other towns and cities. And it's not what you want when you're thinking of building a campus from scratch.

09-00:54:57

Samuelsen:

One of the most exciting aspects of this period of time for me was becoming involved with a conceptual planning exercise with representatives of the

county, the city, the two trusts, the Merced Irrigation District, and the university. We met frequently, all day sessions, for over a year with the guidance and facilitation help of a consulting firm in Sacramento that we hired to do this called EIP Associates. We came up collectively with a concept plan for the development of the surrounding community, following the intent that you and I have just discussed. In the process we were informally negotiating with one another and preparing for ultimate agreements that might be reached. There was a tremendous level of trust and a common purpose. That concept plan really formed the basis for the ultimate long-range development plan for the campus that was adopted by the Board of Regents as well as for the community plan that was formally adopted by the county of Merced. Not that it was precisely in the same way. I'm just saying that some of the concepts that were discussed, the integration of the campus and the community needs and desires, were I think instrumental in those plans.

09-00:57:18

Burnett:

Do you remember where that idea for a concept plan group came from? Was it a model that was imported from somewhere else, an idea that had been—is it common practice? Was it something that you had seen before?

09-00:57:40

Samuelson:

No, but I give credit to people like Trudy Heinecke and Chris Adams and Jack Zimmerman, the planners in the Office of the President who, through their long experience in working with the campuses—Trudy had formerly been on the Irvine campus as a planner—felt that something like this would be very, very helpful. But also the director of planning for the County of Merced, Bob Smith, another very wonderful guy, I'm sure was instrumental in coming up with this, probably in conversations with Trudy. I think we just felt the need. If we were going to pursue this idea of a joint planning process, we needed to start somewhere.

09-00:58:33

Burnett:

And perhaps spurred by some of the resistance or hurt feelings in surrounding communities, this need to bring stakeholders in and say that, "You have a voice here. We want to hear from you. We want to have your input," so that you can build a kind of stable base for all of the planning that's to come. It sounds obvious after the fact, doesn't it? But it could have been otherwise. It could have been done poorly or in a ham-fisted way and it could have encountered a lot of ongoing resistance because the resistance does eventually fall away. You notice in the press there's less acrimony. People seem to be brought on board.

So we were talking about the legal arrangements and the anticipated results of the land arrangements and the arrangements with the Virginia Smith Trust and the Cyril Smith Trust and the establishment of the option agreement. I'm thinking ground up, so literally starting with the land. There's also this reaching out to the community. So there's this concept plan. And then there's this establishment of this kind of community extension service, temporary

learning facilities so you can create educational facts on the ground. For that do we need to turn to talking about the academic planning, because you're also in conversation with those folks? Can we talk a little bit about how that gets off the ground and who's involved?

09-01:00:32

Samuelsen:

That, of course, was not in my bailiwick but I was well aware of the effort that was underway. I think I mentioned that Dan Simmons formed a committee that ultimately came up with an academic plan for the campus.

09-01:00:52

Burnett:

Yeah, the tenth campus academic plan? That's 1996-97.

09-01:00:55

Samuelsen:

The tenth campus academic plan. And Dan and Carol would often sit in, as they were available, with the working group as we were trying to find ways of coordinating and keeping on track of both the academic and the physical planning efforts. Ultimately, when Carol was named senior associate to the president for UC Merced, in addition to her being vice provost for academic initiatives, then everything came under her leadership and she formed what we called "the Merry Band." I was chief of staff and director of administration and someone else, Trudy, was director of physical planning and Karen Merritt was director of academic planning. (JRS: other members of the Merry Band were Karen Akerson, Mark Aydelotte, and Joe Castro.) It was a group of us that would then start meeting as staff to Carol. That was several years later, maybe in 1998 or thereabouts, before she was named chancellor.

09-01:02:02

Burnett:

So this is Carol Tomlinson-Keasey and she was vice provost for academic initiatives in the Office of the President.

09-01:02:13

Samuelsen:

Yes.

09-01:02:14

Burnett:

Okay. So for the entire UC system, she's obviously the person in charge for academic initiatives such as starting a new UC campus.

09-01:02:25

Samuelsen:

Yes.

09-01:02:26

Burnett:

So that's in '97 she starts with that job and then a year later she's made—this is October '98—she's made senior associate to the president with an eye to—that's basically saying, "You are in charge of the UC Merced project."

09-01:02:41

Samuelsen:

Yes.

09-01:02:41

Burnett: The purpose of that appointment was to say, “You’re overseeing the whole thing.”

09-01:02:48

Samuelsen: That’s right.

09-01:02:49

Burnett: And the Merry Band are the division heads for the kind of beachhead operation in setting up the University of California Merced.

09-01:02:57

Samuelsen: That’s right.

09-01:03:00

Burnett: So a year later, when she’s made chancellor, is that so that they’re actually creating the nascent administrative structure for the university?

09-01:03:16

Samuelsen: Yes.

09-01:03:17

Burnett: That’s what that signals when she’s made chancellor, and so they’re now saying, “Go hire the people who need to be the vice chancellor of academic planning or things like that.” Is that how that works?

09-01:03:29

Samuelsen: Yes.

09-01:03:31

Burnett: So under that, you are made senior associate. So what does that mean? Senior associate under now-Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey.

09-01:03:42

Samuelsen: She asked me to take the lead in the continual negotiations with the Virginia Smith Trust, the Habitat Conservation and Mitigation Program, and other special negotiations that might occur from time to time. It was a way of giving me a title since it was clear that I was not going to move to Merced, I was not going to become a vice chancellor.

09-01:04:25

Burnett: Was that on the table? Or they knew that you were retired and you were—

09-01:04:29

Samuelsen: Well, I was approaching sixty-five and I knew that this was going to be a short-term type of thing. But I had been involved all these years and so hopefully there was still a contribution that I could make.

09-01:04:51

Burnett: And so there are a number of things to set up, speaking of this kind of early temporary education system prior to the establishment of the full university.

Can you talk a little bit about the establishment of educational services, broadly speaking, in the area? How did that pan out and who was involved? I understand that you were looking at the current leaders of the existing educational institutions in the area. Ben Duran is the president of Merced College and the name's escaping me now but the head of CSU Fresno. So there are people who are important in that story. Can you talk about what was done to setup educational services in concert with these other institutions?

09-01:06:00

Samuelson:

I think it ties in with what we were talking about earlier, as to how could the university best serve the Valley. In addition to initiating its own programs, would there be a way it could collaborate with existing institutions for the betterment of all concerned. And so there were a couple of initiatives in that regard. One you've alluded to, was with Merced College, where we negotiated what we called the Tri-College Center. Ben Duran was then the president of Merced College. Merced College has a wonderful reputation. I think from the get-go we wanted to make sure that the University of California Merced would have a good relationship with that college. Ben and I negotiated an agreement that provided for portable buildings to be brought on to the Merced College campus. Merced College was not going to charge any rent for that but we would share the maintenance of the buildings using, in the case of the University of California, some of the planning and academic program money that was being allocated from the state. Then we talked to the other Cal State campus in the vicinity, Cal State Stanislaus, and they agreed to be part of this Tri-College program. Again, the idea was to come up with either separate programs that would be housed in this facility or in some cases collaborative programs, university extension or degree programs. I wasn't involved with the academic side because that's not my area of expertise. But certainly people like Karen Merritt and Joe Castro were involved. So that was one example.

And then I've mentioned before the Fresno Center. From the get-go we wanted to do that in collaboration with Cal State Fresno. And so we started negotiations with them whereby they would lease some of the space that we were acquiring and, again, we would encourage joint-type programs. John Welty was then the president and I remember one negotiations session when we were going to sit down over lunch and I was expecting maybe a vice president or an associate vice president, somebody to come to the meeting to negotiate and in walks John Welty, the president of the university. We had a very interesting negotiating session. I had a great deal of respect for him. Ironically, I was joined in, I think that very same meeting, by Joe Castro, who was then serving as director of academic planning or some such title, part of the Merry Band that Carol had put together. Joe Castro impressed me from the very beginning. I knew he was going to go someplace special. Well, the long and short of it is today he is president of Fresno State University. He took positions after he left us with Santa Barbara, UCSF, and then he was named just a couple of years ago. I think he succeeded Welty. So we had those two significant interactions with other institutions of higher education.

And then, over and beyond that, I know we had people on our staff who were interacting with high schools and other community colleges up and down the Valley, in part to facilitate some of the students of those institutions from ultimately going to the University of California Merced. They wanted to spread as much goodwill as possible, to help them understand what the application process was for the University of California, what courses they should be taking and the like. Heavy emphasis was put on that and particularly by a fellow by the name of Chon Ruiz, who is still with the University of California Merced, and did just an amazing job of outreach. (JRS: Encarnacion "Chon" Ruiz is currently the Director of Admissions and Outreach at UCM.)

09-01:11:15

Burnett:

Do you think Clark Kerr would have been pleased to have seen the ways in which there was this deliberate planning to integrate? This new UC campus has to be integrated with the existing state colleges there and the community college and all the way down to the high schools. So he wanted this pipeline, didn't he?

09-01:11:43

Samuelsen:

Oh, yeah.

09-01:11:42

Burnett:

And that that was built into the planning for Merced. And it was a bit of an uphill task, isn't that right? There are various statistics but the percentage of students in the Valley who attend a UC was something like 3 percent versus 7 percent for California as a whole.

09-01:12:20

Samuelsen:

Yeah, that's right.

09-01:12:22

Burnett:

They were facing a real mission, a real mission to fulfill the Kerr ambition of having this conveyor belt of opportunity from even before high school. But just getting people aware that you *can* go to university, you *can* go to the UC. If you are interested, we can help connect you. And that seemed to be the approach that was taken.

09-01:12:59

Samuelsen:

Yes

09-01:13:02

Burnett:

And so you're working on the land side. You're liaising with these folks who are developing this kind of tri-college system or tri-college center. It's not a system because it's meant to be temporary, although the relationships are supposed to be enduring. Do I have that right?

09-01:13:23

Samuelsen:

That's right.

09-01:13:25

Burnett:

They assumed that you need to keep talking with these institutions because they are going to be a permanent part of the UC system, right? And then there's also a question of getting the proper permitting with the county, the correct conservation go-ahead. Given your Natural Reserve System experience, I imagine that was another level of work that you were engaged in in this process.

09-01:14:07

Samuelson:

Yes, and that took an inordinate amount of time on the part of all concerned and ultimately led to the university needing to change the location of the campus from the place it was originally envisioned. Obviously I have thought a lot about that over the years, given the various positions that I have held. I think we were always aware during site selection that there were going to be environmental issues no matter where we went. The University of California is an institution that's going to draw interest. This is not the sixties. Any large development in this period of time is going to require permits and a lot of scrutiny. Indeed, we did have a lot of scrutiny. And we realized, just concentrating on Lake Yosemite, that there were vernal pools there, seasonal wetlands, that foster a beautiful array of wildflowers during the spring but also have some endangered species. There were also some plants that are part of the vernal pool habitat that are invaluable. But I think during the early stages we always felt, upon advice of our counsel from the general counsel's office and consultants we engaged, that we could work our way around these wetlands, either by avoidance or by mitigation. And so up until the time of site selection, and for a few years after that, we always thought it was manageable.

At some stage, as we learned more about the magnitude of the vernal pool habitats in that particular area, we realized that this was going to become a significant problem because we required a permit from the Corps of Engineers to either fill or change the topography where vernal pools existed. And we had to come up with a very stringent protocol in order to meet the demands of the Corps, who would also need signoff from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Fish and Wildlife Service. So ultimately we hired outside counsel to assist us in the process and it became evident that this was going to take a lot of expense for studies, a lot of processing of applications, and a lot of interaction with many, many individuals.

09-01:18:02

Burnett:

Is it fair to say at the time of the site selection the Lake Yosemite site was the most favored in terms of the degree of environmental impact?

09-01:18:16

Samuelson:

That's what our consultants told us as they compared Lake Yosemite with Table Mountain and Academy, which still was somewhat in the background, the Fresno County site. Interestingly, each of those three sites, if you look at just the sites themselves as opposed to the surrounding community, have about the same acreage in terms of wetlands. Moreover, Table Mountain and

Academy have some riparian issues that would have had to be overcome. I feel very confident, no matter which site we would have selected, we would have had an uphill battle getting permits.

09-01:19:08

Burnett:

One environmental advocate said in the press when he was voicing his concerns about the Yosemite site, he said, "It's in the middle of nowhere. Nobody goes there and that's why it's so great. It doesn't require any protection. And when you build a big, huge university with ten thousand students and all of the attendant facilities and businesses and home building and sprawl that's going to come with that, it's the worst possible case scenario." And, of course, that's the position of that one person. But it sort of highlights the nature of the battle that the UC system was facing, because you're building in these areas that are familiar to you, as when you were director of the Natural Reserve System, that there are these areas that had minimal traffic, often in these fairly remote areas, and so it was a matter of securing the rights and the lands so that you could protect the land and the species from being compromised or threatened by human activity. Now you're in the position where you're introducing human activity into that place, not just in proximity to it. But right there, there are all these vernal pools and all of these species. And so it was a real challenge.

But a couple of things sort of tip the scales in terms of the magnitude of the struggle. They knew that brine shrimp were there in the vernal pools. They were one of several species that were considered to be rare. I understand that there was a discovery of a particular species of fairy shrimp that had only the previous year been placed on the endangered species list. Although the environmental problems were known, this took it up a notch in terms of this problem because they were all over this place. And so that was discovered in September of 1999 by, I guess, William Fulton. And so that changed the nature of the debates. And reading in the press, it was quite eye-popping. So you mentioned before that there are a couple of solutions. One is to move the site within the eight thousand acres that you have. The other is to do mitigation. And what unfolds in the press is really astonishing. Can you talk a little bit about the discovery of the fairy shrimp and what that did for you as a planner, as someone who was involved in this process? When did you first find out about it and what was that like? Was it immediately clear to you what this was going to mean?

09-01:22:41

Samuelsen:

I'm not sure it was in the beginning, because I'm not sure that I totally understood the permit process and all that was involved in weighing practicable alternatives, which is part of the process you have to go through. You have to weigh practicable alternatives in terms of the project you have in mind, the cost involved, and the offsets of the benefits. It's a very onerous type of thing. So I don't think that understanding came until later because, again, I think the advice we were getting—and I had not been through this

before, even though I was director of the Natural Reserve System, but this was something entirely different—was that by avoiding some of these areas with careful planning, leaving them pristine, and by mitigation, we would be able to work our way through. I might say by way of background that about this same time the Nature Conservancy was getting into the act of protecting vernal pools. And the lead for that, Steve Johnson, is somebody I had known from my Natural Reserve days. He and the Nature Conservancy decided after quite a bit of deliberations to take on the protection of vernal pools through hopefully conservation easements or purchase as one of their major projects. And this was somewhat coincidental to the fact that the university was seeking a tenth campus and was zeroing in on this particular site. The Merced area, in a broad sense, was one of the largest, if not the largest, remaining area with vernal pool habitat in the entire state. And so when Steve and I compared notes when we ran into each other, I said, “Oh, my gosh, we ought to be talking.” It led Steve to start taking a very major role in consultation with people he knew in Sacramento and elsewhere to secure some mitigation money that, as I recall, went as high as thirty million dollars to acquire acreage, conservation easements, and protect the habitat in perpetuity.

09-01:25:47

Over the years I think the State has acquired over twenty thousand acres. That's about some sixty square miles, as I recall. It's a huge area. And so notwithstanding all of the concerns about the location, the campus, and moving the campus, this is getting ahead of the story, the outcome is a magnificent conservation result because you not only have that twenty thousand acres but you now have a six-thousand-acre natural reserve in the Natural Reserve System immediately adjacent to the campus. It's turned out to be a win-win situation but it did not get there without tremendous help from Steve Johnson, a fellow by the name of Mike Mantell, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, which came up with twelve million dollars to acquire the Virginia Smith Trust property. (JRS: Michael Mantell was an attorney with Resources Law Group based in Sacramento at the time; he is now president of the Resources Legacy Fund.) That's getting ahead of ourselves. But it's a magnificent outcome, even though it caused a great deal of consternation. I'm a consummate compromiser and negotiator, just by nature. I came out with a statement talking about the benefits that could come from this being a brand new campus but also emphasizing all the mitigation that was going to come from it. I made the mistake of signing it not only as Senior Associate to the Chancellor but as Director Emeritus of the Natural Reserve System because I thought that would help my case. Well, members of the faculty, particularly at Davis, were very upset with me for doing that, that I would somehow bring in the University Natural Reserve System as a rationale for proceeding along the lines we were proceeding with the campus being on the original location. Now that the campus has moved down to the golf course and in a different configuration I think their concerns, and for all the reasons I just articulated, I think their concerns have been pretty well mitigated. But at the time they were very upset. I went to at least one all day

meeting with members of the faculty and students and Davis and they chewed on me, and some of the consultants I took along with me, to no end.

09-01:29:07

Burnett: Meaning conservation biologists?

09-01:29:09

Samuelson: Yes.

09-01:29:10

Burnett: Who were saying that you are misusing your erstwhile authority?

09-01:29:13

Samuelson: Yes. And in retrospect I think they were right. I should not have in any way involved the Natural Reserve System. But at the time I was eager to somehow resolve this issue and get the campus going. You put in long hours and a lot of energy and I thought, "Well, maybe we could work this out." But it wasn't meant to be.

09-01:29:42

Burnett: Yeah. Well, I think maybe at this juncture it's worth describing briefly what the vernal pools are and what the fairy shrimp are. The subject of all of this consternation is this organism that is an exemplar of cryptobiosis. So it's an organism that when—the vernal pools are wet for a very short part of the year and they dry out and they're dry for the rest of the year. Is that roughly right?

09-01:30:12

Samuelson: Yeah, that's right. But they lay eggs before they dry out and next season they come back. I think their lifespan is sixteen days or something like that. But they're persistent. And some of those eggs can be dormant for years and all of a sudden they will spawn these fairy shrimp.

09-01:30:34

Burnett: And this is a subject of great scientific interest because this area, it's fairly recently—scientists have kind of known about it going back hundreds of years. But the real understanding of the extent of this phenomenon of cryptobiosis is not that old. What it means is they're obviously looking at organisms that can survive extreme environments. So you think of climate change and we're thinking about having to adapt breeding programs for organisms that need to survive extreme environments when we're thinking about crops and things like that. So that's of interest. This can be useful in terms of vaccines, treating dry vaccines that come alive when they enter the body. So there are all these kind of instrumental advantages to preserving these habitats in the way that Ken Norris described when he was justifying the Natural Reserve System at the outset. He said, "This is genetic material. It's a repository for future scientific research and it may save us in the end from some future environmental catastrophe." So it's not just that people thought that fairy shrimp were cute. Aren't they basically the same family of species

that are the sea monkeys? You'd order them in the mail and they'd come and you'd put them in water and they would come alive.

09-01:32:12

Samuelson: It could well be.

09-01:32:13

Burnett: I think that's effectively what they are. It's not just that they're preserving this [area] for its own sake. It is extremely important for future scientific research, research in biology. And so this was something that was becoming really important to the scientific community as well. So there's that at stake. So you said there are two basic ways of dealing with this problem. You can do mitigation or you can change the location of a site. So mitigation is what exactly? It's an offset? You can purchase other land that would conserve a similar family of species and you could say, "Look, we did this. Let us build here."

09-01:33:08

Samuelson: Yes. I think traditionally that is what is meant by mitigation. And I think that's what we thought we would be able to do. But, again, the original two-thousand-acre site didn't have that many vernal pools. But clearly development of the campus was going to impact the surrounding area and I think that was the concern. Even potentially impacting the area north of the site where there was an even a greater assemblage of vernal pools. And that's where many, if not most, of the conservation easements have been acquired using state money or through the efforts of the Nature Conservancy. We were mindful that on the balance of the Virginia Smith Trust property, the five thousand acres that they wanted to develop as a community, they had more vernal pools than we did on the two thousand acre site. Our concern was such that even before the site was selected we sat down with them, with our consultant. We had hired a consultant by the name of Larry Stromberg to do some preliminary type of investigations. We wanted to make sure they realized that their five thousand acres wasn't all developable, that they were going to face the same kind of problems that anybody else would face in developing that property. Again, I think at that time we thought by avoidance or mitigation those problems could be worked out. But we wanted to lower their expectations as to how much of that property could be actually developed.

09-01:35:06

Burnett: Did you succeed?

09-01:35:08

Samuelson: Oh, yes. They were very understanding and said, "Yes, we understand," and so forth. But this is early on in the game, as I say, before the site was selected. It was later on that we realized we were going to have to make some adjustments. As we started to think about alternative sites, moving it elsewhere on the Virginia Smith Trust acreage, they realized that their ability

to develop the property that was not being used by the university was being diminished substantially.

09-01:35:52

Burnett: More and more.

09-01:35:53

Samuelson: And that became a part of the concern we had as to how far we should move it and to what extent we should keep in mind the Virginia Smith Trust had an expectation in making a gift of the two thousand acres that they were going to be able to realize income on their property. So it was getting a little bit dicey.

09-01:36:16

Burnett: Did they have the option to back out? It wouldn't have mattered, I suppose. Endangered species are endangered species. They would have come up against that development problem whether the university was involved or not, right?

09-01:36:38

Samuelson: Well, to move the site from the original two thousand required new negotiations because our option agreement was to select two thousand out of 2,550 specific acres of that original site. If we were going to move it elsewhere we would have to sit down and renegotiate with them. We never got to that point because it was resolved in an entirely different way, as we've alluded to, with the Packard Foundation grant.

09-01:37:16

Burnett: So let me get the sequence right. The first talk is about when it's discovered. So this is 1999-2000 when it's discovered that one species of fairy shrimp is on the endangered list and that puts in jeopardy large swathes of the land. And the first thought is mitigation and proposals are made. So by 2000 the governor proposes forty-five million dollars for conservation easements totaling sixty thousand acres. That was instead or in lieu of moving the site, changing the location, right?

09-01:38:13

Samuelson: Yes. At that time I don't think the site had been moved—and when you say forty-five, I believe thirty of that was for the conservation easements. I think fifteen million was to the county to help them in their planning efforts because we were jointly engaged in all these studies that were required to get permits for not only the campus site but for the surrounding community. That's why it was a joint type of endeavor with the county. The governor even appointed a "green team," as he called it, made up of agency chiefs from Sacramento. We met with them rather frequently to bring them up to date. Again, he was trying to help the permitting process. I'm sure he was being encouraged by assemblymen and senators and others. People were trying very hard to "streamline" the process because everyone was aware that the target date to open was 2005 and the permitting process was taking longer than anybody anticipated, was becoming more complex. I remember Congressman Condit

early on at one stage even saying, “Well, gee, I think I’ll just go to Congress and get them to exempt this project from the Clean Water Act.” That would have created considerable backlash.

09-01:39:56

Burnett: And some enemies, I imagine.

09-01:39:57

Samuelsen: And enemies all over the country. Can you imagine a precedent of people going to Congress to get an exemption from environmental regulations—you just don’t do that.

09-01:40:07

Burnett: It could be a mine. You can open that door pretty wide. Yeah.

09-01:40:12

Samuelsen: I think throughout, and I even felt this from inside the university, I don’t think there was an appreciation for or an understanding of, or maybe even an acceptance of the reality of the regulatory process. I got caught in the middle of that because the more I dealt with the agencies, the more I dealt with the attorneys, the more I realized that this was going to take a long time, was going to take a lot of work, and it wasn’t going to happen overnight and there were no shortcuts. But legislators and Congressman Condit’s office and members of their staffs started to weigh in and they wanted to be kept informed. We would have conference calls or we would have face-to-face meetings rather frequently to let them know how we were coming along. I think there was an impression we were dragging our feet or we were not doing all that we could to make this a reality. They were not used to things that take longer than they’re used to. It really was very, very difficult. On a personal level, it ultimately cost me because Carol Tomlinson-Keasey was under tremendous pressure from these legislators and others to keep the process going, to make that 2005 date a reality. She called me one day and I think the particular senator who got to her was Senator Dick Monteith, who was a member of the state senate. “You need to find somebody else to coordinate this effort. It’s just not moving ahead. Samuelsen is just not up to it,” was his basic message. In effect she had to relieve me of that responsibility. This was within, I would say, two months of when I had planned to retire anyway. So for the last two months of my career with the university I was assigned directly to President Atkinson. It gave me two months to bring closure to all I had done in my university career, go through files, express my appreciation and the like. Dick Atkinson could not have been more gracious. He and I developed a very close relationship through that. I don’t relate this turn of events to personalize it to me but rather reflect on the pressure that everyone was under and the number of interests that were coming to the forefront, trying to push ahead in a very meaningful way because they just felt this campus was so important and that somehow there had to be a way of working it out. To her credit, Carol stuck to it. It was not easy on anybody.

09-01:44:14

Burnett: No, I'm sure. I'm sure.

09-01:44:16

Samuelsen: I'm sure she was chewed on as much as I was.

09-01:44:18

Burnett: Yeah. I think that the regulatory space has just gotten more and more stressful for people because when you're talking about development there's deadlines, there are investors, there's money being spent, there's money not being spent. There is a regulatory process that takes its time to work out, for very good reasons. There's a need for consultation, there's verification, there are all of these things that are part of that set of processes. There's a lag or a disconnect between the regulatory process and the needs of those who wish to move something forward and that ends up being a kind of intense pressure cooker. You're right that you ended up caught in the middle of that.

09-01:45:26

Samuelsen: I think in all fairness, the people involved really wanted the university to succeed at some place. I've talked recently to Steve Johnson of the Nature Conservancy and I recall our conversations back then. He really wanted the university to be placed somewhere in the Valley. He recognized the importance of that. He just didn't think the particular site we chose was the right one. But he was very pleased with the way it ultimately turned out. I mentioned Mike Mantell before, who's with a not-for-profit organization in Sacramento. It's something like Resources Agency, something like that, Resources Legacy [Fund]. And then Carol Whiteside, the director of the Great Valley Center in Modesto, was highly regarded. I think those three played a major role in addition to Carol and the university folks in getting the Packard Foundation to help out with the twelve-million-dollar grant that made it all possible for all of these barriers to be overcome and for the campus to be where it is now and for all the parties to come out ahead. Even the Virginia Smith Trust ended up with a two-million-dollar scholarship endowment they can draw upon in the future. The university was able to acquire some twelve hundred acres immediately south of the campus that someday will be the community that we talked about earlier and will give the university income that will help support the campus. All of those wonderful outcomes. It's going to take years. And so you go back to the concept planning. I like to think we planted some seeds. These things may not happen during my lifetime but at least the contribution was made.

09-01:47:52

Burnett: So there's a social and economic cryptobiosis, these dormant seeds of relationships that flourished later ultimately and are yet to flourish, right? It hasn't fully unfolded. So Michael Mantell?

09-01:48:12

Samuelsen: Mantell.

09-01:48:13

Burnett: Mantell of the Resources Legacy Fund and Carol Whiteside of the Great Valley Center and Steve—

09-01:48:21

Samuelsen: Steve Johnson.

09-01:48:22

Burnett: Steve Johnson of the Nature Conservancy. So did the Nature Conservancy put up money or were they facilitators?

09-01:48:32

Samuelsen: They were facilitators.

09-01:48:36

Burnett: Okay. Before we get to what worked out, on the other side there was opposition. There were some naysayers. Can you talk a little bit about the advocacy groups that were generating pressure from the other side? There were the people who want things to move forward and there were those who were saying, "Hold on a minute." Who were those folks and what did they want?

09-01:49:03

Samuelsen: Well, the name Lydia Miller particularly comes to mind. She had a small organization that would regularly object to what we were doing in that particular place for the reasons we've articulated. And several other small advocacy groups, as well. But we never were faced with, say, the Sierra Club or other large organizations like the Audubon Society. They stayed more quiet during the process. But these smaller groups tended to show up at meetings and ask to be heard and the like. It was important that we hear from that side.

09-01:50:01

Burnett: Notwithstanding the sort of complaint you had from the faculty about including the imprimatur of the Natural Reserve System, there was frank and educational conversation about what's at stake biologically, right? That knowledge was circulated?

09-01:50:31

Samuelsen: Yes. Oh, yes.

09-01:50:32

Burnett: It was pretty well-known by most parties why this was important and what needed to be done and what could be done in terms of mitigation or moving the location.

09-01:50:46

Samuelsen: That's right. But I don't think it was until we hired Dave Moser of the McCutchen firm and a gentleman by the name of Marc Ebbin who was hired by the county became involved. They were experts in this area and they really

helped us understand what was going to be involved in order to get the permits. I think very highly of them.

09-01:51:22

Burnett:

So what ends up happening is that there's a combination of easements and a decision to relocate. At what point does it become clear that you need to move the site? That must have been somewhat painful for folks because that was the site, wasn't it? It was an aesthetically pleasing site, it was the site that everyone had kind of assumed was going to be the location. At what point does that become clear and how does that decision unfold?

09-01:52:01

Samuelsen:

Well, it started to become clear before I retired. It didn't really become entirely clear until after I retired. So some of what I share I was not involved with. I think while I was still active we retained the very prominent architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill to help us with a campus development plan. As they started to look at the original site they started to raise some questions as to how viable that was from a planning standpoint. They started to direct our attention down to what they called the lake site, which was a site much nearer to the lake, Lake Yosemite. And, ironically, that is a site that the local Merced folks originally thought might be the site for the campus. I have talked to Bob Carpenter and others over the years about this. But I'm digressing a bit. When we first went out and looked at the acreage in the early stages, when we were trying to narrow eighty-five sites down to twenty—I said earlier we just drove up as close as we could and eyeballed it—it just looked like grassland with a single tree and a single barn and it wasn't that attractive. It wasn't until after we had access to the property and we could drive all over the seven thousand acres that we got up to the hillside and thought, "Wow. This would really make a nice site." Had a nice view of the Sierra. Had more topography, was more interesting. That's probably why we ended up there. But Skidmore, Owings & Merrill started to say, "You ought to take another look at that lakeside." It would not create the problems of infrastructure to the extent it's closer to town. It's near the lake. It would have the value of breezes off the lake during the summer, keeping it cool. So we started to think, "Well, maybe we ought to raise that as a possibility." And about that time, too, it became evident that the golf course was having some financial struggles and was proving a burden to the Virginia Smith Trust. They were not getting the income they expected from it. There was a possibility that some of the bonds were going to be forfeited. So that started to lead to the possibility, well, maybe the golf course could be incorporated into the lake site. That's about the time I retired. But subsequent to that time the arrangement was negotiated with the parties I've already identified. People like Bob Hathaway, a colleague of mine who was instrumental in some of the negotiations, negotiated a win/win situation where, with the money of the Packard Foundation, the university ended up owning the entire seven-thousand-acre Virginia Smith Trust property. Virginia Smith folks were given a two-million-dollar endowment and then the property immediately south that

I mentioned before was acquired. It allowed the campus to proceed on schedule because the golf course had already been developed so there were not permit issues. There subsequently was quite a bit of negotiations as to whether that 240 acres could be expanded to the 910 acres that the campus really needed to build out eventually to serve 25,000 students and fortunately, and again I wasn't involved, but as I understand the permit, necessary permit, was ultimately rendered by the Corps of Engineers. The campus is going to be able to realize that footprint, plus maybe go a little bit into the 1,240 acres that they acquired just south of there in order to realize the ultimate goal.

09-01:57:07

Burnett: And that's for the plan to have a campus that can serve 25,000 students?

09-01:57:15

Samuelson: Yes.

09-01:57:17

Burnett: Well, let's maybe take a break and come back because we want to talk about how the Packard grant came about and to talk about some of the other aspects surrounding this because it's a very complicated issue. But it combines moving locations and getting easements. So you have the change in location and mitigation that ends up making the final Merced site possible. All right. We'll continue next time.

09-01:57:48

Samuelson: Thank you.

[End of Interview]

Interview 10: April 12, 2017

10-00:00:00

Burnett: This is Paul Burnett interviewing Roger Samuelsen for the University History Series and it is Wednesday, April 12, 2017, here in the Bancroft Library at the University of California Berkeley. Last time, we talked about your time trying to get Merced off the ground and you contributed to that successfully. You retired for the third time. And what year did you retire?

10-00:00:50

Samuelsen: Two thousand one.

10-00:00:51

Burnett: Two thousand and one. So now we're four years out from the actual opening of UC Merced. Can you reflect a little bit about the story of the unfolding of the campus, the breaking ground and all of that? Because you were retired but still involved, I understand, still hearing stories and still a witness to what was happening.

10-00:01:23

Samuelsen: Well, it was an incredible experience to see ground being broken and the first students enter UC Merced. I did stay in close touch with my former colleagues and they would share with me how some of the negotiations were going, particularly with the final configuration of the campus. And I have nothing but admiration for the final resolution and the way that came about with all parties benefitting, including the Virginia Smith Trust and the University, the generosity of the Packard Foundation and the Hewlett Foundation. It was a remarkable outcome. Then I had the opportunity to learn that a young man I had known in our church was going to be in the entering class. And so having watched him grow up and being good friends of his parents, it was fun to see through his eyes what it was like to enter a university I'd had something to do in establishing.

A little sidelight to that story is that he and I were invited to speak to the local rotary club about the opening. His remarks, in essence, were that he had never heard of UC Merced. He received a letter saying, "Dear Kurt, his name is Kurt Winbigler, "Dear Kurt, welcome to the University of California. You've been accepted to the university but you've been redirected to UC Merced. There will be an open house in a few days. We would welcome your attending the open house to learn a little bit about the campus and the like." And so he went to his folks and said, "How about this Saturday? Could we go down to Merced?" I don't think any of them had ever been to Merced or knew where it was. So the end result was that he had four wonderful years. Really liked the experience. It was gratifying to experience that.

And then a few years later, Jeane and I attended the first graduation ceremony and the featured speaker was Michelle Obama. As you probably have heard the story, the students themselves wrote a letter to her asking if she would be

the speaker. Whatever approach they used was so impressive to her that she accepted. It was magical to see her coming in and give just an eloquent commencement talk, drawing upon her experience growing up in Chicago and having known about the struggles that young people of color have to go through in order to go to an institution of higher education.

And then there have been the many opportunities I've had to sit with Bob Carpenter and others on the campus and see the students come by and just revel in how far the campus has come. Most recently you and I were down there and had that opportunity. We met with Kyle Hoffman, the vice chancellor of university relations, and Jan Mendenhall, the associate vice chancellor. And you may recall Jan and I reminisced a little bit about how I hired her in the late 1990s on a part-time basis as one of the very first employees of UC Merced. To have watched Jan over the years take on more and more responsibility and now be an associate vice chancellor on the campus is just something that means a great deal to me. She was raised in the [Central] Valley, returned, after going to UC Davis and having a business career, to the Valley to take care of her family's farm and heard about an opening and one thing led to another. She introduced me to social media. She brought in a little laptop and showed me something that she had done as a promo for the campus and I was just taken aback by how impressive she was. I went to Carol Tomlinson-Keasey. I'm not sure whether Carol was yet chancellor. She might still have been senior associate to the president. But in any event, I highly recommended Jan and I'm delighted that she has contributed as she has.

10-00:06:55

Burnett:

She's a fantastic ambassador, I think, for UC Merced, having come from the Valley, went to university, went to UC Davis because there was no Merced, and was successful there and then had a successful career. I think she was working for a prominent corporation down in Southern California, made a name for herself there. She had that corporate background and a kind of metropolitan or cosmopolitan experience, and then returned to her roots. And she's very proud of that. But also a real emblem of what's possible at UC Merced and I think that that's something that just by dint of her origins and her career path, she's kind of a model for what students can look forward to in attending UC Merced and that you can come from the Valley, you can go work with the best in the world, continue to do so, or you can come and bring your talent back to the Valley, which is a really powerful story, I think, that is kind of incarnate in Jan Mendenhall. It was a real privilege to meet her and to talk with her. I've read a couple of stories from undergraduate histories, but what was it like for the student Winbigler in those early years? Physically what was the campus in, say, 2005, '06, '07? Was it a couple of buildings? Because I saw it now and it's an established institution with brand-new buildings and it's gorgeous. But what was it like starting right out of the gate?

10-00:09:00

Samuelson:

I think you saw the essence of what it is. You and I also experienced the tremendous expansion that's under way as we speak. But there certainly were the basics in terms of the library and residence halls and dining halls and some classroom space and the like. I've not been back on the campus since that time without seeing significant construction under way, and that's just going to be the way it is for many years to come, until they reach their projected enrollment of 25,000. I think it was a learning experience for Kurt. One of the challenges for Kurt and the other students even today is how to get around with or without a car, how to take shuttles into town so you can go to Starbucks or the market or do your shopping or entertaining. But he made some good connections and upon graduation he literally opened a coffee shop down on Main Street that was a drawing card for students in subsequent years to come and be entertained and hang out. He has since sold that business and moved on to other things. It was a wonderful experience for him. I think the only downside was his parents decided to buy a home in Merced and this was just as the economy was taking a nosedive. I am not sure that turned out to be the best investment for our friends, the Winbiglers, but it did provide after, I think, the first year a place for Kurt and some of his buddies to live. There are a lot of students who, even today, have to live off campus. One of the goals of the expansion project that's underway is to expand the number of dormitory spaces to accommodate more students. I must say, with regard to this project, the 2020 Project, again I'm just in awe not only of what is underway but the ingenuity that the chancellor, Chancellor Leland, and others have brought to the table in creating a public/private partnership that's making this all possible. During my time we'd talk about the ultimate build-out of the campus, the surrounding community, but it's one thing to come up with ideas and plans that you think are appropriate but it's another thing to actually implement them, particularly in a climate of fiscal constraints and competing demands.

10-00:12:27

Burnett:

It's the twenty-first century version of that dream of the land-grant college system across the United States, that you would put a research university in an area to serve that state or that community. It was a two-way street and it was envisioned that way, that the research and innovation that would happen on the campus would then reach out to the community. They would have demonstration agents go out and say, "This is what you can do with your farm. This is the new high-tech way of doing things." And the supply of young student talent, they have a place to go. They can go to the state college. And that dream was somewhat elusive for the Valley for a long time because you had to move across the state to take advantage of the educational opportunities of the UC system. And for the first time they now have that opportunity. It's going to be a process that's going to take some time, I think, for that to unfold. But as we spoke with a number of figures at UC Merced, it's a runaway success, that they have people coming from the Valley, excelling and going on to work either in the Valley or outside of the Valley,

and folks coming in from other parts of California and the world to study there. It's a research UC and you want it to be an international success and I think they've really oriented themselves towards that and planned it very carefully. And you want to innovate on all these axes. You want it to be an investment in what is the next generation of technology that we need to focus on. There's a real focus on engineering and science there. It's a very specific focus. But there's innovation, too. And I don't know if this is conscious policy or not, but you and I went to the campus and there was a difference from other UC campuses that I've been to. And you've got a lot more experience so you can talk about how it's special. But walking around campus, what was the sense that you got of the university in terms of the student body?

10-00:15:10

Samuelson:

Well, I'm always taken by the mix of cultures and backgrounds, although we're experiencing that more and more at Berkeley and other campuses, as well. That was part of the dream, to meet an increasingly diverse population here in California, be it from the Central Valley or elsewhere. I think just watching the students interact, some of them, of course, looking down at their iPhones, but busily moving from class to class or going to the library and seeing all of the desks filled, going to the cafeteria and watching the buzz. It's a very exciting endeavor. How it turns out in thirty, fifty, a hundred years, of course, we don't know. I think once they're able to develop the adjacent land for a university community, including what they're calling a town center which will be a melting pot between the campus and community, this is going to be very, very important and it's part of the dream we always had. The economy has not allowed it to advance as fast as I think anybody hoped but in due course that's going to happen. And for the university to be able to have a major influence as to how that is planned out and to benefit from the revenue that will be produced is heartening.

10-00:17:03

Burnett:

Maybe it was a blessing. The initial relative isolation of the campus at the outset was a blessing for the university in terms of, in essence, forcing the student body to cling together and to develop a really strong identity as Merced students and as the first set of Merced students. I saw an enormously healthy [range of] student activities. We were out there on a day when all of the fraternities were pledging. I don't know what you call it. I mean, they were advertising, effectively, and at this stage the fraternities are virtual. They are literally communities of people who come together. They don't have fraternity houses and sorority houses yet. But I'm assuming they will in due course and that's part of the larger planning. But what was heartening to me was to see the tremendous diversity in just the little pockets of social activity going on. When I went to the University of Pennsylvania and I was a dorm graduate advisor and I was responsible for floors in this dormitory. And on paper the University of Pennsylvania is somewhat diverse, but the diversity works out that people hang out with their "kind," and so you have Asian students, South Asian students, you have Korean students, you have Japanese

students. It's really subdivided and that kind of cultural solidarity and identity is important. But what I saw at Merced was small groups of folks, from any group of five people you would have people with five completely different backgrounds, just hanging out effortlessly, and it was really moving to see. And I'm really excited to see what's going to happen with that. I think it's a good foundation socially and culturally for the university to have that in place as they then expand and create a more solid institutional structure for social interaction at the university. It'll be really exciting to see how that pans out, and it's happening right now. The 2020 project is to double the size of the campus and you can see that. It's really, really amazing to see that construction taking place. So I'm encouraged by that process and we'll see how things unfold.

And so there are a number of figures who contributed to that and people are observing it on the side. And Carol Tomlinson-Keasey was a key figure, as you said, worked under tremendous pressure in getting the university campus going. Was she able to see the fulfillment of that in her career? How long was she chancellor? Do you remember?

10-00:20:35

Samuelsen:

I would surmise maybe about five or six years. Regrettably she developed cancer and had to step aside. She definitely saw the opening class. She presided over the convocation when the campus first opened. She was not able to attend the first commencement but sent a very nice message. I regret her missing that special occasion very much. Carol was the key person throughout the early development of the campus—a very tenacious person. She and I had our differences, largely because our leadership styles were different. On the other hand, I think there was a lot of mutual respect. What she pulled off with the help of wonderful staff and the help of politicians and legislators and many, many people was remarkable—and she would give credit to all of them—but she was the person who brought it all about through her leadership and I give her tremendous credit. I'm very sorry she's not here today to experience this firsthand. She passed away not too long after the first commencement.

10-00:22:05

Burnett:

And I understand there's a plaque commemorating her contribution.

10-00:22:10

Samuelsen:

Well, the quad there is named for her. I think people universally give her the credit that she's due.

10-00:22:22

Burnett:

Well, there's many aspects of UC Merced that are special and unique but I think it's hard to overlook the Natural Reserve. That's a feature that's adjacent to it and I think it makes it a very unique space. So they didn't get the prime real estate that they were looking for, that you all were looking for. Was a kind of prettier spot further up the foothills, I understand. But they got the site

by the lake. But what are the consequences of having a [part of the] Natural Reserve System like that beside the campus? What does that do for the view and for the awareness of the students of precious environmental resources and so on?

10-00:23:20

Samuelson:

It is a unique opportunity to have a reserve of that size and that magnitude immediately next door to the campus. That was one of the dreams Ken Norris and others had in founding the Natural Reserve System. It gives students and faculty and researchers immediate access without having to travel very far. Being able to take field trips and then come back to their laboratories or their classrooms. And as I think I've said, I think it opens up some wonderful opportunities for interface with the public through tours and someday a visitors center. On a very personal level, because of my involvement with both the NRS and UC Merced, I will always remember visiting Chancellor Leland after she was gracious enough to fund part of my oral history. I wanted to thank her and ask her about any expectations she had for what I might say. At the end of our talk she asked me to come to the window in her office and look out over the reserve. And she said, "You must have a sense of pride and satisfaction of being here on the campus but looking out over the latest addition, at that time, to the Natural Reserve System." And indeed I did. That was very kind of her to comment as she did.

10-00:24:58

Burnett:

If I understand this correctly, it preserves the view straight out to the Sierras?

10-00:25:04

Samuelson:

Yes. It's over five thousand acres and it protects the vernal pool habitat in perpetuity. So it goes back to what we said earlier about the ultimate outcome of all the negotiations and all of the discussions with regulatory agencies. It was really a win/win for everybody, including the Virginia Smith Trust, which was able to get out from under the burden of some \$8.5 million of bonds on the golf course, and receive a two million dollar fund to augment their scholarships. The university was able to proceed on schedule to open its doors in 2005. It was, I think, a solution that solved the environmental problems and academic problems and fiscal problems that were surrounding the early development of the campus.

10-00:26:18

Burnett:

And it's good to have some control over the development such that the university can grow towards Merced, right? But then on the other side, that Natural Reserve System preserves the natural beauty of the situation of the campus. So I think one of the dreams of college leaders going way back was, as much as a university links young people to a technological and industrial future, there is this notion, perhaps a romantic notion, of sequestration: that young people can be inspired by being in the enclosed garden, that the troubles of the world are outside and they can focus and that there's natural beauty [surrounding them] as a part of that. And I've seen that in reports.

When I worked on the history of international development, leaders of developing countries were asking the United States how to make an advanced university. What should we do? And one of the pieces of advice that would come back from university leaders is that you want to expose students to technology and science, but you also want to create an environment that is nourishing to them. And this is before all the environmental stuff, right? This is back in the forties and fifties. And I think that's somewhat a part of the makeup of what makes a healthy university. And by all of these negotiations and all of these different stakeholders bumping up against each other and negotiating and working hard, you end up with this result, which is to have this conduit for young people in the Valley and from all over to get the kind of high-technology education and advanced pedagogy, and also to have this exposure to a kind of unique and astonishing natural beauty, from the vernal pools all the way up to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. And I think that's a legacy that I think you should be proud of. I think that's partly Roger Samuelsen in the mix. And it may have happened anyway, but certainly I think your experience, your orientation came into play somehow, that moved that trajectory towards the establishment of the Natural Reserve and the preservation of a twin ideal for the university and the United States. And I think that's a tremendous achievement.

10-00:29:25

Samuelsen:

Well, I certainly contributed but I can't take credit for the ultimate solution. None of us envisioned that during the time I was there. But as you say, it was win/win and you do have the Natural Reserve. But beyond that you have the conservation easements that were funded by the state that protect the habitat even beyond the Natural Reserve, as you look to the Sierra. Then you complement that on the other side with this future university community, which is also very important for the well being of a campus. The outcome was rather favorable but only time will tell how favorable.

10-00:30:16

Burnett:

Right. And the campus itself also has a really green orientation, I understand. All of the buildings are LEED certified—

10-00:30:22

Samuelsen:

That's right.

10-00:30:22

Burnett:

—at the highest level. And in terms of the sourcing of power and recycling there's just this ground up—and that's a very twenty-first century orientation. This ground-up construction of a modern, hopefully zero-carbon research university that in its essence is in harmony with this orientation towards conservation, the preservation of species that we share the planet with. That was just one more phase in a long career of devotion to the University of California and a devotion to California as a physical and biotic space. Right? So there're those two basic orientations. You're very close to the University of California. I think you have a very strong identity. I think for every interview,

people watching on video can notice that you are wearing blue and gold. You make an effort. You're wearing your Cal colors and you're extremely proud of the University of California Berkeley, and the UC system as a whole. Can you talk a little bit about how your Cal experience shaped you and then how your Cal experience became a lifelong commitment for you? How did you remain involved with the University of California Berkeley? How did you remain involved beyond the work that you did in your career in enhancing the University of California period?

10-00:32:33

Samuelsen:

I've been very fortunate. The University of California has been just part and parcel of my life since the day I stepped on the campus as a freshman. I guess I've always had a sense of wanting to give back to the extent that I could because of the experiences I've had, and it has gone beyond my professional career to volunteer activities. I think it started when I was in law school and I was invited to serve on an advisory committee for the California Alumni Association. A committee that was headed by Wally Haas, Jr. of Levi Strauss and of the Haas family, which has done so much to benefit the Berkeley campus. I was asked to participate as a fairly young alum on what the Alumni Association might do in the future in attracting young alumni. That was a very satisfying experience. And then a few years later I was invited to be a speaker at the Lair of the Golden Bear up near Pinecrest. I'd heard about the Lair but for some reason I had never been there as a student or as an alum. So for three straight years my family and I attended seventh week of Camp Gold and I gave a little talk around the campfire about various issues the university was facing. But after three years several of my friends approached me and said, "Samuelsen, we have just about heard everything you have to say; if you're going to continue during seventh week you're going to have to start being a paying customer,"—because speakers and their families enjoyed a free week. My young son Jamie, too, played a role in that because there is a picture floating around where he comes up after being in childcare during one of my talks and just grabs my hand in front of the campfire and pulls as if to say, "Dad, this is enough. It's time to go to bed."

10-00:34:59

Burnett:

The vaudeville cane came out.

10-00:35:02

Samuelsen:

The cane. But we continued on for another almost thirty years attending the Lair of the Bear and so that was a chance to be with fellow alums and to sing camp songs around the campfire and stay connected.

10-00:35:23

Burnett:

So it's an annual retreat for the alumni association, is that right?

10-00:35:26

Samuelsen:

Yes, it's a very popular program. I don't know how many weeks they have now but in my time they probably had as many as ten or more weeks. One

week at a time you would camp in tent cabins, eat in the dining hall. And there were a lot of traditions. Particularly the blue/gold softball game at the end of the week. And during my time I was the captain of the gold team and made sure everyone had a chance to play. We strategized to beat Camp Blue, which is the other camp that's under the umbrella of the Lair of the Golden Bear. So that was a lot of fun.

10-00:36:10

Burnett:

Where is it located? It's a site?

10-00:36:14

Samuelsen:

It's a site under use agreement with the [United States] Forest Service that's near Sonora and a little town of Pinecrest as you go up Highway 108. Instead of going to Yosemite you just keep going straight on Highway 108 and there it is. So it's a couple-hour drive right to the middle of a forest. It's a wonderful encampment. So I had that connection. And then inevitably I became involved with class reunions at Berkeley and have had a role in planning more class reunions than I care to admit. Just last week a group of us met to plan our sixtieth. So that's coming up. One of the outcomes of class reunions have been several class campaigns. The first was for our twenty-fifth reunion, when we accepted an invitation from then Chancellor Heyman to endow a chair. The goal was \$300,000, which we were able to meet. That chair is now valued at \$1.3 million. Thanks to the market it has expanded in value. But income from that support prominent professors and the current holder of that chair is Maurice Obstfeld, who is on leave from Berkeley, a very prominent professor of economics. He is now the chief economist for the International Monetary Fund. We're very proud to have our class chair associated with Maury. I think we like to think we set a pattern for twenty-fifth reunions, that we were the first class to do that and other classes followed by raising gifts in furtherance of their twenty-fifth reunions. But then for our fiftieth reunion we took on still another project and that was to raise an endowment for the Mark Twain Papers and Project that's based right here in the Bancroft Library. Our goal there was \$580,000 but we were successful in raising one million dollars.

10-00:38:54

Burnett:

Oh, my goodness.

10-00:38:51

Samuelsen:

That has led to a wonderful relationship with Bob Hirst, the senior editor of the Mark Twain Papers and Project, and his colleagues. The project several years ago produced the *Autobiography of Mark Twain* in three volumes. If you look at the preface of that you'll see the class of 1958 is very kindly acknowledged for some of the seed money they provided through the endowment we raised. But in connection with that we also were able to acquire what is called the Mark Twain bench, which you may have seen outside the Morrison Library here. So that's the class of 1958 bench that we were able to acquire and we love to have pictures taken of dignitaries and friends on the Mark Twain bench. This endeavor ultimately led to my

accepting the chairmanship with Mac Laetsch of what is called the Mark Twain Luncheon Club. We meet twice a year and have scholars on Mark Twain give presentations to those who are members of the club. People contribute fifteen hundred dollars to the Mark Twain Papers and Project for the privilege of those lunches. This has been a fun experience. So one way or the other the university in my retirement has continued to be front and center. I don't think a week passes that I don't come on the campus for some activity. At one point, I also became a longtime member of the Library Advisory Board and a longtime member of the College of Natural Resources Advisory Board. It's been a gift of time that has been returned many times over.

10-00:41:14

Burnett:

It's perhaps not coincidental, though, that the twenty-fifth anniversary project under Heyman, that's early eighties, right, that that happened?

10-00:41:30

Samuelsen:

Mm-hmm.

10-00:41:33

Burnett:

Until the end of the seventies the University of California Berkeley didn't have to raise much money. Well, it did but it would go to the state and say, "We need more money for X," and the state would say sure.

10-00:41:51

Samuelsen:

That's right.

10-00:41:52

Burnett:

There wasn't any money coming in. And I've talked in other oral histories about the stagnation in the 1970s, that there was no new money coming in. For the first time, in the 1980s, Heyman and others started this trend of seeking private funding, donor funding for the University of California Berkeley and that trend has just continued. And it required boosters. I think we could call you a kind of UC booster who would go out there and say to various people who were touched by Cal in one way or another. They had relatives, they attended themselves, their business benefited from research undertaken there. There are many people who have reasons to thank the University of California. And I guess you were part of a small but growing army of people who were there to defend Cal because times were not good and the contribution of the state financially to the University of California has just gone down and down in a stepwise fashion. And now a big proportion of the budget of the University of California comes from private donations. And there was also a financial revolution and a legal revolution that allowed the university to patent innovations happening on campus. I think that's another part of the story. You're participating in a kind of seismic shift in how the university functions and maintains itself and it's an absolutely essential countermeasure, I think, to handle what's happened to state funding of higher education in California and across the United States. This is something that has really transformed the university. And you were a huge part of that. Is it

something that you saw coming? When you were interacting with the twenty-fifth anniversary class, is that something that was on your minds as you were pulling this together?

10-00:44:29

Samuelsen:

It was, because, of course, I was working for the university and I was pretty mindful of the struggles the university was beginning to have from a budgetary standpoint. But Mike Heyman also was very persuasive. A number of my classmates joined me in a session over a couple of drinks in University House and Mike Heyman was a very effective advocate. I think also an outcome of this was getting more classmates involved in the university. The one who really deserves a lot of credit for most of the success of the twenty-fifth reunion gift and the fiftieth reunion gift is a fellow by the name of Ed Peterson. Ed would be the first to say that after graduating he wasn't that involved. But once we got him to take a major leadership role in those two campaigns his interest in the university just grew and grew. He ultimately became president of the UC Berkeley Foundation and has given to the university very generously over and beyond what he did for our two reunion gifts.

And then I might say for our fifty-fifth reunion we had still another campaign. This one had three purposes. One was to support another Mark Twain project, a publication that will come out next year. It's probably going to be called something like "San Francisco Correspondence 1865-66" and will be based on writings of Mark Twain for newspapers on the West Coast that have never been published before. So we provided some funding for that. And then we provided funding for what is called a TAAP scholarship for the California Alumni Association. TAAP stands for The Alumni Achievement Program and it provides funding for unrepresented students who would not otherwise be able to afford an education at Berkeley to have the experience that my classmates were fortunate to have in the 1950s. Recipients receive six thousand dollars a year and receive a laptop computer. They receive the benefits of counseling and help from the California Alumni Association's programs. So that was a very important program.

And then, thirdly, a classmate of mine, Mary Commanday lost her son about the time we were engaged in the fifty-fifth reunion planning. And that was Ambassador Chris Stevens, who was lost in the tragedy of the ambush on the embassy [in Benghazi].

10-00:48:01

Burnett:

Oh, goodness.

10-00:48:03

Samuelsen:

And so we created a program in his name, a public-service memorial fund that allows students who would not otherwise be able to participate in a summer experience in Washington, DC—intern experience—by providing funding for their travel and for their accommodations while they're in Washington, DC. I

just received a report that in the last two years eight students have benefited from this out of some seventy participants. The other seventy can fund it themselves but here are eight students who would not otherwise be able to do that. So the J. Christopher Stevens Public Service Award has been very meaningful. I know it means a lot to Mary, who is a good friend and a classmate.

10-00:48:47

Burnett:

Were you impacted by your experiences as a young boy, having opportunities to go to the jamboree, the National Jamboree? Those kinds of institutional supports for young people to have exposure to new things, is that kind of the essence of it for you? What is the essence?

10-00:49:14

Samuelson:

Well, for me personally it certainly is. I think we all benefit from those kind of experiences. I mean, I was very fortunate, whether it be that week I had in Washington, DC when I was a senior in high school or later, the chance to be involved with the Nixon campaign that I've alluded to. I think the opportunity for students to engage in some kind of public service outside the classroom and be involved in the community, be involved in campaigns or that type of thing, is terribly important for their upbringing and their ultimate assimilation into society as voting, active citizens.

10-00:50:05

Burnett:

To feel that they're part of something larger.

10-00:50:07

Samuelson:

Yes.

10-00:50:07

Burnett:

And that's something that's under fire, isn't it, as we're passing through this moment in history. It's getting harder and harder to agree that that's all something that we all need and that some people need more support than others. We seem to forget that over and over again. I don't know if you wanted to say more about Berkeley or about your contributions to the UC system overall.

10-00:50:44

Samuelson:

I will just mention my latest opportunity, which is to serve on the board of counselors for the National Reserve System's capital campaign. While I decided not to take a leadership role because I thought it might be somewhat self-serving given my background, I am helping out behind the scenes in putting together the various aspects of the campaign. I'm grateful for the nice appointment by President Napolitano to the Board of Counselors and I'm particularly close to Dick Beahrs, who has assumed the chairmanship of that group. Ironically Dick was student body president ten years after I was at Berkeley. I've known Dick for many years and there has been a lot of handholding. One of the objectives of that campaign is to raise money for the scholarship fund my kids set up in my name to surprise me on my eightieth

birthday. And we've talked a little bit about that. But how gratifying it is at this stage of my life to still be involved in a program that I spent a lot of time nurturing, and also to hopefully someday be able to interact with students who will benefit from this scholarship fund and meet with them. Again, the fund will serve those who would not otherwise have an opportunity to do research on a natural reserve. I am very grateful to my kids for having done that.

10-00:52:35

Burnett:

It's something you said when you were talking about moving from the nascent career in law to coming back to the University of California. And I remember you talked about how you didn't get to see the results of what you were doing. You didn't get that satisfaction and that's what you were looking for in terms of a meaningful career, was that you had put this effort in and this work in and at the end of the day you could see the result. You'd get some tangible concrete result out of it. And I think you fulfilled that goal across these different areas of endeavor, whether it's fundraising and you get to see that some disadvantaged folks would not be able to otherwise take advantage of these things. You were able to provide them with an opportunity. In the Mark Twain activities you're able to participate in that and see that it's going to have this concrete benefit for researchers, for the public to learn more about Mark Twain's activities as a journalist and as a writer. So there are all these benefits that you can see as a result of your efforts. And sometimes they happen right away and sometimes they took a couple of decades to come to fruition. And some of them you won't see the full manifestation of and that's also kind of wonderful. You know it's going to keep going long after you leave this earth and you have this wonderful impact that you've been able to witness yourself and that must be enormously satisfying. And so there is your activity in terms of helping the University of California, helping higher education, helping with access to higher education and all the benefits that go with that. And there's also this contribution to California as a set of ecosystems. You've already talked a lot about your passion for the outdoors but how that passion translated to working for organizations that were fostering public access to wild or natural spaces, and also preservation efforts of these different institutions.

10-00:55:25

Samuelson:

Well, I have been fortunate to be involved with the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek and with the Save the Redwoods League based in San Francisco in furtherance of my interest in the environment and in maintaining and protecting the beauty of our state and hopefully helping to educate young people as well as adults in the values of our natural systems and in the protection of them. I think for ten years or so I served on the board of directors of the Lindsay Museum—my kids used to go over to the museum—it was like a library. You could check out hamsters or rabbits and maintain them in your home for a week and then return them and learn how to feed and nurture them. Or we would take injured birds to the wildlife hospital at the museum where they would be hopefully brought back to full repair and be

released. And if animals were not releasable then the museum would keep them there and maybe put them on display. We're talking about far more than birds; mammals and other animals were included. A friend of mine got me involved and it was at a time when the museum was literally located in an old pump house that was owned by the East Bay Municipal Utility District and was available on a leased basis. The museum clearly needed a new facility. So I spent a lot of my ten years—five years as president—nurturing that planning process and a fundraising process that would lead to a new museum. I now have the satisfaction of sometimes visiting the museum that has evolved and it's a magnificent facility with a magnificent program. While I'm no longer involved actively I still take my grandkids there when they're in town and we continue to support it.

The Save the Redwood League—I became a member of the board of counselors in, I think, 2004 and I'm still active. For all of that time I've been on the science committee. For most of that time I've been the chairman of the science committee. I followed in the footsteps of Bill Libby, a well-respected and accomplished professor of forestry here at Berkeley, now retired. And Bob Connick, who was a prominent professor of chemistry at Berkeley and a former vice chancellor and provost at Berkeley. I had big shoes to fill. But as with my role as director of the Natural Reserve System, I was the non-scientist trying to administer a group of very accomplished scientists in addressing various issues facing the Save the Redwood League. The membership has included people like David Wake, who's a professor of zoology here – now retired but still giving an inordinate amount of time to the deliberations of the science committee. And then one of my successors as director of the Natural Reserve System, Alex Glazer, up until a year or so ago was a very active member of that committee. The league is able to attract very accomplished, knowledgeable scientists and likes to think of itself as being science based in the decisions that it makes about the preservation and protection and restoration of redwoods. I think the biggest accomplishment during my time from a scientific standpoint was a very innovative program called the Redwood Climate Change Initiative. It was really Bob Connick who suggested that the league take that on. There is now an elaborate array of sixteen plots in old growth redwood groves throughout California which have been carefully mapped and are being carefully monitored to assess the impact of climate change on redwoods and on the environment. One of those plots is on the Landels-Hill Big Creek Reserve, which we've talked about earlier, a component of the Natural Reserve System. So those are the two outside interests from an environmental standpoint that I have pursued.

10-01:01:06

Burnett:

And applying your gifts for what one would say from a professional standpoint is development work, right?

10-01:01:16

Samuelsen:

Yes.

10-01:01:16

Burnett:

So you were kind of a development expert. I don't think you really see it that way necessarily. I think you see it as much more of a personal passion for working together with others to achieve something. To the extent that there is a kind of professional development of development folks, they talk about the importance of personal relationships and connections with people, but almost as an instrumental thing, that this is one of the steps you need to take off in your professional development of your career as a fundraiser. But this is something you lived. It's the lived experience of helping other people, identifying goals, and following through with them. There's a meaningful social and authentic approach that you take that I think is a kind of model. It's not something you can put in a bottle and market. It's something you have to embody and I think that that's something you've demonstrated across your career.

10-01:02:38

Samuelsen:

I appreciate very much your comments. Thank you.

10-01:02:43

Burnett:

So we've talked about your commitment to UC and to Cal and your commitment to California as a natural reserve in and of itself, something you want to protect and preserve and augment. But there's also the preservation of Roger Samuelsen, which is important. There are a number of activities you've undertaken to fulfill body, mind, and spirit over the course of your life and I'm wondering if we could talk about those elements that keep you sane throughout all of these challenges that you've faced.

10-01:03:24

Samuelsen:

Sure. Well, one has certainly been my church involvement. I've been a member of Orinda Community Church for over fifty years. That's hard to believe. I used to look around when people were asked to stand if they'd been there fifty years and thinking, "Wow, is that really possible?" But now I'm one of the seniors. I have taken on various leadership roles there. I think the two I might mention that mean the most to me would be, first, what we called the Christian Hacienda Project. During the earliest stages of my tenure, when I started, I became chairman of the Youth Commission, as we called it, and we thought there would be merit in finding a work project for teenagers. One thing led to another and we identified an orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico. For about seven or eight years we would take upwards to seventy high school kids down for a one-week stay at the orphanage. We would undergo construction projects; we would play games with the kids at the orphanage; we would take them to the beach. We would do arts and crafts and we would have evening programs. It was a very meaningful experience for these teenagers and some of them remain good friends of mine today. I know how much that meant to them. We would literally clamber into two buses and drive all night to Tijuana, arrive the next morning and interface with the kids. And then upon our return we again would travel all night and arrive on a Sunday morning just

in time to march into the sanctuary and conduct the church service. Those were meaningful experiences.

10-01:05:37

Burnett: [laughter] A little bleary eyed, I imagine.

10-01:05:37

Samuelson: A little bleary eyed, indeed. And then the other experience has to do with a project in Guatemala called Common Hope. Common Hope is a not-for-profit based in St. Paul, Minnesota. Years ago the founders decided to establish in Antigua, Guatemala a center for meeting the needs of underprivileged families. I think Jeane and I have been on four of those trips, where we go down with members of our church and with others for up to ten days and, again, undertake work projects, help on social visits, work in the warehouse sorting through donated goods, help out in the library, that kind of endeavor. Again, it's an opportunity to give back and to meet the needs of these families that, except for the support that they received there, would not be able to afford sending their kids to school or have the benefit of the social services that Common Hope provides. Jeane and I have sponsored four or five children over the years. Right now we have an eleven-year-old by the name of Alex who lives in a nearby town of San Rafael and as long as he stays in school we will continue to contribute sixty dollars a month. That gives his family the wherewithal they need to augment their budget. They're living in very meager quarters. Common Hope provides the books he needs and the social services he needs. There's also medical care for the entire family that goes along with it. That's been a very meaningful activity for us and we've become very close to others involved with Common Hope, some of whom also have a background with the University of California. Two of the honorary members of their board had University of California careers, Gerry Carlson Morrison and Sandy Smith, both of whom are very good friends.

10-01:08:15

Burnett: And when was the first time you went down to Guatemala?

10-01:08:19

Samuelson: I would say in about 2002, just after I retired from the university. Very close friends of ours by the name of Bob and Vicky Schwein, introduced us to Common Hope. They led that first group and invited us to go along and we were so taken by the experience that we came back to our church and organized the subsequent three trips that we have been on. There have been other groups from our church that have gone down there. One is going this coming June. We decided for a variety of reasons not to go on this particular experience. But it's become a very meaningful part of our church.

10-01:09:12

Burnett: I asked when, because I understand that Guatemala has had a pretty violent past and there's a long history of interventions in Guatemala and there is a lot of political struggle and a lot of violence and, to this day, there's a kind of

exodus from Central America because of the violence. We hear stories of immigrants from El Salvador and other places fleeing gang violence and other forms of violence and sending their kids alone to the United States. Were you apprehensive going to Guatemala for the first time? Do you have a different perspective having been there several times and seeing what other people might regard as a kind of tragic space, a tragic political history and a tragic economic history? Do you have a different perspective having been there and worked with people over the years?

10-01:10:17

Samuelson:

Well, as to the first question, yes, we were apprehensive, largely because the history of Common Hope is that the founders, when they first tried to establish a school in Guatemala, were forced to leave. They were threatened in the process. And so it was only through perseverance and resolve that they were able to ultimately acquire a site in Antigua and have the program that now is some twenty-five years old. We were certainly advised that we needed to be careful in walking even in Antigua, which is a relatively safe city, with others, not to wander off the beaten track. Regrettably the last time we went down we were not able to go to a satellite community that Common Hope has established because of the fear that the route might be overtaken by people who didn't mean well. The young person we were sponsoring at the time was living in that satellite community. We literally had to talk to him not in person, as we had hoped, but by Skype from where we were in Antigua. We regretted that because we were very close to him and he was close to graduation from high school which, of course, was the ultimate goal.

As to your second question, yes, it certainly has opened my eyes to the reality of the life that those folks live. Part of our experience always was going into homes with social workers. And even though we perhaps didn't understand the language, experiencing the interaction between the social worker and the family and then talking to the social worker afterwards as to what issues they were dealing with—they were pretty severe. But we would have lectures and discussions about the reality of what was going on. I could elaborate further but I think that's probably sufficient for now.

10-01:13:07

Burnett:

I've never asked you, do you speak Spanish?

10-01:13:11

Samuelson:

No. I've taken more Spanish lessons than I care to admit. I can look at a printed page and maybe make out some of the words but I do not have the ability to speak. And that was a downside to going down, not being able to relate. But the people down there with whom we were dealing spoke pretty good broken English and so we were able to communicate, if not in words, by gestures.

10-01:13:47

Burnett:

And when the initial group was told to leave, do you understand why they were asked to leave initially?

10-01:14:01

Samuelsen:

Well, of course, I wasn't directly involved but I think the government felt they were a threat to whatever they had in mind.

10-01:14:11

Burnett:

Right, right. Well, that's something that I'm going to assume is informed by your faith, that this is a Christian mission, an activity that is part of your faith and it's something that informs every aspect of your life.

10-01:14:33

Samuelsen:

That's right.

10-01:14:34

Burnett:

And so Orinda Community Church has been not just a source of meaning in your life but it's a conduit for your spiritual life and that's something that you've had since you were a kid and you have taken that through. I don't know about this question. The question is something like how has your spirituality evolved? But I want to make it more specific than that [laughter] because that's a pretty cosmic question. But I know that you sort of changed denominations at one point in your life and that may have just been because of what churches were available where you lived. I don't know. Let's say just as an adult, has your faith changed over the course of your life? Have you developed different practices? Wow, I'm really struggling here. [laughter]

10-01:16:05

Samuelsen:

Well, let me help a little bit.

10-01:16:07

Burnett:

Okay.

10-01:16:09

Samuelsen:

I think I have been attracted at Orinda Community Church to a more progressive way of looking at my faith. It's not as doctrinaire as perhaps I was first exposed to when I was growing up in Pasadena. I don't take scripture as literally as I might have back then. I think there are lessons to be learned and I find a more flexibility in what I can believe today as well as those with whom I worship. I also find our congregation to be very open and affirming. Our church is reaching out in a very real sense to others who are disadvantaged, most recently to immigrants, where we want to make sure that immigrants feel very welcome to attend. We took formal action to ensure that that would be possible. And then I guess I've just come to value more and more the church as a community. Not only a community of faith but a community of friends. Jeane and I now are very involved with heading what is called a care team, where four times a year for a month we reach out to those who need a hand because of illness or lack of mobility or the loss of a loved one. And that's very, very important to us. We consider some of our best friends to be people

we've met through the church. I'm going to a Giants game tonight with one of my good friends who I met through the church. That's just part of our everyday life.

10-01:18:24

Burnett: Yeah, yeah. And the care team rotates, not only in terms of the people that you serve but the people on the committee. They rotate so that people aren't excessively burdened or challenged throughout the year and so you can distribute the load, I suppose.

10-01:18:42

Samuelsen: That's right. And then as luck would have it I've become very close to the pastors and associate pastors over the years. A former pastor and I backpack together, we enjoy trains together. We enjoy Mark Twain together. I really have developed some very close relationships and it just happens that they are pastors.

10-01:19:16

Burnett: He was a long-term pastor, is that right? Over something like twenty years? Is that right?

10-01:19:23

Samuelsen: I would say about fifteen. Fourteen, fifteen years.

10-01:19:27

Burnett: Yeah. That's a long tenure.

10-01:19:28

Samuelsen: Frank Baldwin by name. I started becoming acquainted with him by serving as chairman of his pastoral relations committee. That was a support group. And one thing led to another. One day I asked if he'd like to go backpacking and he said yes, so he joined my backpacking group.

10-01:19:47

Burnett: Well, that's a nice segue to the sort of keeping body, mind, and spirit together in one activity. And I think that's the backpacking, which you continued from your childhood basically.

10-01:20:02

Samuelsen: Yes. I really started in earnest again about forty years ago when my brother invited me to join his group. We've gone just about every year since then, although now we tend to stay in cabins and go day hiking because some of my colleagues are not able to handle the backpack. I'm not sure I would be at this stage. It's evolved into what we now call the Corps of Discovery. It's Lewis and Clark at the ultimate. So I'm Lewis, Phil Pister is Clark, and Frank Baldwin who I just mentioned gives us spiritual guidance. Karl Pister—we call him the Gray Wolf. He's the former chancellor of Santa Cruz. I've mentioned Karl several times, I think, during the course of our oral history. And then my brother. My brother is The Engineer. So we have this group that meets once a year and we go back and forth with emails between outings.

Once in a while we'll talk to President Jefferson about some aspect of the Corps that maybe needs some attention. And there are many stories that are told around campfires.

10-01:21:33

Burnett:

And so prior to this most recent shift to staying in cabins, you mean to say that over the past forty years it was customary for you to take a backpack, hike up and make a base camp for the night and keep going further up?

10-01:21:54

Samuelsen:

Oh, yes. We would go forty, fifty miles on occasion and there's not much of the Sierra we've not experienced. And a lot of it was cross-country. So it was challenging. Talk about an intersect with nature. And particularly when you are with the likes of Phil Pister, an aquatic biologist. I've mentioned him before but he would be able to tell us about research that's been conducted at lakes where we were staying or experiences that he'd had over the years. And half of what he shared was actually true. [laughter]

10-01:22:44

Burnett:

Well, I've spoken with Phil Pister. The passion for the natural world is palpable when he describes the discovery of the pupfish. He's very, very deeply, deeply engaged in knowing and experiencing and sharing in these wild places. I can't think of a better compatriot to have going out on these long treks.

10-01:23:24

Samuelsen:

Well, and of course, it's meant so much to share this with my brother. He and I have a mutual admiration society. I think he's one of my biggest boosters; I certainly am one of his biggest boosters. These trips have afforded an opportunity to reflect on our lives and reflect on our experiences with the University of California. And I think his style of leadership in the scientific world with the National Fuel Cell Center and the many other aspects of alternative fuels he has touched is very similar to mine. We like to involve a lot of different people and facilitate discussions and like to reflect back on all that's happened since. We may have planted a seed or two.

One of the things I'm not sure I've shared is the experience we had after the Merced site was selected as a tenth campus. My brother and I had occasion to have dinner in Mariposa with one of our uncles and aunts. We spent part of the time reflecting on our uncle's upbringing in the Valley, because he and my mother were raised in Parlier, near Fresno, and some of the issues you and I have talked about with regard to the San Joaquin Valley and its needs for higher education. And then Scott and I went from there—I had the combination to the lock of the campus site that had been selected just a few weeks before by the Board of Regents. We took it upon ourselves to drive up to the campus site, pull out our sleeping bags and a bottle of Hafner chardonnay, and sit there and talk about the decision that had been reached

and our careers with the university and the roles both of us had played. It was a night I will never forget.

10-01:25:50

Burnett:

Wow. And a nice way to toast years and years of work, to bring that to fruition. I think we talked about this before, but in spite of all the cuts and the transformations in California politics and so on, there does seem to be a species of California optimism that you and others embody, that there's this sense that this is a special place. There's something about the place itself that inspires you to go forward and to feel like you can go forward. Of course we can say it's privilege and it's good fortune and it's the position that you were raised in and occupy, but you have had adversity, as well. And I think that it's something we'd love to try and bottle and export, right? I talk to Californians all the time and I talked to your brother about this, too. If you want to find out what's going to happen in twenty years, how people are going to be living in twenty years, just check out what's happening in California now. I think there's that sense of pride that California's on the cutting edge. But it is rooted in an orientation, isn't it, that you feel that things are possible? It's getting harder to have faith in that, isn't it? I don't know. Do you feel that way? Do you feel optimistic?

10-01:27:50

Samuelsen:

I do but I think that's just the way I've been raised. I guess I've been fortunate in my life to see where adversity is followed with opportunity. Doors close and doors open. I'm reminded of talks I used to give to incoming students and others when I was ASUC president. I think I learned this at a student conference before I assumed office. It goes back to the Chinese characters for the word "crisis." And I'm sure you've heard this, where one of the characters denotes danger and the other denotes opportunity. I tried to impart that to the incoming students from my own experience, that there are going to be some setbacks, there's going to be some struggles. There are going to be times when you're homesick; you want to go home. But if you stick to it, some wonderful things can happen, maybe beyond your dreams. And certainly that's been true of my life. When I think back to the forty-seven years or so that I've had of marriage to Jeane, doors had closed on my prior marriage, but doors opened for Jeane and that was very significant in my life. I wouldn't trade those forty-seven years for anything, or my whole career with the university. We've talked about my involvement and that goes over, what, sixty years now. There were times that things didn't go particularly well, or I might have taken another fork along the way. I was disappointed to be turned down for some jobs for which I applied but, by not taking those jobs, I was able to do some other things for the university that I might not have otherwise done. We might not be here right now.

I would say, yes, I'm optimistic. I asked my brother about that the other day given what's happening in Washington, DC, because here is someone who has devoted his life to alternative fuels and to overcoming some of the effects of

climate change and to tackling smog. And he had just come off of a conference of scientists who were dealing with these issues. I asked him how he felt when he hears from Washington that climate change is a hoax or there's deregulation of the coal industry and the like. And he said—this is my brother speaking—“Well, I feel optimistic, notwithstanding that. Number one, I think that there are so many advances that I'm experiencing and hearing about that there's no turning back. I just marvel at how far we have come. Number two, we are blessed to be in California, which is ahead of the curve. And through legislation and leadership of Governor Brown and others, are still affording a platform on which to have advances in terms of energy and climate change. But number three—” this is getting a little bit off the topic but he said, “I think the current administration's going to self-destruct and some reality is going to return to what we are facing and what we need to do to overcome some of the struggles that we now have.”

10-01:32:08

Burnett:

But also this resonates with what you just said about crisis and opportunity. What has been happening in the last several months has been galvanizing for so many people. What's reason for optimism is to see renewed political engagement, grassroots political engagement. People know where they stand and they know it's not just enough to sit on the sidelines. They become engaged. And I think that that's a reason to be optimistic in the face of multiple crises. And so I think that that's a nice Easter message perhaps. [laughter]

10-01:32:53

Samuelson:

Well, I hope so. Paul, I don't know how we stand on time but I would like to just reflect a bit on this whole experience with the oral history. It's just been incredible. I'm just grateful to Karl Pister and Jud King, former provost of the university, and Mac Laetsch, who I've mentioned several times, for the initiative they took in affording me this opportunity. And then Chancellor Leland and former Vice President Bill Tucker, who provided the funding. Very grateful to you for the way you have navigated me through the various stages. It's been really very, very special. I also want to say how grateful I am to my family for the support that they have given me throughout my entire life and career. And it starts with Jeane. She's been my sounding board and my rock. She's the one who's helped me maintain some balance, because I tend to be a workaholic and she's tended to lead me into other pastures, for which I am very, very grateful—in addition to being my lover. And then I've alluded to my three kids and I think I've mentioned that our daughter Thea is a choral director of the New York City Master Chorale in New York City and the Washington, DC Gay Men's Chorus. But what is foremost in my mind right now is that she's engaged to be married on August 27th at the age of fifty-one. And she's marrying the son of very close friends. Regrettably her fiancé's dad died about twenty years ago. He was one of my very closest friends by the name of John Mendel. I miss him a great deal and I'm sorry he can't be here because our two kids at the age of seven or eight used to play on the Mendel's

dock over in Belvedere and we used to go on ski weekends. So these two fifty-one-year-olds have known each other for some period of time.

10-01:35:33

Burnett: Wow. That's wonderful.

10-01:35:35

Samuelsen: And then our son Bob is a superior court judge in Atlanta and he's going to conduct the marriage ceremony, which touches us greatly.

10-01:35:50

Burnett: Yeah, that's wonderful.

10-01:35:51

Samuelsen: So that's very exciting. And Bob and Courtney have three kids. So we have three grandkids who live in Atlanta. Their oldest, and our oldest granddaughter Liv, is starting to think about college at the age of sixteen and she's interested in paleontology. And high on her list is Berkeley. If that were to materialize Nana and Gramps would be very, very proud. (JRS: Courtney works for GE in executive learning and development; their other two children are Cal and Roscoe.) And then our son Jamie is a sports announcer in Detroit. He has a talk show every morning from 6:00 to 10:00 and so he's a chip off the old block—not my block—but my dad's block because, of course, my dad was a sports writer, a sports announcer. Jamie went to Northwestern and started broadcasting Northwestern Wildcat games as a student and went on to a wonderful career. His wife, Christy, is with PBS and she conducts a weekly program summarizing events in Michigan called MiWeek. So they're an entertainment couple and they have three children of their own, Caroline, Josh, and Kitty. Thus, in all we have six grandkids. As I said earlier, they honored me on my eightieth with this wonderful gift. I just hope looking back I was able, on top of all the other things you and I have talked about, to provide the love and parenting that our three kids needed in terms of coaching or attending special events or sitting around the dining room table talking about whatever had transpired during the day. You do the best you can. All I can say is I admire the parenting that I see them doing today and if they learned a little bit of that from Jeane and me then I'm very grateful.

10-01:38:08

Burnett: It sounds like a wonderful, wonderful family with a lot of love and a lot of fulfillment. And that's a really, really nice tribute.

10-01:38:20

Samuelsen: I guess what I didn't really anticipate was all of the other events and conversations that would evolve around the oral history. We've talked about the visit I had with Chancellor Leland at Merced. A couple of weeks ago I went over to Point Reyes for the commemoration of the fortieth reserve in the Natural Reserve System. I heard NRS director Peggy Fiedler and faculty manager David Ackerly talk about the Natural Reserve System and what the potential was for this site. I could just sit back in the back row and listen with

a smile on my face as they articulated a vision that goes far beyond what I may have experienced during my time. That was very gratifying. And then last week my class met to plan its sixtieth reunion and the current ASUC president by the name of Will Morrow gave us a tour of the student center. My college roommate, John Cox, leaned over to me and said—he calls me Roometh and I call him Roomie—he said, “Roometh, as we look out here, do you realize that you played a role in”—he used the word foundation—“laying a foundation for this student center as it has evolved?” But I wasn’t alone. Many others were involved, including the other members of the Kerr Boys, the ASUC presidents of my time, Dick Marston and Bob Hamilton and Jim Kidder and Bill Strickland, with whom I meet annually. We all played a role. But it’s amazing for Roomie to have said that.

Then just this last weekend Jeane and I had two other experiences. One, on Saturday, we went to a luncheon for scholars, TAAP scholars graduating this year, and the class of 1958 scholar Stephanie Frankel was there. We had a chance to give her a big hug and to hear more about what she has overcome to graduate from Berkeley in terms of anxiety and depression and a feeling of not really belonging. She’s persevered and now she hopes to go on to graduate school as a social psychologist. My admiration for her just has no end. And then on Sunday we went up to the Hafner Vineyard in Healdsburg. I’ve mentioned Dick and Mary Hafner on several occasions. But Mary passed away about a month ago.

10-01:41:30

Burnett:

Oh, I’m sorry.

10-01:41:32

Samuelson:

This was a memorial service for her. Fortunately Jeane and I went up about three weeks before she died and took a soup lunch that Jeane prepared and had a chance to talk to her and say our goodbyes. She and her family modeled so well the dying process and it was a chance to celebrate her life and celebrate the dignity with which she lived that life. As you go through an oral history like this you reflect inevitably on your own mortality, on what legacy you may have left behind. I just hope I can model halfway as well as Mary Hafner and her dear Dick and her family have modeled during what’s been a very difficult time. Afterwards there was a little gathering and Hafner chardonnay was poured and we all raised a glass.

10-01:42:44

Burnett:

Oh, that’s lovely. Well, given your experiences and your approach to life, I’m not so worried. I think your attitude and your spirit will carry you through. I want to thank you for allowing me to listen to your stories. It’s been a real privilege. I think there’s a kind of model in what you’ve been describing, a way of being in the world, and I think that’s perhaps the most significant aspect of this and that will be for the ages.

10-01:43:24

Samuelson: Thank you very much.

[End of Interview]