

INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS F. IRVINE
FORMER DEAN, COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

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Dr. Hartzell: Interview with Thomas Irvine on the engineering program, he was Dean of Engineering in the Oyster Bay days. I'm an ex-archivist of the New York State War Council, just at the end of the war. Our job was to retire the records created under the War Emergency Act and all the legislation that took place during the war and see that, which was historically of some value, was kept in different places throughout the State in the War Councils and also in the State Library.

Dr. Irvine: I kept all the material until I left the Dean's office, and I had 12 file cabinets of stuff, and I just spent two weeks going through that, I guess.

Dr. Hartzell: Why don't you give it, I mean tell Evert Volkersz, Special Collections, we have a University Archives.

Dr. Irvine: Did you have it in 1970?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, I think Evert was here then.

Dr. Irvine: Uh, huh, yeah, I should have.

Dr. Hartzell: It's on the second floor of the Library. I do have a little bit from Leonard Olsen.

Dr. Irvine: Oh, really, he saved some things.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, his secretary saved some things at the time that Lee was apparently was going to throw out everything before he arrived.

Dr. Irvine: I see.

Dr. Hartzell: Let's go through the questions quickly, and then you can digress after that. Name, department, rank and so on.

Dr. Irvine: You want me to start?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, start on question one.

Dr. Irvine: Okay, well, my name is Thomas Irvine. I'm from the Mechanical Engineering Department, I'm a Professor of Engineering.

Dr. Hartzell: Your present rank or your

Dr. Irvine: My present rank is Professor of Engineering.

Dr. Hartzell: Right, but before that you were?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, previous to that I was the Dean of Engineering from about 1960 to about 1971.

Dr. Hartzell: Really.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, long time. I came to Stony Brook in 1960. I guess I was 38 at the time. I came from the University of North Carolina, where I was Professor of Engineering.

Dr. Hartzell: At Raleigh.

Dr. Irvine: At Raleigh, right. John Lee, who had just been appointed the first President at Stony Brook, was responsible for my coming to Stony Brook.

Dr. Hartzell: How did he know you?

Dr. Irvine: Well, he knew me because he was the chairman of the department I was in in North Carolina.

Dr. Hartzell: Okay, fire away.

Dr. Irvine: Why did I come to Stony Brook? Well, the way John Lee laid it out was that we were to start a new university essentially from scratch and that meant a new College of Engineering. Engineering had been going through some real throes of development because, as a result of the experiences in World War II, it was found it was best for training engineers to give them a better scientific and mathematical background so that they could keep up and contribute to the way the physical world and technical world was changing so rapidly. So this seemed to be an opportunity, since it's so difficult to change old academic departments, to start new academic departments with these new factors in mind, and that was probably the most important aspect of my decision to come to Stony Brook, this opportunity to start a new engineering program, which I and many of my

colleagues felt was more in keeping with the times. My understanding of the purpose behind the creation of Stony Brook, well, of course, New York was not like the midwest states in the vanguard of starting up state universities, which happened about a hundred years ago there, but for a variety of reasons had decided to start a State University in the late '50's and early '60's. And we were assured, or I was assured, that although the unit at Oyster Bay at that time had started out as a four year institution to train teachers, that it was going to be changed into a first-class university, and, of course, I came from a university background and that's the milieu that I wanted to work in. And as far as the vision, what was the vision being transformed in its reality, I don't know what that means? Tell me what that means.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, you have said it somewhat.

Dr. Irvine: Oh, I see, the vision of the institution, yes. Well, I think I did sort of answer that then before. My impression of Stony Brook when I first came; of course, when I first came we were at Oyster Bay and not here at Stony Brook. And I was amazed with the

Dr. Hartzell: That was 1960?

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, well, 1959 I guess I first came in the fall to be interviewed up here.

Dr. Hartzell: I see. Who interviewed you?

Dr. Irvine: I was interviewed by two groups because I was being offered two positions, in a sense. An administrative position as Dean of Engineering, and then I insisted that I be a Professor of Engineering, so that I was interviewed by an academic group in the faculty from that standpoint. And, well, I was most impressed with Oyster Bay, of course, as anybody would and the people, it was a small, sort of a family like affair there. I think there were maybe twenty-five faculty members. And I met Leonard Olsen, who was a charming person; and I was with John Lee during that visit. And then there was Austill, who was Dean of Students, and I think I met the members of the, I think they called it the Executive Committee then. Anyhow, they had a kind of an Executive Committee; who were the people on there? Gosh, I would have to tell you later because I

can't remember all their names. But I do remember being interviewed by the faculty group and there was Francis Bonner, who was on that group, and Bill Lister from Mathematics

Dr. Hartzell: Was Sidney on it?

Dr. Irvine: I don't think Sidney, they were mostly physical scientists because they were trying to see what kind of a technical

Dr. Hartzell: Frank Erk?

Dr. Irvine: Frank Erk was on the committee and from Physics, oh dear.

Dr. Hartzell: Was it Cliff Swartz?

Dr. Irvine: No, it's

Dr. Hartzell: Mould?

Dr. Irvine: No, who later became Dean of the Graduate School?

Dr. Hartzell: Oh, Dave Fox.

Dr. Irvine: Dave Fox was on the committee, yes; I think it was those four or five people that I met with; and I had a very good impression of them. And, of course, I didn't know what the rumbles were going on at the campus at the time, one never does really see behind what's happening. I think that covers question 8. What events, what persons and what experiences stand out in your mind? Is that, in what time frame, is that in the beginning or

Dr. Hartzell: We're trying to go

Dr. Irvine: The last twenty-eight years?

Dr. Hartzell: Well, we're trying to go at least to 1971.

Dr. Irvine: Oh, dear, well. Of course what

Dr. Hartzell: Let me ask you one question before that.

Dr. Irvine: All right.

Dr. Hartzell: Was the curriculum, the engineering curriculum in place by the time you came, or did you have a part in the negotiations with General Electric.

Dr. Irvine: Okay. Oh, no, I had no part in the negotiations with General Electric. And now that you bring that up, somebody had commissioned a study, and I think General Electric got paid for it, of a group

Dr. Hartzell: I think that was Olsen.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, okay. A group of educators were asked to, if they were starting off a new university, in those days times, what sort of an engineering curriculum would they have. And it was anonymous, none of them signed it; I happen to know some of them that were on the committee.

Dr. Hartzell: Who were they?

Dr. Irvine: Well, Myron Trybus, who was the Dean at Dartmouth, I know was on that committee.

Dr. Hartzell: Trybus, how do you spell his name?

Dr. Irvine: T R Y B U S, Trybus. I suspect that John Truxal had something to do with it.

Dr. Hartzell: Already, what's he done?

Dr. Irvine: He was the Provost at Brooklyn Polytechnic at the time.

Dr. Hartzell: I see. There was a man named Linder at GE, was it?

Dr. Irvine: I don't remember him. Let's see, where was I? I remember your question now. Of course, it's all very well and good for an outside group to draw up a curriculum, but in the long run it's the responsibility of the faculty. So, it was a sort of a semi-guide, if you will. Although I personally approved of the spirit of the thing, and I think most of the people that came in the beginning also felt that way. So, to answer your question, there was not a curriculum in place, there were these recommendations in place, which the faculty could take or leave.

Dr. Hartzell: In other words, no courses had been offered yet?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, well, when I got here, I think, they admitted students to the engineering program two years before I came in hopes of having a faculty by the time they got along far enough to need engineering courses. And they were in some trouble; they finally got

to the point where they had to offer a permanent course and Dave Fox from Physics taught that; and then they hired a young fellow named Richard Glasheen as an Assistant Professor and he was teaching, I believe, some mechanics courses. So, it was very *ad hoc* and when I came there was no engineering faculty. I was essentially the first faculty member in Engineering. And I came in the beginning of the year in January of '60, and our students would be really entering their third year by the next fall, so I had to kind of scuttle around that first semester and get a few faculty members in all the different departments so that we could handle the students. We didn't have too many students, maybe 20 or something like that, but we had to do something for them. So when I came there essentially was no engineering program at all.

Dr. Hartzell: Where did you get your engineering faculty and who were they?

Dr. Irvine: Well, that's an interesting thing. What I decided to do, because there was nobody to help me to decide, was to organize the College along slightly different lines than was customary, that was traditional, and not to have professional departments, because it didn't fit in quite as well with the kind of undergraduate program we were talking about but to organize the departments more on disciplinary lines; because we were looking forward to moving into graduate work and the disciplinary lines is a much better way to organize the graduate work. We had envisioned that the undergraduates would all have the same degrees, so they would not have that department affiliation, they would have more a college affiliation. And so our first idea was to have, I think, four or five departments: electrical science, science of materials, applied mathematics, and a department that we called fluid and thermal sciences, which was roughly a combination of mechanical and aeronautical engineering. And so we started off that way.

Dr. Hartzell: Was Gerst there then?

Dr. Irvine: No, Gerst was, nobody was there. This was the spring of 1960 and so, as I said, what I tried to do was to get department chairmen first -- I was not capable of recruiting faculty in all the departments -- and then let them do the recruiting within the departments. Oh, computing science, I'm sorry, I forgot that. So that first spring I think

we managed to get all of the department chairmen; there was Sheldon Chang in Electrical Sciences; there was Finerman in Computer Sciences; there was Sumner Levine in Material Sciences; there was Walter Bradfield in Thermal Sciences and Fluid Mechanics.

Dr. Hartzell: I've interviewed Walter.

Dr. Irvine: You interviewed him; and Irving Gerst in Applied Mathematics. And so we were going to get them in the spring and they were able to get a few faculty members, maybe one, at most two, in each department before we started off in the Fall. I can't remember exactly, but maybe, including department chairmen, we recruited maybe ten people before the following semester, which was quite a job.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, I would think so.

Dr. Irvine: Still a new institution, you know. So, well I think that's roughly the answer to your question. Where are we here now?

Dr. Hartzell: Nine, I think.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, what events, what persons, what experiences? Well, almost as soon as we came here, of course, the event that took over everybody's time and concentration for the next year almost was a sort of an academic schism in the University, which came about because the mission of the University was different in the beginning, as I mentioned before. It was in the beginning to train secondary school teachers in science and mathematics and then it was broadened a little bit more, but it was to be a college; and it didn't have a university aspect. And so the people were recruited on that basis. And then all of a sudden the mandate was changed to be that of a University and the people were recruited on that basis. And there were some serious educational, philosophical differences between the two groups.

Dr. Hartzell: From your point of view, do you know what they were? Can you state what they were?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, I think they were partially the kind of an institution that the different groups wanted to live in. The first group had more of a college and, I think, liberal arts, perhaps, background and were happiest in that sort of a thing.

Dr. Hartzell: They were largely from Chicago?

Dr. Irvine: I think some of the leadership was from Chicago; I don't think they were largely from Chicago. Olsen was Chicago and the Dean of Students, I believe, Austill was from Chicago, and there were several other chairmen of departments that were from Chicago, so there was certainly a Chicago element. I was very naive, I didn't know what Chicago philosophy was at the time. And then there were the other group that were most used to a university thing and heavy emphasis on research and scholarship, original scholarship, and so they wanted to hurry up and fix the place up so it looked like the University of Michigan or something like that. And these were just two opposite directions, really. And it wasn't very long before each group thought the other was trying to murder it or something, and became very suspicious and communications broke down. John Lee, of course, identified more closely with the second group; he was used to a university background, and he wanted to set up graduate faculty and so on and that bothered a lot of people. And so I think those were the main differences. Later on because of the heat of battle, personal differences surfaced and so on, but I think that was really what was behind it. And it's hard to look back and decide whether it could have been handled any differently; maybe it was inevitable that there be a shaking out period. I don't know, there was a lot of damage done to a lot of people's professional society, so that certainly, that event was a big event. And, of course, in a sense, there were two camps, equally divided in numbers in that following fall semester, I think there were

Dr. Hartzell: Fall of '60?

Dr. Irvine: Fall of '60, yeah, that's right. So the faculty meetings, to which everybody went, almost all the votes were divided equally, with maybe one or two votes in the favor of the new group rather than the old. So, the persons, of course, who stand out in my mind, Leonard Olsen became identified as the leader of one group, Leonard Olsen and Austill perhaps; and John Lee, perhaps myself, became identified as people in the other group; and you know what happened eventually. It came to a head and the Board of

Trustees felt a plague on both your houses, I think. So John Lee got rid of Leonard Olsen and the Board of Trustees got rid of John Lee. And we sort of started all over again. It was a shocking experience to everybody; it's all in The New York Times, you can look it up in the Library. Well, what was my understanding of my own place in the future of Stony Brook, well, I was appointed, of course, to try and develop the College of Engineering. And at least in the beginning, my own place in the future was to do that, which I did as best I could for a number of years, some of which were rather stormy because of the administration problems that we had after John Lee was fired. And then you, well then Harry Porter came down for a year, but everybody knew he was temporary, and then you came down for a number of years. And as you recall, we worked quite well together.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, right. Let me ask you one question which has stuck in my mind. I remember Harry Porter having me come down and meet with a group in the little study in Coe Hall on the first floor just off the main door. Do you know what group that was and were you one of them?

Dr. Irvine: No, I don't think so. This is before you were appointed here?

Dr. Hartzell: I had already been apparently appointed. I came down just for them to meet me and for me to meet them. It was a *fait accompli*, as I understood it, that was being presented to you people. Whereas I had previously been accustomed

Dr. Irvine: I don't remember being consulted on your appointment.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes. Nobody does.

Dr. Irvine: I can remember Harry telling me about it. He told me a little bit about you and so on, and since those were strange days, we didn't say much. So, I don't remember that meeting.

Dr. Hartzell: Do you remember what he told you?

Dr. Irvine: He just told me your background, that you had been at Cornell, that was in Iowa.

Dr. Hartzell: That's right.

Dr. Irvine: And that you had been in Lehigh

Dr. Hartzell: Bucknell.

Dr. Irvine: Bucknell, sorry, and the position you held, that you were being appointed here, not as President, but they made up a new title, Administrative Officer, I think,

Dr. Hartzell: Acting Chief Administrative Officer.

Dr. Irvine: Acting Chief Administrative Officer, that's too long; no wonder we said Administrative Officer and that he hoped that I would cooperate with you and that things would go along and we would continue to develop the College.

Dr. Hartzell: You were in charge of the move from Oyster Bay. Remember that?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, yes. Did you do that to me?

Dr. Hartzell: No, I didn't. That was already happening.

Dr. Irvine: Yes, that's right. That was my first contact with you, I think. I remember picking you up down at the old house, that nice house down in Oyster Bay. You lived in there.

Dr. Hartzell: Mrs. Coe's cottage.

Dr. Irvine: Mrs. Coe's cottage, yes.

Dr. Hartzell: Now called the manor house.

Dr. Irvine: And you said you wanted to see the new campus and talk about the plans for the move, and I think I drove you out to the new campus, went over the what procedures we had set up to move the campus from one to the other. Yes, that was quite a job.

Dr. Hartzell: Harry appointed you to do that?

Dr. Irvine: I was appointed the 'Move Czar.' I told him I wouldn't take the position unless he gave me absolutely all the authority to tell anybody on the campus what to do or it would have been impossible. But actually everybody was very cooperative and it went quite smoothly; and I set up student groups and so on; they were very cooperative

Dr. Hartzell: Do you know whether anybody at Oyster Bay took part in the planning of the campus out here, was anybody responsible for the location of the buildings?

Dr. Irvine: No, I was certainly heavily involved in the planning of the first engineering building and consulted on some of the general buildings, like the Library and so on, but the site plan, when I got here, was already arranged. That is, the Engineering Building was here and the Library was there. So that took place before I came.

Dr. Hartzell: Chemistry was close, the closest to the, Chemistry and Biology were the closest to the Library.

Dr. Irvine: Yes, but of course the first year we had no Library. We had the Humanities Building, the Chemistry Building, and I'm not sure about the Biology Building, probably, it came in during the year maybe. So that we set up the Library in the Humanities Building and many of us were in Chemistry. Engineering was in Chemistry, Chemistry was in Chemistry, probably Physics was in Chemistry.

Dr. Hartzell: My office was in Humanities.

Dr. Irvine: Your office was in Humanities, right. Mine was in Chemistry. And then the second year, I think, we began

Dr. Hartzell: And we had G Quad.

Dr. Irvine: Yes, right. All of those were strange days, Karl.

Dr. Hartzell: Yeah. We went through a period when every building was a multi-purpose building. We had to do it.

Dr. Irvine: Even the new Engineering buildings, we had music, part of music in there at one time; those bongo drums drove us crazy. Yeah, okay, well, let's see. I was sort of fooling around with question 10. Why do you think I was appointed? Well, I'm sure why I was appointed, because I had an engineering background. What expectations did you have when you came? Well, the expectations academically of being involved in developing a new curriculum for Engineering, as I mentioned before. How have these expectations worked out, both personally and for the institution? Not very well, I don't think. If you look at the organization of the College today and the curriculum, we're pretty much back to what it was before we tried to change it. That is, the departments

have now become professional departments again; we have Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering.

Dr. Hartzell: Why is that, do you know?

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, yes, I think I know. There are a variety of reasons. One of them was tradition. It was very difficult for the parents to understand if their son wanted to be a mechanical engineer, why he studied in a department of thermal sciences and fluid mechanics. So the loss of professional names, which are identified in the public's mind was difficult from a recruiting standpoint. It was very difficult to change the bureaucratic structure of the recognition of the former organization; for example, the New York State Civil Service, even though we were at a State University, would not give our students credit for graduating from an approved curriculum because we did not have a civil engineering department, for example. So if one of our students wanted to go to work in the Highway Department, he was not recognized as having a legitimate degree because he didn't have a civil engineering degree. And also it was from the fact that as we got more and more faculty, all of who came from schools which had the former organization, they wanted to keep the same organization. And, so sort of one by one the departments voted to go back to their original names and purposes as being undergraduate departments.

Dr. Hartzell: Did the original concept of engineering science as a fundamental floor of knowledge for all of the separate engineering departments last at all?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, yes, that certainly lasted. If you compare our curriculum to the curriculum before World War II, for example, there is just no comparison. That is, our present day students have so much more of the basic sciences of physics and chemistry and even biology nowadays, and mathematics, that there is no comparison at all. So that part stuck, that is, the engineering curriculum was heavily strengthened in science and mathematics.

Dr. Hartzell: How about your placement of students and your attracting of students? Engineering and some of the other disciplines go through cycles apparently.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, some severe cycles. We're at a downward cycle right now.

Dr. Hartzell: You are.

Dr. Irvine: Yes, we were on an upward cycle for a number of years. They seem to have a period of about ten years or something like that, they go up for ten years and they go down for ten years. I don't understand

Dr. Hartzell: Does it follow at all the breakthroughs in the frontiers of the basic sciences? Was engineering, the use by engineers of the new knowledge?

Dr. Irvine: I don't know whether the total number of students does, the way the students, the areas in which the students choose to study certainly does, because of the solid state revolution, so there's so many students in electrical engineering; because of the computer business, there are many students in computing sciences and so on. I think the cycle is partially demographic and partially socially driven. I mean everybody is going to suffer right now because the number of students available is, we're going into a depression, but that's a demographic problem we have no control over. And especially in the last twenty years, there have been times when science with even more technology, I think, has been identified in many people's minds with bad things -- weapons of destruction; again, the environmental problems and so on. I think that was true in the '60's particularly, where there was a sort of national revolt against because of the Vietnam War and so on. So, I think we suffer sometimes when that problem, in my view, probably rightly so. Well, that's how the expectations worked and what was the history of what happened, I think. Were my activities confined to the Stony Brook campus or did you have relations outside? Do you mean professional relations?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, professional relations or even administrative; did you deal directly with anybody in Albany?

Dr. Irvine: No, generally not, except I would go along on the budget hearings; but I reported to the, originally the President, and then when there became an Academic Vice President or a Provost, I reported to them. So, no, I didn't deal directly with the Central Office in Albany. I had a lot of outside activities, as you know, I'm very internationally minded.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, right, I know that.

Dr. Irvine: And have a lot of professional activities outside the campus.

Dr. Hartzell: But in the Central Office, there was no particular individual with an engineering training to whom you could go.

Dr. Irvine: No, no way.

Dr. Hartzell: What understanding of engineering was there in the Bureau of the Budget?

Dr. Irvine: I don't think very much.

Dr. Hartzell: Axelrod and Viellette and Norm Hurd, Norm Hurd was in the Department of Agriculture before he became

Dr. Irvine: Director of Budget. Is that what he was? I never had any dealings with Norm Hurd; he maybe have boned through a couple of the budget hearings up there, but it was with the people that reported to Hurd that we talked to, I believe. No, there was nobody really up there and that presented some difficulty because engineering, like every other discipline, has their own problems and they are unique and it was difficult to convince people of it, I think.

Dr. Hartzell: Do you know whether Buffalo came in with Engineering about the same time we did?

Dr. Irvine: Yes, I think early in my tenure here is when Buffalo came in, maybe roughly about the same time; because I remember getting together with the Dean of Engineering at Buffalo, and saying welcome to the club, trying to establish some relationships.

Dr. Hartzell: They started off in a different way, did they?

Dr. Irvine: Of course, they were an old school; they've had engineering for a long, long time.

Dr. Hartzell: Oh, they have?

Dr. Irvine: Oh, yes, they came in as an engineering college, and a rather large one. They were in some trouble, I think they lost their accreditation, mostly because of

financial difficulties. So, they had their own set of problems, which they are taking care of quite well. Buffalo Engineering School is a very reputable one now.

Dr. Hartzell: Was there any help for Engineering on the part of Harriman or Rockefeller?

Dr. Irvine: No, Harriman was before my time really. Rockefeller clearly was a friend of State University, more so than subsequent Governors, especially the present one. But I don't think he differentiated, I think it was the concept of the State University which he was more interested in.

Dr. Hartzell: Did we have any contact with Farmingdale?

Dr. Irvine: Well, Engineering did, because Farmingdale had a two-year program in Engineering Science, which was designed as a transfer program. And, of course, we were one of the obvious places to transfer to.

Dr. Hartzell: Did you get students from Farmingdale?

Dr. Irvine: Yes, one of the things I did when I first came was being listed to make contacts with, not only Farmingdale, but with Nassau Community College and Suffolk Community College -- those are the three in the area -- and all three had Engineering Science two-year programs, and we set up transfer arrangements so that if a student would take the two-year program in any one of these three institutions, it was sort of an automatic transfer. And we tried to coordinate the courses as well as we could having some different faculty. I must say we got very good students from all three of those institutions. What they did was bend over backwards to keep the standards in those programs enormously high, so that their students would do well when they graduated. And we found that they were very bit as good, and in some cases, better than our own students, so that it worked out very well, I think, and continues to do so.

Dr. Hartzell: Did you do any active recruiting from upstate New York?

Dr. Irvine: Well, I went and gave a few talks. As you know, in those days, unlike today, the recruiting and admission was entirely out of the hands of the Engineering College. It was in the hands of the Admissions group, and they did the recruiting and

they decided who were admitted with some input, but almost none from us anyhow. And so whenever I was invited by them to give a talk or anything, I certainly would and I did; but it was on a sort of hit and miss basis; it was not something that we organized.

Dr. Hartzell: I see.

Dr. Irvine: So, that's about it, I guess. Thirteen questions, that's an unlucky number.

Dr. Hartzell: There's some on the other side.

Dr. Irvine: A couple, yes, just to get away from the thirteen.

Dr. Irvine: Oh, okay. What do you feel you have accomplished at Stony Brook by 1971? Well, that was when I finally decided I had been Dean long enough; I think ten years in a position like that is plenty. One of the things I did find when I was looking through my files this morning was my resignation letter to the faculty, written in 1971, telling them why I was leaving.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, send a copy of that to Evert Volkersz.

Dr. Irvine: Okay, I'll do that. I felt what we had accomplished is, we certainly had a viable Engineering College by 1971. We had established five Ph. D. programs in all of the departments, so that our research was growing, and we were recognized nationally, we suddenly began to appear in the lists and so on. We had some pretty rocky years in the '60's, but that came about because of the University, as well as the Engineering College, but I felt that we had gotten started and had done a pretty good job for ten years; but then how could I feel anything other than that and live with myself. Can you name individuals who did things that were important for the future development of the University as a whole or some part of it? Do you mean in my area or?

Dr. Hartzell: A broad institutional view, from your point of view.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, well, going back to the very beginning, I think those individuals that gave us some leadership in our transition from that terrible time in 1961, when the campus was all split up and then when we had to come back together again, I think you and Harry Porter had certainly an important part in that.

Dr. Hartzell: Harry was, I thought at that point, was very useful person. He took responsibility for some of the personnel problems that went back into the Oyster Bay days that I knew nothing about, and he apparently had the background and was willing to take the leadership. The Martin question, for instance. Who was head of Mathematics?

Dr. Irvine: Bill Lister was, but then they brought in another guy, that is under John Lee, and I forget his name, but there was a lot of problems with that appointment. Well, I'm reminded just while we talk about Harry Porter. Just after John Lee was fired, I guess it was a day or so afterwards, I got a call from Tom Hamilton, the Chancellor in Albany; and he said I have to do something to fill the leadership gap down there, the place is just sort of a boiling cauldron. And he said, I'm inclined under recommendation to, of a group of the faculty, to appoint the following person as Acting President; and I don't even know the name of the person, but I told him that that person was identified very strongly with one of the groups; and if he did that, it was going to just be murder down here. And I suggested that he bring somebody in from the outside. And I had known Harry Porter because he had come down, he was Provost then, and he had come down to the University a number of times. I said I think a very good guy would be Harry Porter to come down here because he has that kind of a personality, he's divorced from the immediate problems down here; and I think he can get along with both groups and do something. So, I don't know how many other people recommended Harry Porter, but at least I did to Hamilton. And he did appoint him very shortly thereafter, and I think he was a good appointment. I think anybody from the campus would have been a catastrophe, including me.

Dr. Hartzell: Right. How do you think my three years worked out?

Dr. Irvine: I think they worked out very well. Those were building years, as you know. We had our series of problems, but it seems to me we had a fairly good group. I am reminded of Stan Ross, who is no longer with us, but who I think was a very good appointment; I think that was your appointment, as Dean of the Arts and Science College.

Dr. Hartzell: Do you remember driving somewhere with me, and my asking you about Stan Ross?

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, we were driving to Yale, as a matter of fact to talk about another faculty problem, if you remember. Yes, you asked me about several people, and I told you what I thought. Yeah, on the Long Island Expressway.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, I liked the way he handled the paper and the appointment searches in the History Department. And I thought he was after good quality.

Dr. Irvine: Yeah, I think he was.

Dr. Hartzell: As it turned out, he had a fairly sharp focus on Latin America.

Dr. Irvine: Yes.

Dr. Hartzell: And I don't know

Dr. Irvine: Well, he went down to head up the Latin American Institute at Texas, didn't he?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, right. I saw him one time, he was walking with a cane, bent over.

Dr. Irvine: I only remember him as a very active guy.

Dr. Hartzell: I know it.

Dr. Irvine: He and I got along very well.

Dr. Hartzell: Well, I think almost anybody could get along with you.

Dr. Irvine: I'm not sure of that, you check that out with Olga. Well, that's about it. Turn it off.

Dr. Hartzell: Okay.