

Interview with: NANCY O'BRIEN

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Nancy Decker

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

Transcript - Nancy O'Brien

Interviewee: Nancy O'Brien Donahue

Interviewer: Gus Nolan

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Summary: Nancy O'Brien reflects on her early history growing up in Poughkeepsie before working in the reporter's office at Marist College. She talks about her experiences at the college, professionally and as a student, including the introduction of women to the college as students, as well as what she thinks Marist's strengths are.

Gus Nolan:

Good morning, Nancy.

Nancy O'Brien:

Good morning.

GN:

Nancy, will you tell us something about your official name, what is your full name?

NO:

Nancy Ruth O'Brien Donahue.

GN:

Were you named after another member of the family?

NO:

No, not really, but I was named after Frank Sinatra's daughter. [laughter] My father when he was in World War II before the war ended, he used to hear *Nancy with the Laughing Face* that he recorded for his daughter because her name is Nancy and his wife's name is Nancy, so when I was born he wanted me to be Nancy, so there's a little story there.

GN:

Where were you born?

NO:

New York City in the Bronx.

GN:

When?

NO:

1946, October 11th.

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GN:

Do you have any siblings?

NO:

Yes, I have two sisters and a brother.

GN:

Their names?

NO:

David, Joanne, and Denise.

GN:

Ok, where did you grow up?

NO:

Until I was eight years old, in the Bronx, in New York.

GN:

Where in the Bronx?

NO:

Right near Yankee Stadium, 85 West 166th Street, I still remember the address. I went to Sacred Heart School, between Nelson and Woodycrest Avenue, near the old Polo Grounds.

GN:

Ok, you lived there for how long?

NO:

Eight years.

GN:

So you didn't go to school there?

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NO:

No, just for I think, up to...

GN:

Third grade.

NO:

Third grade, catholic school.

GN:

And then where did you move?

NO:

Then I moved to Poughkeepsie, lived in the city of Poughkeepsie and started at I think, it was Ralph R. Smith Elementary School.

GN:

And then, high school?

NO:

High School, Poughkeepsie High School, graduated from there in June, nineteen sixty-four.

GN:

What were your parent's names and occupations, your fathers?

NO:

My mother was June Mews, that was her maiden name and she was a homemaker; and my father, who is now deceased, was Harold J. O'Brien and he worked for an oil company until he retired, Gulf Oil.

GN:

Now, let me ask you some personal questions. How long have you been married to Edward?

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NO:

It will be twenty-seven years this December; isn't that wonderful?

GN:

It is. Were you married in this area?

NO:

Yes.

GN:

What about the children, tell us about the children.

NO:

We have two children, Ned and Hope. Ned just turned twenty-five, Hope just turned twenty-two.

We still have them both at home, so we feel very lucky about that. No, we really do, and they both graduated from Marist. Hope is getting her master's degree in two weeks, she finishes her student teaching.

GN:

Wonderful. Now tell us about coming to Marist. When did you first come to Marist to work?

NO:

September, 1966.

GN:

What were the circumstances, how did that come about?

NO:

Ok, I worked at DeLaval, a separator company then, out on Route Forty-Four, for one year exactly, almost to the day. I decided I really didn't like that job all that much, there was a lot of key punching as I recall it, which was very boring. I did want to go to school so I was taking

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courses at night at Dutchess Community College in English, and I knew through some friends, Mrs. O'Brien who was the recorder at that time, and she had a secretary, Chris Lariot, whose husband, George Lariot was a student at Marist. Chris was working in the recorder's office as her secretary. They were getting ready to move, I think George was graduating; he had gotten a job, so she needed a secretary assistant in the office, and because I knew her children and we socialized and I was in her home a lot; she knew I wasn't too happy at DeLaval. She thought I was very funny, she liked me, so she said, "why don't you go up and see Tony Campilii, I need somebody and I will set you up with an interview, which she did.

GN:

Is she related to you?

NO:

No, in no way at all. Not that anyone would ever believe it, they thought and many still do, that she was my mother.

GN:

Yeah,

NO:

But she wasn't.

GN:

Some of us here

NO:

But she really wasn't, but the kids in this school always believed that she was because we were very close, and I was just a year younger than her daughter, and I think a year older than her son.

GN:

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How would you describe your first jobs at Marist, what was your role?

NO:

I was the, I guess I was like a secretary pretty much, even though I really wasn't trained in any business courses; I took liberal arts in high school, college prep. I basically was like her assistant and did the secretarial things in the office, answer the phone, but very shortly I started to do a lot more. She let me do a lot of the things that she did as far as figuring out the cumulative indexes of the students, recording the grades, and then I started to do a lot with registration because everything was done by hand. I very quickly got to do a lot of the things that ran that office. It was really exciting.

GN:

Now, the way you described those conditions; you had come from DeLaval with some technical area; Marist is rather primitive I guess in those terms; when did technology begin to move in? When did they start using computers or punch cards?

NO:

Ok, no, I don't know the date; you probably know the date that it started, but I do know that we were still over in Champagnat in this very small classroom, and that was our office. It was a long, very small classroom, one of the very smallest downstairs on the left, I think it was like the third or fourth room.

GN:

Did you say Champagnat?

NO:

No, yeah I did, I'm sorry, I meant Donnelly. I remember Nilus Donnelly was the first one that was going to start this computer and it was called the fourteen 0 one, it was a big mammoth

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machine and he decided to start with the recorder's office and then go to the business office, so we were going to be the first ones. He came in and he would say, "You have to meet with me, you have to learn how to keypunch." Well, I knew how to keypunch, that's one thing I came from DeLaval with because that was my job. They just basically taught me it there; and I did all the timesheets and the time keeping for the company. I knew about that so we started on a class with that and he tried to teach us some programming, which was a joke because we didn't know anything about it and we [laughter] spent most of our time laughing and fooling around because we really, if you know Nilus Donnelly; I mean we didn't look at him as like someone that's going to teach us to run computers.

GN:

He ran bulldozers.

NO:

Yeah, right, right, but he would come in and say, "Now we're going to learn computers, and I'm going to teach you." We had some really funny meetings. I had a little step up because I knew the keypunching so I fell right into that, which is one of the first things you needed to do as far as punch in grades. Doing a schedule, that's how we really began in our office, we were the first.

GN:

Who were the people you reported to; first there was O'Brien, but then who was there?

NO:

First there was Mrs. O'Brien, and then, I'm trying to think, if Mr. Mortensen was the registrar at that time. I believe he must have been, but he wasn't in the office with us, that didn't occur until we moved over to Adrian Hall. He was there, but I think he was her boss at the time, part time, because he was a retired relief teacher/principle, but I'm pretty sure he was the registrar. At that

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time, the Dean was John O'Shea, Brother John O'Shea so he was who we reported to and he was upstairs in Donnelly; that I remember, in the very beginning. I think also upstairs, was the teacher education office with Brother Murphy. They were kind of next to each other, so those are the ones I remember in the beginning that we reported to.

GN:

How about Tony Campilii?

NO:

Tony was very, we were very involved with him because we worked very closely with the business office. Tony is the one who hired me; I've known him since the day I came here. We worked close with him because whatever we did affected their billing, which I'm sure still does, so we were like really tight, close together, we were very involved with him too. I don't know that you would say reported to him, but we certainly did deal with him a lot.

GN:

Could you say something about the interaction of your offices, to get information? For instance the debts, you wouldn't let people register or did they register?

NO:

Yeah, we had a very good relationship. We knew what we had to do; we couldn't give out grades when kids owed money, and the diplomas, we had lists that we had to do, so there was a very close relationship there. They were... we were downstairs and I believed I think they were up. I don't know where they were at that time, if they were upstairs or not. We all got together, that was another thing; when the computers came in, they put us next to each other. They felt we needed to be near each other, so that's why we took over Adrian Hall. When this computer started to come in, they put the Computer Center, the Business Office, the Recorder, Registrar's

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office, all together in Adrian Hall; when we started out on this new venture. Then the idea was to get us on the computer first, computerize our records and then the business office. We worked there and we were in and out of each others offices because we were really very closely related in the duties that we both did. We had an excellent relationship, all the staff, Tony, and Mrs. O'Brien, Mr. Mortensen only he was part time, so he was basically doing a lot of, taking in transfer credits and things like that. He was doing part of the schedule; but eventually a lot of that really got turned over to us and then we ended up with a full time registrar after he left.

GN:

Was that John Dwyer, who's the first

NO:

I'm trying to think, was John first or was it... I don't think John was first. I think it was John King. John King was here for about a year, he wasn't here too long, he was a Brother; maybe a year, year and a half, and then I think it was John Dwyer.

GN:

Do you remember Brother John Malachy?

NO:

Yes, but I was not here when he was here; he was the registrar with Mrs. O'Brien, before I came, and I think, I don't know if he was full time or part time, so I didn't have any dealings with him. He was for a while; but when I came, Mr. Mortensen was really the one who was doing it.

GN:

Ok, and he was replaced eventually by--.

NO:

He was probably replaced by John Malachy, right?

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GN:

What's the span of years that you were in the office here?

NO:

Thirteen.

GN:

Thirteen years?

NO:

Thirteen years.

GN:

Now, in those thirteen years, the college went through certain development; and you would say that there was some crystallization in the departments. From where you stood was there... were each of the academic areas as cooperative, or did they have more problems than others? For numbers of reasons: like for instance, requirements for diplomas, teacher education needed certain credits and so on. Did you have any interaction with departments like that?

NO:

Yes, all of them, because I basically, what my job became, well we decided, who graduated. Our office did; we went through folder by folder; we would stay in the office all hours of the night.

GN:

You mean computers were not used for this?

NO:

No, not in the beginning, oh never, no. It was all, I mean, we would get printouts eventually, but still. I'd have to go through every file and make sure that it matched, because again, I mean, you had to do a double check on that sort of thing, and I ended up doing that.

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GN:

Did you use an adding machine, or what did they use?

NO:

Yes, we had this old blue slate colored machine that I figured the indexes on, and then you would type the grades. I typed all the grades on the transcripts too, and then I typed when they got the diploma, what it was in, and the date, because you had three dates of graduation, which you still do; January, August, and May. So we did all that, but even after we were on the computer, I would get the grades off the computer on labels, on student labels and I would have to post them on the transcripts. I still would have to manually type at the bottom of the transcript that they had completed the degree and what the degree was. Then I also had to keep those records in order to make sure we got Bundy money; because we got money for every graduate. So that money was very important to the college at that time; that was part of my job also.

GN:

Now, while Marist was an all-male institution, did you and other women feel that you were treated fairly?

NO:

Oh, definitely. [Laughter]

GN:

Favorably?

NO:

Definitely. [Laughter]

GN:

Was there particular consideration given to women because facilities really didn't...

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NO:

I don't recall now, do you want me to talk as a staff person or as a student, because I was both?

GN:

Well, as a staff person first and then we will get to the student.

NO:

As a staff person, it was great, it was like a family. There were a lot of secretaries, so there were a lot of females on campus, I mean as far as secretaries. Older women, younger women, all ages, as I recall, everybody got along well together. The offices all knew each other, Admissions, Tom Wade's office, Dean of Students, Teacher Ed with Brother Murphy, Sandy Doxy was there.

GN:

Oh yes.

NO:

Admissions, I mean all these names come back to me. The Admissions Office; Eileen Young; who ended up marrying Pete Leone; who is still a city cop. I saw him not too long ago when we were going to a concert. So the offices, there was, I think, she may even still work here; she was over in the residence hall. I can't remember her first name now, isn't that awful, she's still here, I think. So no, and Dave Flynn was in Admissions; his wife worked for us for awhile temporarily, people in the business office, lot's and lot's of women as far as staff goes as I recall, and very close knit. Everyone got along, everybody knew each other, everybody helped each other, you needed something from their office, very friendly, very nice atmosphere to work in.

GN:

When did you become a student here?

NO:

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I think probably not the first semester, I started fall, '96, I believe I was still taking a course up at Dutchess.

GN:

Stop right there, fall

NO:

'96, '66.

GN:

Fall, '66.

NO

God, what's wrong with me?

GN:

Ok. [Laughter]

NO:

This is where my age shows, yes fall, 1966. That's when I started, so I probably started my first course in January, probably 1967.

GN:

Was that evening school?

NO:

Evening, yes, I was the first, when they let girls go in; I was one of the first to go in but I had to go in the evening. I mean we're not in the day classes yet, so I started in the evening and my first course was with Casimir Norkeliunas in German, because I had taken three years of German in High School and he thought this was just great; that he had a girl in his class that was taking German, and I remember I felt, there were about thirteen people in the class; they were all IBM

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men, so that was a little intimidating, because I not only was the youngest in the class, I was really very young, only nineteen.

GN:

And the only female?

NO:

Only female, and about twelve IBM men, mostly older men; so he would call on me a lot to recite things; I had a very strict German teacher so I was fairly good in it because you had to be; she was tough and I again was the only girl in high school taking it and she was like eighty years old; and she banged the ruler and whatever. He kind of took advantage of that and made a lot of jokes about it, I was a little, I felt a little uncomfortable but not too much about you know, being the only woman, but I guess just being in that class and being a German class and all these engineers. It was okay because he was really sweet and sensitive to it.

GN:

So you're taking one course, and you really have to go half the distance now right, because you have a diploma from Dutchess Community College?

NO:

No, I only came here with, I believe I transferred in seventeen credits, so I did all my work at Marist. I started then, and I was the first employee to take advantage of getting free tuition, nobody else did it, nobody cared about it; but I did, and I was the only one that did it and then of course I advanced taking more courses again at night until you were allowed to take them during the day. Then I started doing it during the day on my lunch hour to get my degree. It took ten years to do the whole thing, but, once I started to do it, it took a few years, some of the other staff women, started to see, gee, maybe we should do it. I remember, I think the first ones that did it

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after me very slowly and I think at that time they were only like auditing, was Joy Kudlow and Arena Britt and I think Syd Watoff started to do a few things; but I was the first one to get a degree from here under that program.

GN:

And it took ten years?

NO:

Ten years exactly, I was pregnant with my son when I got my BA in English on May 1976.

GN:

Ok and you majored in English?

NO:

Majored in English and minored in Philosophy.

GN:

How is it that you rose to the chairman of the department? Doctor George Sommer was an outstanding professor here and yet you didn't take him.

NO:

No, I didn't.

GN:

How did that...

NO:

Well, one of the courses I know, I don't know if he taught Shakespeare, I know he taught Chaucer, and I had no interest in taking that, so that probably is one of the reasons, but it's probably the same reason, I minored in philosophy and I never took a course with the Chairman of the Philosophy Department either, so I don't really think that that is that unusual.

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GN:

Well it is unusual, but it's not that unusual.

NO:

Is it really? I don't think so; I know Doctor Sommers thought it was, but I didn't. [Laughter]

GN:

Yes, right. Tell me, when you got your degree, were you ever of a mind to leave Marist and seek a position elsewhere at another great institution in the Hudson Valley?

NO:

Never, never.

GN:

There was no attraction to go to IBM?

NO:

No, never.

GN:

It was too interesting and fun to work here.

NO:

Right, I loved it, I loved every day; I never even took vacation, Tony used to say, "you've got to make her take her vacation." He'd have to pay me for it all the time, because I just never wanted to miss work, I loved it.

GN:

Okay, tell me now, the official coming of co-eds to the campus and what impact did it make?

Did you feel in your office that it was, did they cry more regularly for things they needed than the guys?

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NO:

No, I really never saw that, not in my office; maybe the business office where they wanted the money, but no, I didn't see that. The girl's, they kind of stuck together in the beginning; of course the guy's were really, you know, liked having them around, but I remember they were always very polite. I mean it was just like a new experience and lot's of fun, and I didn't see anything negative about it, it was just like a new thing beginning, just like the computer; you know, kind of different. I think probably maybe in the classrooms is where maybe they might have seen a difference and maybe the adjustment because there would be so few; even though you had a certain number enter the school, you might have a class with twenty-seven guy's and maybe two or three females; so maybe there, but as far as our office goes, no, we didn't see a lot of that crying. We got just as much complaining and needing help from the girl's as we did from the guy's, in some way's the guy's probably needed it more.

GN:

Yes. Did you have anything to do with the credits being given to the nurses at St. Francis Hospital?

NO:

I know we had to record them, but we didn't have a whole lot to do with other than just having to record them and keep their records, that were pretty much done on their own and just probably brought to us to record them on transcripts and keep their records. It wasn't done for too long, I don't believe.

GN:

No, because once that program ceased, shortly after they were not going to be admitted to the school.

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NO:

Right, right.

GN:

One other question now; the business of seeing changes at Marist, is what I want you to talk about. Number one, we talked about the introduction of co-eds; what would you say about the administrative changes? Were you here for a change from, did you know Brother Paul?

NO:

Not as an administrator.

GN:

Not as an administrator. Ok, then Linus Foy was the President, were you here also for Dennis Murray?

NO:

When Dennis came in, I was just about to leave, so I saw more, I knew more about Dennis as a president as a student and then through my being a faculty wife, and then of course meeting him at many functions and his wife, so I really left my position as Assistant Registrar when he started.

GN:

Ok, let's back up and talk about Doctor Foy. What were your experiences with him as an administrator; did you ever have to go to his office for materials or improvement, or did you write budgets to...

NO:

No, my dealings with him, I dealt mostly with his secretary, Miss Travis.

GN:

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Oh, yes.

NO:

Ok, so she was like, she did all his work; Linus was just, he would be in our office a lot, you know, very fast, that was how Linus did everything, in and out, very fast. "Hi, good morning, any problems?" He would ask you some personal things if you knew something; it would be official, but he would always talk to you in an unofficial way. I kind of knew him more personally, just by being in our office all the time, but it was done in a very unofficial personable way. The stuff that needed to be done officially in the office, Mary Travis would come down and get what she would need.

GN:

Did you have any protests? Students coming to your office and then not being happy with the outcome and going on to the President's Office. Was there any kind of difficulty?

NO:

No, not that I recall, as I recall, he was always very approachable. I know there were a couple of instances where they were trying to get together groups, they would write things in the circle; but I always felt they always has access what they needed; I don't recall, I think they would mostly go through Tom Wade, because he was Dean of Students at that time. Linus was always available to anybody, he was always visible.

GN:

Were there any difficulties involved in the kind of maturing process the development of departments and programs, do you have to change a lot of...

NO:

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We had a lot of problems with scheduling rooms, the academic calendar and the catalog which came out of admissions and then they did, eventually it went from admissions to our office, so there were some problems there, and changes of department heads and some department heads did things one way, and then they would want to change a schedule, you know things like that. Those times it became difficult when department heads would change naturally because people worked in different ways, so we would have to keep on top of that all the time, that was our job too, and then especially when we took over the catalog, getting deadlines in, that was always a difficult thing, getting grades in on time, calling them on the phone because they hold up everything; but I'm sure the same thing happens now, incomplete grades, following up on that sort of stuff. That became more and more of a problem, especially as you got more and more computerized, got more and more students, needed more and more reports, as I say we needed to get money in every year to the state for Bundy Money, so your statistics are very important and they were always asking us now for statistical reports, which we didn't have to do a lot before. We also did the veterans benefits in my office, I did that also, so that was also important for financial aid, we worked very close too with financial aid.

GN:

Do you recall who the first controller was?

NO:

The first--.

GN:

He was a brother.

NO:

Gee no, I don't.

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GN:

Was it Cornelius?

NO:

Russell?

GN:

Yeah.

NO:

Really?

GN:

Ok, I just thought you might...

NO:

No that I didn't know. No, no.

GN:

He's the first to get federal aid.

NO:

No, I did not know that.

GN:

Yeah, well, he's World War II.

NO:

Ok.

GN:

That would be a bitter history, just for the record here as we're going through this. On this changing, when a new requirement goes in, doesn't it take some time for it to actually be

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implemented. Now there are students who come that are given catalogs, and given requirements, don't they go through a period of three or four years here under those requirements or can you change them?

NO:

They are supposed to as I recall, whatever you came in under and that even affected me, because I was here for ten years, we had, what you would have to do then is get waivers.

GN:

Right, or find the other catalog

NO:

Yeah right, and with me, within ten years the catalog did change, the requirements changed, the core courses changed, I mean I'm not going to go into all that, but you were supposed to be held to the requirements of what the year you began. Someone like myself who was doing part time, at the end, I did full time, I did go to school full time and worked full time, but I stuck to the requirements of nineteen sixty-six, so somebody would always have to be up on those requirements and...

GN:

Was there a sixty-sixty core program?

NO:

Yeah,

GN:

Sixty you chose, and sixty the Department Chair chose?

NO:

Yeah. That was very easy in those days.

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GN:

From your vantage point, what would you say Linus Foy's greatest or several of his contributions would be and then what would Dennis Murray's be? Can you talk about that in general terms?

NO:

I really don't feel I could say, I mean I've seen all the changes it's like a different school, but I think for the time; from what I remember, I mean Linus was just, he had a vision, it's just his vision for the future and he was here at the present time when a lot of that just wasn't going to happen, but I certainly think he knew what was going to happen, but I think his own personal life changed too, so I mean, that's probably part of it; I think if he had stayed here, I mean my own personal vision, he would have done just what's happened; I mean I do believe that because he's a brilliant man and he was a tremendous, hard loyal worker. The Marist Community meant a lot to him, and I still feel to this day, even though a lot of it is..

GN:

Materially changed

NO:

A lot of credit is given to the technology and all that, I still don't think it would have gotten anywhere if it didn't have the core people that were here from when I was here. I believe that with all my heart and soul; and I feel that is the biggest change that I see and it's also the saddest one because I just feel a lot of the new younger staff don't have that history, which is, that's life. I just feel that not having that, and the one's that are still here that still do have it, thank goodness they're here and have been able to pass on some of that, but I don't know how much of that has been absorbed by the new people or if they really understand that full meaning of it. I hope they do and I know there is a lot of people that are retired and still are very active and part of the

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community here, so I think that's why we still have this active Marist Community that's still a great part of the college. I think one of the great things about Dennis is other than his focus on the future and how important technology is and I've read many statements that he's said and heard many speeches, but I think one of the most important things is that he built on that community; he didn't try to eliminate it or dismiss it, he saw from the very beginning the strength of it, recognized it, and integrated it into what Marist could become. To me, that was the most important thing, he recognized the importance of that.

GN:

Ok, could you reflect a little bit on Nilus?

NO:

Oh Nilus, he was so wonderful, I loved him. He was just a man of all trades, a man of all seasons. Could do, I mean very talented man, I still now, even, my husband tells me things, you know stories now and then about him, you know personal stories.

GN:

What about his projects?

NO:

Yes, he could do everything and he did do everything; I mean we all know the building stories of the Brother's, you know, out there building the school and the foundations, but look, he's the one they went to, to start the computer. Who ever thought that, I mean I don't know where that came from, but just a very friendly, generous, kind open person that also had a vision of what the college could become to. Very accessible to everybody, to the students, to the person who cleaned the offices, right up to the President. He was just, and even when I think of him, I think

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of someone like Brother Tarcisius in the printing shop, that little old place that that poor guy used to work in and still get us everything that we needed.

GN:

On the same tone now, can you reflect on some other outstanding members of the faculty that you saw? If I mention some names you might reflect on?

NO:

Well you know, I do remember to, we didn't talk too much about the administration, but I do remember the Dean's that I worked under; and they were wonderful. Again, they were strong parts to our Marist Community. We went from Brother John O'Shea, who also later became ordained a priest, and I was invited to go to his ordination and I will never forget that, down at the Capuchin Brothers, and that was wonderful, to see him become a priest. Then he left and I believe then, the Dean's Office, I think it was Brother LaPietra, and then it was shared between Kevin Carolan and Jerry Cox, so there were like three of them. They had three distinct functions. I worked very closely with them and that was great. I think by then, I had become the Assistant Registrar, so I went from a secretary to an administrative position under them at that time. I worked with all three of them as I said, and they were great. They believed in what you could do and they were very supportive; especially Brother LaPietra. If you told him you could do something, that's all you needed to say, I remember him saying many times, "If you say you can do it, if you meet the deadline, I believe you", and Jerry and Kevin were the same way. Then after them, I believe it was Lou Zuccarello, and again, you know, people built on what was already there, they never tried to really change it. They tried to keep the strengths, which I think we had from the beginning, they recognized it, they built on it and they just tried to maybe, just

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make it better, but not ever replace it or come in and try to change anybody's style. I always had an effective relationship there, then it turned where I guess Jerry, became more the Dean

GN:

Of students.

NO:

Yeah right, and Lou was more the academic again, but still worked very closely with us. I know they always, Richard LaPietra, just started a tradition; when we did graduation, how to pronounce the names of students when you gave out the diplomas. He would come down to our office and go over every single name with me and with Mrs. O'Brien too, in the beginning, to pronounce a name, not to make a mistake. That followed, I don't know if they do that today, but I know Richard did it and I know Lou did it, and Jerry did it and whatever, anybody who was going to hand out the diploma.

GN:

Yeah, they break up now into the chairs of the various departments.

NO:

Do they, ok, but we started that, you know, they came down and we would go over it, name by name, so they would pronounce it right.

GN:

On this, the follow up of Lou Zuccarello, would be Andrew Molloy, full time. I think there might have been a year there when it was more or less vacant; that's not exactly true, but; were you here for...

NO:

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No, I think by then, because I had left in August, of seventy-nine, that was my last year and then, as I said, Dennis had just taken over, so I think August fifteen. I think my dinner was almost like the same time he was leaving and I think Andy maybe after that, or for an interim period.

GN:

One year after that.

NO:

Yes, ok, so that was really the end of, no I really just knew him personally he and his wife Rosemary just through the college.

GN:

How about some of the faculty? Do you remember Roscoe Balch?

NO:

Oh, definitely, yes he and his big hat.

GN:

A Dr. Jephtha Lanning?

NO:

Oh, Jep, he was one of my favorites because he was in the English Department and I was, I knew a lot about him, going through, his getting his doctorate. That's what I remember too, he and Cass Norkeliunas, and Tom Casey working on their doctorates, I mean they did a lot of... they had to come in the office to get copies of things and we were like right there and talking about how are you doing on that, so I remember that. Those are the personal things I remember. As far as teachers, they were just wonderful; also the man sitting across from me, I had him, Professor Nolan, in class too.

GN:

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Outstanding teacher.

NO:

No, I have to say, one of my biggest surprises and this is not because you are sitting here, but I knew you more as an instructor, coming in the office, always getting your grades in on time, always like that, but I never had you in class and I remember when my first class that I took with you was a night class; I remember, I shouldn't have been amazed, but I was; what a great teacher you are. I enjoyed the course so much, because I never saw that side of you. I've never seen my husband teach, and I think that's terrible, because just what I hear people say and just to hear him talk, I know he's a wonderful teacher, but I've never been able to be taught by him.

GN:

My niece cried after she finished taking your husband's course because there were no more philosophy courses.

NO:

Yeah, I know, and I've heard that from other's, that's what I'm saying; a lot of times, I didn't get to see the people I knew in the administrative level, worked with as faculty people in an administrative area. When I got to get into a class and see them as teachers, it was like wow, there's a good teacher, I mean you were so funny and good in a classroom and we had such a great time in the courses.

GN:

You read it just like I wrote it, that's very good. [Laughter]

NO:

No, I'm serious, I really am.

GN:

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Let's take a different tact. What do you see in the future for Marist, ten years down the line or twenty-five years down the line? What kind of an institution do you think would be here, when you look at this library now, is this the beginning of more things, or are we going to lose something in the transfer in becoming bigger?

NO:

I don't think we will lose anything, I don't know how much bigger they can get, I think they are going to run out of land if they haven't already, so I don't know. Just certainly what they have done so far is just wonderful, I mean the vision has been there. I know they just recently got more money so somebody is doing their homework and they know the needs. I think, and this is just a personal thing; I think the technology is great and I think the future is there, but I would just hate for them to lose the human aspect of what people themselves can do, and not always depend on it because the world is still made up of human beings. I just hope that the Marist commitment never changes. I hope they keep in contact with the alumnae, the families, the children and I know that they are always very active in that now and I hope that stays the same. You still have to have that foundation if Marist is going to be unique. I think they are unique now and I would want them to stay that way; and they won't stay that way unless they look at some of those other areas. Keep doing the technology, but do more, like with your teacher-ed. I got my Master's Degree last August in Ed-Psychology and I know what how important that was to me, and what I learned being with the students and some new teachers, some old teachers and a lot of the humanness that's in those classes. I'd like to see that expand and what my daughter is getting out of it. I would like to see more programs for that, you know, like maybe a child care center on campus. I know a lot of colleges are doing that and I don't see Marist going in that way and it's an excellent way to train their student teachers, and excellent way to get their special-ed training.

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You know, to have the students that are here, have their children, some of them need babysitting services. I'd like to see some things go in that area.

GN:

Do you remember the swimming pool?

NO:

Yes I do, I even swam in it. I brought my kids to it in the very beginning.

GN:

Maybe we should build another swimming pool outside and integrate a summer program.

NO:

Wouldn't hurt, it's a great summer camp for faculty and student children and Upward Bound and things like that, if you still have that.

GN:

Yes, right; and the location of Marist, will it remain a focal point in it's position here to draw people, do you think?

NO:

Oh yeah.

GN:

The campus has really become a gem, really.

NO:

Yes, it's beautiful, just beautiful.

GN:

Is there anything you would like to add that I didn't ask, in terms of your experience?

NO:

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No, not really, I still miss the old days when I go to the faculty receptions. I hardly know anyone anymore; there are a lot of adjuncts. I think that's the only thing that I would be careful about.

We have a lot of adjuncts, and I know there's financial reasons for that, but I've heard statements from students and from parents, even people where I work now. I have people, matter of fact I have a faculty person that comes to where I work, the children do, and I here statements that there's just a lot of part-time teachers, always getting different ones; so I think you just have to be careful about that. I think department chairmen recognize now from what I understand and I hope they pay more attention to that. Other than that, I think that they will do a good job and they will be successful as they are.

GN:

In closing, what would be some of the fondest memories of your long career here? Either in your work career or your student career or as a wife to Kevin?

NO:

Well, I guess I'll do a little bit on each one. As far as faculty, just wonderful, caring committed teachers, all the time, even now, the new faculty. I've experienced the older faculty, those that have passed on, have retired; because I just finished my master's degree. I came back twenty years later after the BA degree, that as tough for me in the beginning, I felt really like a duck out of water, but, excellent faculty now that I've had... really still committed even though some of them were still here and some are new, so that's still here and I think that's a good thing. I've seen that, and through my children I've seen it. As far as when I first came here, the camaraderie that was here and the Christmas parties that we had, which we don't have anymore, they were lots of fun and very personal. Now that personal touch isn't there because we don't have it anymore. I don't know why. I think that was something that we tried to split up into three groups;

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we had a maintenance one, we had a prison one, you know for the prison people, we still had the faculty one, and then all of a sudden we did away with all of it. I guess that's just because we grew too big. That was one of the personal touches that we don't have anymore. The September reception, you get together at Dennis' house and that's really nice, but a lot of people don't know anybody anymore and they kind of stay in little clicks, but I guess again, that's life. As far as my fondest thing, I guess, is that I met my husband here and that was the greatest thing about my education here; my children did, so of course I take that away as a very, very special, special thing. I have made some very good friends with some very really... and I just say this as a word, but some really good, honest, caring committed people, which I think is the best thing to get out of an education, and is what I am proudest of in my children and my husband. That's the kind of people they are, that's what I feel the proudest of and I hope that I've gotten some of that from here in the jobs that I've gone on to and that I've been able to bring that commitment to the areas that I've worked in since I've left.

GN:

Thank you very much.

NO:

Ok, you're welcome.