

**Thomas Wade**

**Marist College**

**Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Transcribed by Nancy Decker**

**For the Marist College and Special Collections**

Transcript – Thomas Wade

**Interviewee:** Thomas Wade

**Interviewer:** Richard Foy

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**Subject Heading:** Wade, Thomas  
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Marist College Social Aspects

**Comments:** Thomas recalls his impression on the mission of the Marist Brothers and its effect on the college.

**Summary:** Thomas reflects on his early childhood, his education and his parents and brothers and sisters. His experiences in the Physical Education field and coach, assistant Head of Admissions, Dean of Students and Head of Admission the many positions he held at Marist. His fondest recollections seem to be about the history of Marist and the Brothers that made the school so outstanding. Thomas feels that the uniqueness of the Marist Brothers accepting the lay person as equal and the tradition of the familial spirit make Marist College what it is today.

**Richard Foy:** This is an interview conducted with Thomas Wade. We are in the Archives Room in the Cannavino Library. The date is Friday, January 18, 2002 about 10 o'clock in the morning. And Richard Foy is the interviewer. Tom, I would like to ask you some questions, or ask you to tell us about your experiences here at Marist. Before we do that, this sounds like...regooing [Laughter] could you tell us your name and something about your own family?

**Thomas Wade:** Thomas Wade. My immediate family is my wife, Anne and our four children. Currently, we have four grandchildren, three of which were born this past year. [Laughter] Personally, I come from a family of six on Long Island. My mother and father were immigrants from Ireland. My father was 14, my mother was 16.

**RF:** [00:01:02](#) What did your father do for a living?

**TW:** [00:01:05](#) My father worked. He came over at 14 to work on his aunt's farm, in Sands Point, Long Island. I think her husband died and he was a 14-year-old boy in the family, and I think he came over to help run the farm. Incidentally St. Mary's in Manhasset is the Episcopalian Cemetery across the street and that family, the Dean Family, is all buried there. My father was Episcopalian. He converted to Catholicism. From there, he went to work on all the estates in Sands Point as a gardener and landscaper, and they lived, eventually he married my mother who came over to work with Lady Rothschild, the jewelry family, in New York. [Laughter] They met in New York, eventually married, she came out here and lived on the estates. They had a cottage on the estates and three of my sisters were born on the estates. They stayed with that, he came over I'd say around 1907 or so, he stayed with that into the mid '30s when the Depression was and the people started to lose their estates because of taxes and so forth. Eventually, he went on to become a carpenter, sanitation man, and then he ended up taking care of the park in Port Washington. He got the job because he worked with a young man by the name of Holtz, his father was the superintendent of one of the estates, and the young man he eventually became a Senator in New York State. It was a political appointment really, because we had eight votes in the family. [Laughter] He did that, and he worked, he died when he was 83, he worked until one month before he died.

**RF:** [00:02:40](#) Wow.

**TW:** [00:02:42](#) So then, we went to school right in the village. It was an

interesting town. The immigrants came over and worked on the estates and then they, their first piece of property was just outside of Sands Point right near, it was the IBM Country Club in Port Washington, right on the Long Island Sound. Then from there, they moved up into the railroad, into the village and so on. Eventually, you couldn't live in that town because it became a very wealthy community and it was executives who worked in New York for professional people, and pretty typically you have to move away, and that's how I came up here.

RF: [00:03:25](#) Did you, did any of your brothers or sisters go to college?

TW: [00:03:29](#) No.

RF: [00:03:30](#) So, are you the baby in the family?

TW: [00:03:32](#) Yes, I'm the youngest of six, and I went to St. Mary's in Manhasset and I would say out of the class, even then, in the early/mid '50s, I'd say if you had one or two didn't go on to college, graduate, that was it. What happened I guess is, the GI Bill after World War II and the Korean War was on at the time and it ended in the early '50s, and so the whole movement towards going to college was happening. That was the environment then, you know.

RF: [00:04:07](#) How did you get to Manhattan College?

TW: [00:04:12](#) I applied to only one college because I wanted to study Physical Education, and I knew I couldn't afford to go away to school so I could commute back and forth, and so I applied to Manhattan and did my Physical Education. Then I came back and started teaching and coaching that same year.

RF: [00:04:27](#) Did you play varsity sports for Manhattan?

TW: [00:04:30](#) No, I played freshmen ball. When I was there, that's the time when they were loaded. That was their best time, from probably the early '50s through the mid '60s. Like Ronnie Petro came one year right after I graduated, Ronnie Petro who eventually came here as a basketball coach, and I believe he was playing here and they were very good. They were NCAA and Holiday Festival Tournament winners.

RF: [00:04:53](#) Yes, I was thinking baseball, did you play?

TW: [00:04:56](#) No, you know what I did was, I didn't play... I don't think I played

any baseball. Then when I graduated from college and I was teaching at St. Mary's, I played, no, I did, I did it during college, I played semi-pro baseball on Long Island which was a big thing then. You know, because after World War II, a lot of guys used to go right into the minor leagues because there wasn't any real work. So a lot of guys played minor league ball and semi-pro baseball was very big, and I played that. Interestingly enough, Charlie Shilling, who played with the Boston Red Sox, he went to St. Mary's High School with me and he went to Manhattan eventually, and he signed in his senior year, but at that time, the mid-late '50s, a \$35,000 signing bonus which was a lot of money. His father played with Phil Rizzuto in the semi-pros in Queens before Phil Rizzuto went to the minors and then went to the majors. So, it was interesting.

**RF:** [00:05:55](#) When you graduated, you moved back and you began teaching at St. Mary's in Manhasset?

**TW:** [00:06:00](#) Yes, I began teaching at St. Mary's in 1959 through '62.

**RF:** [00:06:06](#) So, a typical question would be to ask you, how you heard about the Marist Brothers?

**TW:** [00:06:11](#) Well, I heard about them because, naturally, I went to school with them, but how I got here was, one day, I was coming in from a Physical Education class and the teacher in class, Brother Paddy Long, I said, "Do you know anything about Marist College?" He said, "Yes, I went to school with the president." So I said, "Would you write him a letter, ask if I can coach up there?" and stuff like that. So, he wrote a letter and I still have like a half a sheet of paper from him saying anyone... the stagecoach finally got through, anyone who's crazy enough to want to work here, I'll interview. [Laughter] I came up, I think, in 1960, November. I missed the college, I went all the way up to Staatsburg, and I stopped at a little gas station up there and the guy said, "Oh, it's back." When I came and met you, you said, "Gee, I'm surprised anybody knows where we are." I started in '60 and then in '62, I came up.

**RF:** [00:07:05](#) What jobs did you have that first year?

**TW:** [00:07:09](#) This job was easy really compared to what I had with the high school, when I went to teach at St. Mary's, I taught all the Physical Education, I taught two periods of Biology and English, sophomore English; and I coached the varsity, and junior varsity basketball, simultaneously, and I coached baseball. And to make extra money, I drove the bus. [Laughter] I did all that for \$3,200 dollars a year. [Laughter] Monsignor Sharp who ran the school, was very, very

sharp. He had a high school here for 1,500 students. There was no debt on the buildings what so ever. I can remember after my second year, I was over with him talking about a raise and stuff, "Come back and talk to me in September." [Laughter] Stupidly, I come back in September.

RF: [00:07:58](#) You're trapped. [Laughter]

TW: [00:07:59](#) So, that was that. When I came here, I was the head basketball and the assistant Director of Admissions and my responsibility was recruiting Long Island and New York City. We opened up the Long Island community to Marist and that was my strategy because large Catholic population, good income, large number of students. When I started, I used to go out with the college ring, the yearbook, anything I had, and after four years, when I finished and went on to become Dean of Students, we used to have standing room only in the classrooms for college nights because the college had caught on that well.

RF: [00:08:48](#) What was your initial pitch, that first year out when you're trying to sell the college that you couldn't find?

TW: [00:09:00](#) I guess the key thing was the quality and the size of the institution. In other words, we had extremely good faculty because a number of the Brothers, they were prepared to teach here and all had their Doctorates. There was a small number of lay people who had been hired, so they were pretty well selected, and so it was the quality and size, and the major factor was the cost. Room, board and tuition was \$1,200. I used to get questioned by the guidance counselors, "How can you afford to do that?" I said, "Well, most of the faculty are Brothers, and there's no debt." So, it was a really great buy for people who were considering getting a college education for that price. Interesting enough, we held that for a pretty good while. Here's another interesting thing I think is, I spoke to Sean Kaylor the other day, is it Kaylor or Maylor? Kaylor?

RF: [00:09:57](#) Kaylor, I think.

TW: [00:09:58](#) The other day about... because we're working now on the decline of admissions, and I said to him, "Well, what's your financial aid budget?" He said, "16 million." I said, "Do you know what ours was? \$20,000." [Laughter] So I said, "The only thing about that is every kid paid his way through here in those days," and that held for a long time. When I left here, January '81, there was still very little money being put into scholarships. That was the key thing. I think it was really the quality of the institution, the size, the cost and at that

time, too, we were still a very Catholic institution, so there was a real market for it.

RF: [00:10:45](#) Who was your boss? You were the Assistant Director of Admissions?

TW: [00:10:49](#) Brother John Malachy, he was the boss, and he traveled the way I traveled. He took all the college class records. He did the east, kind of the east coast, and I did all the... I used to visit four or five schools a day in Long Island. We visited 120 schools in the fall in Long Island. We covered every high school in Long Island. There's a Brother, there's a Brother Michael, and he was a guidance counselor at St. Mary's, and he was up here one time and he said, "Oh the story on Long Island is it still doesn't exist if Wade hasn't been there." [Laughter] That's what we did. We just pounded the pavement, we really went at it.

RF: [00:11:30](#) You weren't married when you first came here, were you?

TW: [00:11:33](#) No, I was married in my second year.

RF: [00:11:34](#) Where did you live for your first year?

TW: [00:11:37](#) I lived in Poughkeepsie, I took over an apartment from Hannah Wallace who was a teacher in...

RF: [00:11:43](#) From Mount St. Mary's.

TW: [00:11:44](#) Mount St. Mary's, and also taught a course here. Then, I moved the second semester, I moved onto campus and lived in Sheahan Hall.

RF: [00:11:53](#) That's what I seem to remember. I was sitting there with you.

TW: [00:11:57](#) I had a great, those days you called them Proctors, Phil DuTremble from Connecticut you know, so he really ran the floor. I had the upperclassmen, so that was not bad, you know, and in those days, it was ten o'clock go to the men's room, go back to your room, and go to bed. [Laughter] And between eight and ten o'clock.

RF: [00:12:15](#) Phil DuTremble was a little older.

TW: [00:12:17](#) Yes.

RF: [00:12:19](#) Interestingly enough, his uncle was Brother Joseph Robert, who taught Latin here.

- TW:** [00:12:25](#) Yes.
- RF:** [00:12:27](#) You had some other teachers living there, too, didn't you? Did Tom Casey live in there? And Bob Lewis?
- TW:** [00:12:33](#) I think they came a year after me.
- RF:** [00:12:35](#) Oh, okay.
- TW:** [00:12:37](#) It was Brother Shurkus, who was there. Who was the other one? There was another Brother who lived on campus, it might have been Andy Molloy.
- RF:** [00:12:46](#) Yes, they might have been Brothers, too.
- TW:** [00:12:48](#) I remember when I came up in the summer to start, I didn't live week before I went on the road. I was probably the first person to live there besides Brother Andy, and about three o'clock in the morning he turns the alarms on to test them, he forgot I was there. [Laughter] So that was, the interesting thing I can remember the year before we were married, I brought my wife Anne up to see the campus. In those days, it was still building buildings. When we came on campus, it was pretty well still like a dirt road, I think, between St. Peter's and Donnelly and what not. All the Brothers were out saying their rosary walking around campus. I'm thinking to myself, what an image for her to come up and see, you know. [Laughter] We drove, I think after we left here for the visit, we drove north for probably half an hour or something, we were really out in the woods, and I think she must have been saying, "Where am I going?" [Laughter]
- RF:** [00:13:42](#) Where did your wife come from?
- TW:** [00:13:45](#) She came from Manhasset, and she went to St. Mary's. Not while I she graduated the year I went back to teach. She went to Regis College in western Massachusetts.
- RF:** [00:13:55](#) And you married her just when she graduated?
- TW:** [00:13:59](#) Yes, '62.
- RF:** [00:14:02](#) Let's switch to basketball. Who was the Athletic Director when you came?
- TW:** [00:14:07](#) Brother Bill Murphy, the Red Fox. [Laughter] He was a great guy,

very inventive, very talented, and he worked with Louie Carnesecca at St. Ann's, which is now Archbishop Molloy. And that was another thing, when we won a game, you telling me we have no ambitions to be in the N.I.T. because at the time N.I.T. was *the* tournament, not the N.C.A.A. The reasoning was that St. Ann's antagonized people in New York because they won so much, and we don't want that happening here. So I said, "That doesn't bother me."

**RF:** [00:14:42](#) Well actually, my feeling was when I was a high school teacher, certain Catholic colleges had gotten the concept of being basketball schools: Iona, Siena, and I was determined as president, I wanted this to become an academic institution. However, I was never against sports because I worked under Louie Carnesecca, too. You know how people can be excellent people.

**TW:** [00:15:14](#) And he is. Several years later, we started basketball camp when I was Dean of Students, we started basketball camp, and the first year, he came up for free and lectured and he said because of the opportunity the Marist Brothers gave him, he said he would come back and do it. We opened and then those camps went on from there. He came up to lecture for free.

**RF:** [00:15:43](#) That's very, very interesting.

**TW:** [00:15:45](#) Yes, he was the kind of guy, he never forgot you. I have a great story about him. I graduated from high school, and there was a beach near Port Washington where I lived New Haven beach. I used to go down there in the summer time. I was down there one day, and I'm shooting away and stuff like that, and all of a sudden, this guy comes over and I recognize him because we had played St. Ann's when I was in high school. He comes over and starts feeding me the ball and stuff like that, he says, "Where do you go to school?" I said, "I'm going to go to Manhattan College." He bounced the ball one more time and walks away. [Laughter] Because that's how he used to pick his talent, he used to go around to all the city playgrounds and find the kids and say, "Would you like to come to St. Ann's?" I've never forgot that story, he just calmly walked away. He was there on a family picnic. [Laughter]

**RF:** [00:16:31](#) Now that's Louie, Louie lived his whole life. He was also a great baseball coach, probably better at baseball than basketball.

**TW:** [00:16:40](#) I remember, you probably told me that, he didn't know basketball, but he came to St. Ann's as the baseball coach and then he took the basketball over.

- RF: [00:16:46](#) Yes, he took it over, and his strategist used to be a fellow by the name of Lou Tambini who's the coach of Loyola and would sit on the bench with him, but Lou wanted his kids to be absolutely prepared.
- TW: [00:16:58](#) Oh yes.
- RF: [00:17:00](#) The game plan had to be in place, and they had to be in terrific physical shape.
- TW: [00:17:04](#) Yes. He has a very simple principle. He says, "The team that gets up and down the court the fastest and puts the ball in a little more often than the other one wins." [Laughter] No, he was fair, as I said he never forgot you. He'd meet you years later, he knew who you were, he was as courteous to you. No matter who you were, he was a really good guy, you know, very talented.
- RF: [00:17:28](#) What kind of recruiting did you have to do?
- TW: [00:17:33](#) I didn't do any because the message that was given: we don't really want to be a basketball power, in the sense. But the first year, I had a very good ball club because I had Freddy Weiss, who was an extremely good ball player. He was six-six, and I brought one kid from St. Mary's with me, Jim Clancey, who was good, and I happened to have Denny Bryan. We ended up having a really good record and we jumped the schedule. We started to play, we signed on Siena, LeMoyne... In those days, there was no divisions, I mean you could play anybody you want.
- RF: [00:18:08](#) Yes.
- TW: [00:18:09](#) So then, comes the next year, four out of five are gone. One just left school, Dave Flynn practiced teaching, couple others for various reasons couldn't play. So here we are playing these schools, and I don't have any ball players. [Laughter] We could play for a quarter or a half, and then the talent would just take over, but we started the great rivalry with Siena that year. Next year will be, this year, December will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we started in 1962. No, excuse me, '63, so it's going to be 2003, this will be 39.
- RF: [00:18:48](#) Wow.
- TW: [00:18:50](#) There's a great coach there who had been there for years and years, Dan Cumin.

- RF: [00:18:53](#) Oh yes, I remember him.
- TW: [00:18:55](#) Your point about Catholic Colleges and, you know, being basketball powers, it was also in the '50s that we had a series of basketball scandals.
- RF: [00:19:09](#) Yes.
- TW: [00:19:10](#) Shaving point spread and what not, I could remember people on the road in admissions saying, "We don't want those days to come back." A lot of the colleges saying, "We don't want those days because they were setting the standards." In those days, you go back and check their records, and they didn't belong in school, you know, in those days, it was just 'let it be.' So, I think that was a really good thing, I think it was the integrity of the program. An interesting thing here I am Assistant Director of Admissions and then Director of Admissions and I'm coaching, you know today there would be an N.C.A.A. investigation or something. [Laughter] With all the rules and things they've put on the institutions, but I think that was really a good thing about the college, is that it was a good thing, everything we did.
- RF: [00:19:55](#) Yes, you mentioned Yeshiva.
- TW: [00:19:57](#) Red Sarachek.
- RF: [00:19:58](#) Red Sarachek, actually he used to be a consultant to the Knicks, and he did a lot of consulting for Lou Carnesecca would come up, and I think Bill Murphy wanted to get some teams up and got Red.
- TW: [00:20:14](#) Yes, we played Yeshiva, we played them, and we played a lot of the schools in the metropolitan area. Yes, Red Sarachek I knew him from St. Mary's because he used to sell sporting goods, too, so he used to sell us the basketballs and stuff, basketball and baseball equipment and stuff. He was, he was like an icon, in basketball in New York.
- RF: [00:20:35](#) Yes, very smart.
- TW: [00:20:36](#) Yes, those were the days. You used to go to Madison Square Garden, again, when you talk about scandals, you used to have the fans cheering in there on the point spread and then the team scoring more points and score more is like you're saying, wow. It was really just open, you know. [Laughter]
- RF: [00:20:53](#) Well, moving along, what happened to you? When did you stop

coaching basketball?

**TW:** [00:21:04](#) I stopped it pretty quickly.

**RF:** [00:21:07](#) Who replaced you?

**TW:** [00:21:09](#) Paul Arrow. He was, I had to make a decision in my first year. Did I want to stay, take over the Athletic Department and Physical Education, and continue coaching? Or take the Admissions over because Brother John says, "I want to go on to teaching." I was a very good coach, but I said to him, "Honestly, I'm not a good Physical Education person. I really like the coaching, but I'm not a Physical Education person really." And I said "I wouldn't do a good job for you. I wouldn't develop that program well." and I said, "You really might get somebody who is going to create a good program." And so, Bill Murphy went out recruiting, and he hired Howie Goldman. Howie Goldman came in and Howie was an excellent Physical Education man, had his Doctorate in Physical Education from Indiana University, and highly respected by the faculty because of his academic credentials. So, he developed a very good, you know, Physical Education program, and he coached soccer. I coached the second year, I coached basketball, but it was too difficult to coach basketball and do the Admissions, the ability to concentrate. I also had a brother-in-law who was always security conscious. He said, "When you get to be older, you know, basketball may not be that much" and he has an influence on me, you know, when you're 45 or 50 it might not be that big a deal." [Laughter] So, I quit. I just walked away. I coached for three years in high school, two years here, and I think people were shocked that I just walked away because it was so much a part... and I absolutely walked away, I never went to the gym. I didn't go to a lot of ball games during the time. But interesting enough, I got back involved with the seniors in high school with Roosevelt when they had some really good ball clubs, and it was really a lot of fun because I could just work as coach, I didn't have any responsibility to the kids, and he's now head coach at Mount St. Mary's in Newburgh. He's almost a person my age. He is a real coach, he has been coaching for ever and ever, and he doesn't want to give it up. I walked away from it, and I don't have any regrets because people always ask me and I say, "No, because life style," I said, "You know, family is too important to me. If you're going to do that business, you're going to be away a lot, and it's like another marriage." I said I wouldn't do it.

**RF:** [00:23:36](#) Was there any pressure at that time, or slightly after you were coaching, to move to bigger time or slightly bigger time?

- TW:** [00:23:47](#) No, I think when Ronnie Petro came in, he came in and he was a good coach, he did a very good job. Paul coached two years and then Ronnie came in. Interesting, Paul, I think Ron was a candidate before Paul Arrow, we went with Paul, I think. Then, we brought Ron in, and he had a very good job in the late '60s/'70s, and then, the '80s, he got caught. The other institutions were giving scholarships, and he was just recruiting without scholarships. He had very good records because, I mean, he went to the N.A.I.A. tournament a couple of times. And then the '80s, I think we made a move up to Division II, but we still weren't giving scholarships. He started to become a 500 coach. And then, interestingly enough, we built the McCann Center, and I think one of the reasons, one of the reasons we went Division I was, when you went and saw that big gym and there were very few people in it, you said to yourself, "This isn't going to work."
- RF:** [00:24:53](#) That was the mid '70s. I think it's probably the '70s.
- TW:** [00:24:57](#) Yes, right, the '70s, excuse me, and McCann came in, so it wasn't really into the...and he was still winning, in those days. I'd say by the '80s, the mid '80s, it caught up. No, maybe I'm getting a little confused here. It started to happen before we moved into McCann, right, because I left here in '80/'81, and that's when the college went Division I, really.
- RF:** [00:25:22](#) Yes.
- TW:** [00:25:22](#) And so, he got caught. He didn't have scholarships and he was playing against schools that did, and so the college made a decision, you made the decision. And then it kind of laid on the table. It was kind of there but it didn't and then Murray came in and he said, "I want the board to make that decision to go to Division I." And then the board I guess around 1980 or maybe even slightly before, made that decision, and Ronnie brought it to Division I. He did all the kind of works that had to be done to bring it to Division I.
- RF:** [00:25:54](#) Well, one of the things that happened was the H.E.O.P. programs were instituted in the late '60s, early '70s, and it meant a lot of public schools were able to basically recruit kids using H.E.O.P. money. So, it seems which were competitive suddenly became non-competitive.
- TW:** [00:26:13](#) Yes, he was just caught with it.
- RF:** [00:26:16](#) He got trapped. So, Division II is really a no man's land. It's not

my interview, but Jack Driscoll, when I was last years... said, "Don't waste your time on Division II," he says it doesn't cost you much more to go to Division I and you get a lot more publicity from it.

**TW:** [00:26:38](#) Very interesting story, and when you left and I was looking to leave Marist myself, I was down there for an interview, and he had known my work here and I wanted to talk to them, and that was the days of Jim Valvano and they were very, very successful. During the interview, I happened to make a very serious error. I said to him, "How long are you going to be able to keep Valvano?" The interview was over (TW slaps his hands) like that. He says, "Why don't you go down the hall and talk to so and so," and I left and that was it because I made the mistake because he says, "We're number one," and they were really doing very well at the time. Not shortly long after, Valvano did leave. So, that was a very interesting little story with Jack Driscoll.

**RF:** [00:27:25](#) Yes.

**TW:** [00:27:26](#) But he was absolutely right. I think the same thing here was the, that really helped Iona move up, and I think like when we moved in Division I, Rick Smits came here, had a major impact on the college. You know, no matter how you crack it... people also don't, maybe it's different today. I think back in my time when I was here, kids made decisions about college for a lot of other reasons. They didn't really make them on an academic program, and I don't know if today, I'm not too involved, but the kids are probably more serious about what they're doing and why. But, in those days, kids picked all other kinds of things why they're going to college, and it was a total experience, and I think what Rick Smits did here... I think the athletic program right now is excellent. I think the scope of it is excellent, and you know, Tim Murray does an excellent job managing. There is quality across the program.

**RF:** [00:28:27](#) That shows that Marist consistently wins the overall cup for the M.A.A.C.

**TW:** [00:28:36](#) Yes, the Commissioner's Cup, right.

**RF:** [00:28:38](#) Which means that, not only did they stress basketball, but they have a wide variety of sports and there's a lot of opportunities for both men and women here.

**TW:** [00:28:47](#) Oh yes. Well, that's a great thing. I still work out in the mornings

over at the McCann Center, and to go in there like six thirty, seven o'clock in the morning and see a lot of the athletes, men and women, working out is fantastic. I *really* marvel at the women's program because, you know, it's such a unique opportunity for a young woman to have that fact of athletics in their development, and the quality of the kids is just outstanding, you just don't meet a nasty kid, but again, I think that's the tradition of Marist. Marist has always had nice kids, and they're always friendly and open and so on, and you wonder, I just marvel at it when I see them.

RF: [00:29:28](#)

How do you think that happens? People always seem to characterize Marist kids as nice kids.

TW: [00:29:39](#)

I think it came from, you know, the Brothers. The Brothers, the tradition of the familial spirit, that I think they were welcomed and welcoming to everyone, and I think the close rapport we had with students, the interaction, you know, there was very little separation between faculty and students. When I was Dean of Students, you had a rule that the institution will never stand of the individual student. That the college won't be sacrificed, but we're not going to sacrifice a student either for the sake of the university, college. And I think that's a unique trademark of Marist, is the spirit of the Brothers and the acceptance of the lay person. I think the uniqueness of Marist is that the Brothers here accepted the lay person as an equal, versus, in other religious kinds of institution, there was a dividing line this is our college, meaning religion, it's our place and you're okay at this point, but don't come across that line. I think that's the real value and tradition at Marist and the unique quality of Marist today, is that it's gone from a church-related school to now a school with church tradition. And I think they let the lay person be very involved in developing. When you made the move to create the lay board of trustees, in a private college, it was very foresig-htful because I think the other colleges have not thrived the way Marist has because of that decision. I think, bringing the lay person in, and you also said another thing at the time going back that we have to get across to the lay people here: that it's not the Brothers college, that the Brothers are not going to save this college, that everybody has to save it. And I think that was, it's a hallmark for the college, and I think it's a very distinctive factor. And I don't know if I ever sent it to you, but I found in the Boston College alumni magazine a whole article after Vatican II, how all the big Catholic college presidents got together when they came back and said, "You know, we can't do this, my Chemistry Department is bigger than the budget for my religious order. And we cannot have that religious order dictating what we're going to do with the college 'per say,'" so, it was called The Land of

Lakes Conference and it was Hesburgh, the BC [Boston College] president, the Notre Dame president and others, they got together and started to say, "We've got to make a move," and you did that in the '60s. I think it was phenomenal. It allowed us to surpass the Ionas, the Fordhams, the Mannhattans and so on, who were our competition. You can just see today, I think that the college is thriving. I go back to the real distinctive mark of the Marist Order as the way they accepted the lay people.

RF: [00:32:29](#) When did you get out of Admissions?

TW: [00:32:32](#) I got out of it pretty quickly, I was in only four years. I was in Admissions from '62-'66, and then I took over as Dean of Students in 1966.

RF: [00:32:42](#) Who replaced you in Admissions?

TW: [00:32:43](#) Dave Flynn.

RF: [00:32:45](#) Had he worked under you?

TW: [00:32:46](#) He worked under me, he had played ball for me, and then when he graduated, I hired him because I took over, and he did, he took all the road work that Brother John had, he did the traveling, and I took the Long Island.

RF: [00:33:02](#) So even though you're head of Admissions, you still had a suitcase. [Laughter]

TW: [00:33:05](#) Oh yes, I still had plenty of schools [Laughter] and my wife was home with the children. We used to be in here very Saturday, and we'd interview because the basic principle was, you didn't get to talk to them on the road and you get them to visit and you get them to interview. If you just look at the statistics, you've increased your yield from, if you got them on campus, you pretty well had them. So, we always did the all-day Saturday.

RF: [00:33:32](#) It's interesting, that seems to be a watch word today. If you can get the kid to visit the Marist campus, you've got him.

TW: [00:33:40](#) Yes, there's no question. Again, going back to the athletics for a moment, one morning, I was working out, a young woman who later on I found out she was pretty well valedictorian of the class, I said, "How did you find Marist and where are you from?" I always ask them those questions. I said "Where you from?" and she said, "Oh, from Pennsylvania." I said, "How did you find out about the

college?” She said, “Stuff came in the mail, my parents looked at it and stuff, and we said, let’s visit.” And she said, “I came, they had the program I wanted. Look at the campus, look at the way they keep it,” she said, “A no-brainer. So, it was very simple, they have the program I wanted, and the campus, look at it, so that’s how I got here.”

RF: [00:34:15](#)

Yes.

TW: [00:34:16](#)

So no, I took over in '66 as the Dean of Students.

RF: [00:34:19](#)

Who did you replace?

TW: [00:34:21](#)

Paul Stokes, Brother Paul Stokes.

RF: [00:34:24](#)

Was he your boss when you were Athletic Director? No, he reported to Bill Murphy, or to Howie.

TW: [00:34:31](#)

Yes, I reported to Bill Murphy, but probably technically it did go through his office.

RF: [00:34:34](#)

Eventually.

TW: [00:34:35](#)

Because there was only, at that time, there was you up here, and there was just Brother Paul Stokes, and he was both Dean of Students and Academic Dean.

RF: [00:34:44](#)

Ah yes, but eventually Ed Cashin came in.

TW: [00:34:48](#)

Right, Ed Cashin came in. Paul Stokes went to Europe to the second Novitiate, and Mike Kelly came in for a semester. Then, when Paul came back, the college changed. The Champagnat Hall had opened, so the enrollment in the dormitories had literally doubled, and he was very effective because he knew every kid and he was real kind of stern disciplinarian type of person, but soft at heart, and he came back in '65 and maybe even his second semester and he said, “This is not for me anymore because I can’t manage all this.” So, he left and went to teach in Chicago, and Brother John O’ Shea took over as Academic Dean, and then subsequently, Eddie Cashin came in as Academic Vice President, and I’m trying to think now, Richard LaPietra replaced John O’Shea.

RF: [00:35:51](#)

Yes, that was probably him.

TW: [00:35:57](#)

Yes, that was it. So that was an interesting time to be thrust into this

with all the changes going on and Dean of Students, that was an interesting time.

RF: [00:36:07](#) Let's just pause a minute here to get going again.

TW: [00:36:10](#) What's interesting is Brian walking in the room. When I took over as Dean of Students, here he was teaching physics, and he was running the dormitories for us. [Laughter] It was interesting how lean we were in those days. The Brothers were still in the dorms, and we depended a great deal on the students. And then what occurred, when the whole faculty promotion policy started to evolve, it was a no-brainer to stay to work in the dorms because you weren't going to be rewarded for it really, it was going to be based on your academic performance, so we lost, literally all the Brothers with the exception of a few in the dorms. We had one per building I think, and the dorms were run by students at that time. Which I think again is another hallmark of a college at the time is that the students, and they will tell you to this day, is that the college made them make decisions. That they had to make decisions about things and they had to be accountable and so forth. Somebody else wasn't going to take care of it. If you talk to the older alumni, they will tell you how valuable that was to them, that they be put in that position.

RF: [00:37:23](#) Do you remember when the college went co-ed?

TW: [00:37:27](#) Yes, I remember that. It really, we took them in, again smartly, you introduced them into the night school, and you introduced them with a nun from Kingston. And I met her years later up in Benedictine Hospital, and she came in, and a couple of other women drifted in that way, and then the nuns from St. Francis came over and made a pitch for bringing a nursing program on board, and faculty said, "No, it's a baccalaureate in co-education." Because what we were really fighting at that time, the all-male institution, was also the fact that all the wives of the faculty, lay faculty, went to all-girl schools and they went to all-male schools, and they didn't want that tradition to be broken. So, subsequently, I can remember in the summertime, when everybody was away, it was brought before the board and the board voted it in. [Laughter] And when we get back, we're co-ed. In '68, we took the first women into the dorms, and it really went well. I guess the only problem was that a core of guys didn't want them either, they didn't want to go co-ed, they wanted to stay all-male. That was really the only problem, and I think there was a terrific group of girls, well, number one they had to be, they are going to come into an all-male environment, they had to be a pretty strong people, and there were several exceptional students,

and interestingly enough, one of them, I think it was Celeste Maneri twins.

**RF:** [00:38:57](#)

The Maneri twins.

**TW:** [00:37:58](#)

Yes, she's a principal out at St. Mary's High School in Manhasset in the grammar school.

**RF:** [00:39:02](#)

No kidding.

**TW:** [00:39:03](#)

Yes, and does a phenomenal job. That, I think it went fairly well.

**RF:** [00:39:11](#)

You mention Maneris, that's interesting. I think their father was a physician, and it was a bit of a surprise that he let both girls come through a very experimental situation, [Laughter] but it worked out very well.

**TW:** [00:39:27](#)

Yes, I look back and sometimes when I speak to alumni groups I, you know, everybody gambled on the college, and they gambled, the alumni gambled on coming here, you know, and someone like myself gambled coming here and so forth, but when you look back on it, and say what a wonderful result. So, you attracted people who were gamblers, probably. [Laughter] We were risk-takers in saying I'll do that. And but I really go back, they were a phenomenal class, the Maneris. They particularly stand out because they were really leaders, and they really rose to leadership in positions in the school elite. That went along, I think, quite well. There were difficult circumstances for them, too. I mean, it was definitely an all-male environment.

**RF:** [00:40:12](#)

Probably. We certainly had a lot of security. We had one part-time retired policeman. [Laughter]

**TW:** [00:40:18](#)

I remember you telling me that. I fought for that, I got him, and you said, "Yes, you know, a few years from now, we will be spending \$250,000 and it won't be any better." [Laughter] I think I recently spoke to Tony, and I forget what they pay now for security.

**RF:** [00:40:34](#)

Security and also for lighting on campus. [Laughter]

**TW:** [00:40:36](#)

And the vehicles I see and stuff. Yes, times change, it's a much different institution, much different world.

**RF:** [00:40:44](#)

Yes, it's very interesting. So, you from, now, how did you make the

transition from Dean of Students, which I consider the worst pressure job on campus, to over to Vice President for Advancement?

**TW:** [00:41:04](#)

Well, I guess the point was, I'd done it for ten years, and yes, I did from '66 to October '75, and my whole track record is I get bored. Now, I could be a consultant is good, because you always find different people, different issues, and it was a phenomenal time, that time because there was such change. It was the co-ed, we recruited the first minority students, the changes in the Catholic Church, we were moving from church-related to private co-ed, Vietnam War, student rights, so it went by very, very quickly. Going back into development, I guess I've basically always been a marketing person, when you come down to like the Admissions and so forth and coaching, you know it's all motivation and stuff like that. I thought I made it kind of easy, the difficult part was there wasn't really much money there, because there was no alumni to speak to, and we had a cadre of board members whose strategy was when I took the office over, I made like a, b, c, d list. The "A" people, we kept working, working and working. I can look back today and say, there's still a lot of money coming from that "A" list. That was Jack Gartland, it was the Dysons, it was the Margaret Mairs, and so on. The strategy was we have to stay close and work with them. Then, down the road, we can start counting on the alumni when they would come through. We were real fortunate that the McCann Foundation became a staunch ally to the college. Interestingly enough, Paul Stokes told a story about Jack, that, in the '50s, when Paul was developing the college, they formed an advisory council and Jack Gartland was on it. He said, "There's one thing I won't do is raise money." Subsequently, the foundation, the McCann Foundation, became his to direct. He's probably put, I'd say somewhere between ten and fifteen million in there since, and, you know, that's been a coincidence. It's been his commitment, I think. But, so what we did then, we initiated the first annual fund program. It was hard on the alumni because they were young, and I think, talking to Shaileen on this project, the library, they really are starting to get returns now with some of the alumni. I think this streak eventually, because those who came here in the '60s and '70s, who took that risk and they became very successful, they see the success of the college. I think there's a lot of money there that could be tapped.

**RF:** [00:43:56](#)

It's beginning to show, too.

**TW:** [00:43:57](#)

Yes, yes.

- RF: [00:44:01](#) That's why, surprisingly, the most grateful ones right now seem to be evening division people: Dick Cole, another fellow, I don't know his name.
- TW: [00:44:16](#) They'll probably give an endowment for science. Talking to [Brother] Sean the other day, they've come up with an interesting program: how to complete your college degree. [Laughter] I said, "Sean, back in the '60s," I said, "This little night school, there was probably several hundred people who were in IBM who had a year of college, a year of technical school," I said "We had three PhD's in physics, teaching 120 physics majors and one of them was a Nuclear Physicist." I said, "Brother Brian," I didn't say it to him this way, but that program was affected. [Laughter] They were really, they were just great, and they would come from IBM, that's how the growing got started and development got started.
- RF: [00:45:09](#) You mentioned this before. I just want to go back to the notion that the relationship between the lay faculty and the Brothers faculty. Do you think it's always been good?
- TW: [00:45:21](#) I talk to people about it over the years, because I've seen situations. Well, my daughter teaches in Manhattan College, and that's the Brothers' College. When I left here, I went down to Iona as a consultant for a year, and they're very good, their college, there's no question, and the Jesuits, it's their college, and you never felt that here. I even saw it, you know, when I went to high school. I never really talked with them at St. Mary's, they just accepted it here, and I just think it's a hallmark of this institution. I think it's the reason why this institution has become so good, is that there has been a great relationship of the religious and the lay. I think, also, I relate an awful lot to some of the weaknesses in the Catholic Church, is that they have not been able to do that. This institution, by accepting the lay person, became stronger and so on, and when the Brothers left, how they stayed with the institution, with the Order and so forth. I think it's a uniqueness, and I think it's something the Church should look at to say, "Look what you can do if you combine the talents of the religious and the lay person." I think it's a reason why the college has developed so well, why it's so highly regarded. It's a strength.
- RF: [00:46:51](#) You don't really know that much about the history of the Brothers, but that seems to be a hallmark of the Brothers themselves, a certain democratic approach to life.
- TW: [00:47:02](#) And there's a humility. I mean, when I first came here, all the

maintenance was done by the Scholastics on a Saturday afternoon when they had finished classes. There was that model: to work and to pray. I think that is significant and they carried it out. I mean, I saw it as a student in high school. They were just phenomenal. When you came here, you saw it. There was never a wall, and your talents were respected as much as theirs; you could make decisions. I think it's something distinctive about the Marist Brothers and

- RF:** [00:47:50](#) Well, we certainly were able to hire very competent people, you mention yourself, Ron Petro, Howie Goldman. Howie Goldman graduated from Bronx High School of Science, that sort of set him up for the faculty.
- TW:** [00:48:06](#) When you look back, see you also, you were fortunate in those days is that you were hiring only so many a year, so you were really able to screen out properly. Also, too, a lot of us who came, there was a commitment to that, too. As lay people, we were quasi-religious in a way. We worked in a Catholic institution, and there's also a sense of that mission that you were fulfilling. Otherwise, it didn't make sense to really work at a Catholic school. And so, I realized they used to tell faculty when they talked about salaries, if you want more money, go work for Dutchess, but you're not going to like it as much. They pay you, but you're not going to get the courses that you want to teach and so on. You know, in those days we were part of the mission.
- RF:** [00:48:53](#) Yes.
- TW:** [00:48:53](#) Again, that acceptance that you were part of the mission. And I don't know what it's like today, I don't know if people who come in to Marist think that way today. I presume they do because there's something still here that you can see and feel when you're on campus. I just look at a person like Tim Murray, he's probably the one I have the closest contact with, and you see the effort he puts in to doing what he does and the commitment adds to it. You get the sense from him this is his college. It's not a place where he works.
- RF:** [00:49:25](#) Yes.
- TW:** [00:49:29](#) They are still attracting people of good quality.
- RF:** [00:49:31](#) From the point of view of the incoming students, a great number of them are Roman Catholics, so, in some sense, the college is considered a Catholic college regardless of the fact it's not owned by the Brothers or by the church.

- TW:** [00:49:52](#) Yes, and I think again that's a kind of tradition here in America, you look at a lot of very good schools, they came out of those roots, and then they're still a vestige of those roots. Yeah, it's interesting you point out about, still Catholic. I can remember when we were going through the transition, to a private institution, I used to meet with the trustees, and I remember meeting Art Brook and showing him the admissions statistics and stuff like this, and he says we're not Catholic, "You guys better be very careful how quickly you move away from that Catholic image," he said, "Look where your students come from." [Laughter] You know old Arthur, businessman, you better be very careful about that. [Laughter]
- RF:** [00:50:30](#) There was no real attempt to move away from that.
- TW:** [00:50:32](#) No.
- RF:** [00:50:33](#) But, the other thing, when you look at places like St. John's, and you talk about Manhattan [College], the Catholic higher education has to service anybody. There are more, I guess, Jewish lawyers and Jewish pharmacists from St. John's than there are Catholics, so it's part of a mission to educate anybody.
- TW:** [00:50:55](#) Yes, and my aunt's cousin, Rita Coratty, is married to Bob Coratty, a very successful lawyer in New York and very staunch Catholic, a very big part of that. And he speaks that often, that Americans really don't understand the contributions Catholics have made to education through their system of education, elementary, high school, and college. The impact that they've had on the country. I remember going back to grammar school, we taught it was God and country, and how many times were we told you're blessed because you live in America with all its great natural resources? You look around the world today, and you say, "Holy Christmas, look at this, you know, how fortunate we are and look at the rest of the world." You know, the Catholics have done a phenomenal job.
- RF:** [00:51:46](#) Okay, well I'd like to tap it off, is there anything you want to say that you can think of now, or should you wait until the next interview?
- TW:** [00:51:54](#) No, I think that it was just a fabulous experience, and it was great to see it continue to be. It's going to be interesting to see, hopefully in the next 20, 30 years, if I can live that long, I'd be pretty old, to really see where it is then. I guess the question is where does it go from here? Can it become a university? Should it become a university? I don't know. The campus now, it's beautiful, the facilities are excellent, and they're well-maintained. Again I think

the main, the attraction to the college is the curriculum that was set back then. In the late, in the '70s, the decision was made, relate the liberal arts and the work group and that's a real attraction to students and parents.

**RF:** [00:52:45](#)

Yes.

**TW:** [00:52:46](#)

That's been carried out well. So, it's been a good run.

**RF:** [00:52:51](#)

Okay, well I want to thank you very much.

**TW:** [00:52:53](#)

You're welcome, nice seeing you.