

**JoAnn Wohlfahrt**

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Michael Orsini

For the Marist Archives and Special Collections

**JoAnn Wohlfahrt**

**Transcript** – JoAnn Wohlfahrt

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**Summary:** In this interview, JoAnn Wohlfahrt discusses her long standing connection to Marist College, particularly her time working in the College's Development and Alumni office. During the conversation, Wohlfahrt discusses the changing physical landscape of Marist and how the student body and workplace has changed over the years. Wohlfahrt also discusses the relationship between Marist and the surrounding towns and cities.

## **JoAnn Wohlfahrt**

(00:01) **Gus Nolan:** Today is Monday, the 22nd day in October, and we have the great opportunity to interview one of the first workers in the Development and Alumni Office, Joanne. JoAnn there's about four or five parts to this: before Marist, Marist, after Marist, and then your ideas about the future, the crystal ball. Where are we going? Okay. So, in a little overview, tell us about the beginning. Where did you grow up, and grade school and high school, et cetera?

(00:50) **JoAnn Wohlfahrt:** I grew up, I'm a third generation native of Hyde Park, New York. And my grandfather, Clay, actually on my father's side, that was my maiden name, was actually a playmate of FDRs. Hyde Park was a very, very small place back then and he didn't have anybody to play with, so they recruited youngsters from the village, and one was my grandfather.

(01:16) **GN:** Really?

(01:17) **JW:** Yes.

(01:17) **GN:** So, he actually knew him then?

(01:20) **JW:** Oh, yeah. They knew him well, and he became a gardener, as he got older, on the estate.

(01:25) **GN:** Okay. Are there other members in your family? Do you have brothers and sisters?

(01:31) **JW:** Yes, I have one brother, a younger brother. He is five years younger. My brother, David Keith Clay.

(01:37) **GN:** Okay, and the schools? You went to Hyde Park School?

(01:41) **JW:** I went to Hyde Park Schools until I was about in the fourth grade and for family reasons, my brother and I moved in with my grandmother for a couple of years, and then I went to Poughkeepsie schools and graduated from Poughkeepsie High School.

(01:56) **GN:** Okay. Alright. Roughly, in what year, what was going on in the world? Was World War II over? We're between the wars? Vietnam had not started yet.

(02:09) **JW:** Oh no. No, no. You know, I'll go to high school because I don't remember much before that going on in the world when you're so young. But, you know, when we were in high school, it was what I call the golden years. Other than, you know, there was the Cold War. Eisenhower was in the White House, and we were so fortunate because we didn't have to think of any skirmishes or anything like that when we were in high school. My class, the class of '60 was the first freshman class to walk into the, then new, Forbes Street High School.

(02:52) **GN:** I see.

(02:53) **JW:** And so, in 2020, we'll celebrate our 60th reunion.

(02:58) **GN:** Really?

(02:58) **JW:** From Poughkeepsie High School.

(03:00) **GN:** Very good. Okay. Moving on, after high school, did you work during the summers?

(03:07) **JW:** No, not really. You know, I got a job after high school in the Poughkeepsie Savings Bank and that's where I met my husband.

(03:18) **GN:** Oh, okay. Poughkeepsie Savings Bank. That's in the middle of the city of Poughkeepsie?

(03:26) **JW:** Yeah, it was a flourishing bank for so many years.

(03:29) **GN:** Okay. When did you first hear of Marist? Was it a known place, or was it just the Brothers were here in those days?

(03:42) **JW:** Well, Marist, it was a place you went by and it was familiar and it was just like going past Roosevelt's. I mean, when you lived here, it was just a place and it wasn't very big back then.

(03:57) **GN:** No.

(03:57) **JW:** So anyway, if we can go about twenty years when my oldest daughter was ready to go to college, I thought, well, I can help out. I'll get a job. But I didn't know where to get a job. I had secretarial experience and stuff. So my mother worked at Western Publishing, and it was there that she met Jack Dougherty before he came to Marist.

(04:26) **GN:** I see.

(04:26) **JW:** And so, she said to me--. I said, "I was kind of thinking of applying at Marist, but I don't know much about working at a college. She said, "well, if you wanna know about Marist, you have to go talk to Jack Dougherty." And so I did. I walked into St. Peters, and Jack had recently retired, but was still part-time. Tom Wade was the

Director of Development at the time.

(04:51) **GN:** I see.

(04:52) **JW:** And anyway, I went into Jack's office and we hit it off right away. We knew a lot of the same people, and well, you remember Jack?

(05:02) **GN:** Oh, yes, yes, yes.

(05:03) **JW:** He was something else. I'm telling you. He could relieve money from people so easily that they didn't know what was happening. But anyway, it was after that that I started watching the ads in the paper. And there was one, finally, for the Development Office, and I said, "well, what have I got to lose?" So I applied and Ron Zurawik, class of '72 [Zurawik is class of '70], hired me, but I ended up initially working for Tom Wade, and then when Tom left, John Leahy came on board, and then I started working for Ron Zurawik. He was one of my first bosses.

(05:40) **GN:** Was there interviews or was there just--?

(05:42) **JW:** Oh yes, I was interviewed. Oh, certainly I was interviewed.

(05:45) **GN:** There was a process by which you--.

(05:45) **JW:** Oh, absolutely. But the thing that I think was in my favor, I knew how to take shorthand, and it came in handy a few times. It really did.

(05:55) **GN:** Okay. Now in the process at Marist, where did you--? Where was your office? What did you do?

(06:07) **JW:** Okay. It was located in St. Peter's.

(06:11) **GN:** Was it in the extension where Nilus [Donnelly] had his office originally? Or was that taken down by that time?

(06:17) **JW:** No, at St. Peter's, the gatehouse. The little gatehouse, that's where the development office was. And it's still there. It's still there.

(06:28) **GN:** Well, the gatehouse is really Kieran.

(06:34) **JW:** Maybe I'm misspeaking. I thought it was called the gatehouse too. But anyway, it was St. Peter's building.

(06:39) **GN:** Oh, it was really St. Peter's.

(06:40) **JW:** St. Peter's building. And right across there was a road and the lawn where the chapel is.

(06:48) **GN:** Yeah, the road up to the chapel.

(06:49) **JW:** Yeah. Right by road though there was a cutout for two cars to be parked, and then Jack had one of those spaces.

(06:57) **GN:** Oh, yeah. I see. Yeah. Don't dare go there. [Laughs]

(07:00) **JW:** Yeah. And I remember that Dr. Foy, you know, Dennis, he was the president, but he was looking into computerizing the College and helping with that project. So, he would come over and, just a lovely man, really. And I realized early on what a wonderful memory that he had. Somebody told me that he had a photographic

memory. I don't know about that. But anyway, there was a woman who was the office manager, and he came in and he was talking with her, and he said, "you have children?" And she said, "yeah, they're Mary, John and Susie." or whatever. And it was quite a while later, he came in again and he said, "how are Mary, John and Susie?" That he would remember that, you know. So that's one of the early memories that I have.

(07:55) **GN:** You mentioned earlier when there was only the Gregory and Benoit houses. North of the campus.

(08:02) **JW:** And Dan Kirk's residence. That was it.

(08:06) **GN:** Dan Kirk's house had gone up at around that time too.

(08:08) **JW:** Yeah. They were the only buildings north of Waterworks Road.

(08:11) **GN:** And was the Lowell Thomas under construction yet?

(08:16) **JW:** Well, no, no. That evolved after I started.

(08:22) **GN:** Had the fire went down the old Hermitage?

(08:27) **JW:** I don't remember that being here, so it must have. It must have.

(08:31) **GN:** Yeah. I have photos of it, but I don't know the years.

(08:35) **JW:** Yeah, because I started on January 21st, 1980 and Dennis had been inaugurated in '79. I mean, the newest building was McCann! That's where they had the inauguration.



(08:47) **GN:** I see. Okay. Alright. I needed that year. Dennis had just come on board. And Linus had left. And now there was this development of the buildings going up.

(09:03) **JW:** Exactly. See, Lowell Thomas had died after he gave his last major address here.

(09:10) **GN:** He gave the talk in May, and he died in August.

(09:12) **JW:** It was like “oh my God.” Do you want me to tell you about the old gym and what happened with that? [Gus affirms] Well, Bob Norman and John Lahey, went to Lowell Thomas Jr and they wanted to make the old gym into a communication center, and they wanted to know if they could put the name Lowell Thomas on it. And Lowell Thomas Jr. said, “well, you can use my father's name, but not on an old building.”

(09:46) **GN:** That began to move.

(09:47) **JW:** That's why. And that was the first building after Dennis was president.

(09:53) **GN:** Oh, as you come on the campus now, it must strike you as a magical world, huh?

(10:03) **JW:** Gus, I'm telling you! Because we worked in Fontaine, before I retired, that's where I retired from. And to see those four buildings where Gartland Commons was and that little bank building, it boggles my mind to think they could fit all that there! You know? But they're beautiful. They're beautiful.

(10:24) **GN:** I mean, the most recent four dormitories that have gone up now, the other dormitories were already in because Linus built Sheahan and Leo and Champagnat [Hall], so they were in place.

(10:37) **JW:** Oh God yes.

(10:38) **GN:** And it's funny, at the dedication of the McCann Center-- . Now one of the members of the class of '68 gave a little talk on Saturday night. It was the reunion, the 50-year reunion of the class of '68. And he read this little talk, where he got it I don't know. But Linus' voice says, "we are dedicating this building, and it will be the last building that Marist College puts up." Well, I'm here, you know, because he spent the budget [Laughter] Of course, we got a great donation from the McCann Foundation. But you always had to put something of yourself into those things. So, he was saying that and now you look at what has happened since. You can just go around here. You have Lowell Thomas. You have Dyson. You have Fontaine. And then you have, the, what's her name? The Computer Arts Center building now. It was named after-- . She was chairman of the board at the time.

(11:55) **JW:** I can't think of it.

(11:55) **GN:** [Laughs] That's fine! And then you go to the dormitories. The Foy Dormitories. The Gartland Commons. And then we go north across Route 9, a whole other world, you know?

(12:11) **JW:** Whoever thought that we would go east? And what I did years ago, before anything was ever done--there were houses across, the Skinner's was there, Western was there--and I took my video camera and I went along Marist and just photographed everything. And when I look at it now, I go "oh my God, I forgot this. I forgot that."

(12:38) **GN:** Do you still have that film?

(12:38) **JW:** I do.

(12:40) **GN:** We have to have copies made and put here, maybe in the archives. That's really something.

(12:47) **JW:** Yeah. I wonder if anybody else thought to do that.

(12:51) **GN:** I don't know if anybody asked then, but this summer, two students that I've been working with here had me do the other thing. They got a cart, a golf cart, and they got their camera and they had me go with them and talk about St. Peter's, the Kieran Gatehouse the library, and before the library to Fontaine. And then we went around down to the McCann Center. I mean, it's probably gonna be their project for senior year or something, you know? Because when I saw it, I couldn't believe the old guy that was given the account, you know? That was me! [Laughter]

(13:33) **JW:** Well, I have to tell you when I was walking along the College there, along Route 9 on the college side, I saw the remnants of something. I remember Jack telling me this story that he went up to Dr. Foy's office, of course he called him Linus, and he sat down and he said, "Linus, what does a wall mean to you?" And Dr. Foy thought, and he said, "well, I guess it means keep out." And he said, "I think we need to tear down the wall that's around the campus." He said, Dr. Foy almost had a heart attack: "Jack, what are you talking about? The brothers built that wall. We can't tear that down." But they did. And Jack was right because it does mean keep out and they tore the wall down. And I saw the remnants of it, Gus! The remnants are still there.

(14:35) **GN:** Well, not too long after, Nilus came to Linus, and said, "it's beginning to disintegrate."

(14:45) **JW:** Oh, really?

(14:45) **GN:** "What do you think we should do?" And Linus said, "take it down." So he

had been thinking about that, I guess.

(14:53) **JW:** Oh, yeah. Yeah. Jack may have planted the seed in his head. I don't know.

(14:56) **GN:** Yeah. Right. So that's the story of the wall. And now there's a fence around it, you know?

(15:02) **JW:** Yes, yes. An estate fence.

(15:04) **GN:** But you can see through it, you can see the activity going on.

(15:06) **JW:** Yes. Oh, yes.

(15:07) **GN:** Okay. The other parts now. Some people that you remember, do you remember Dan Kirk?

(15:16) **JW:** Oh yes, I do. But he died in--?

(15:21) **GN:** '84.

(15:22) **JW:** Maybe. So, I was here for four years. But he would come in the office to visit Vicki () and that's how I got to meet and know what a lovely man he was. It was so sad.

(15:36) **GN:** Do you remember George Sommer?

(15:38) **JW:** Oh yes! [Laughter]

(15:39) **GN:** A different kind of person. [Laughter] Oh, let me see. Who else? Milton Teichman?

(15:48) **JW:** Oh yes. Yeah, Dr. Teichman was a lovely man. But I got to know people because when we moved into Adrian and we were in the big room, Jack's desk was in the back corner, and he was like a magnet. Everybody came in. Larry came in, you came in, Jeff came in. Everybody came in to talk to Jack. And all you could hear was laughter. And so that's how I met a lot of people at Marist.

(16:23) **GN:** Well, you're right in the middle of the campus.

(16:25) **JW:** We were.

(16:25) **GN:** You had Donnelly across the way and you had Fontaine and the Greystone building.

(16:32) **JW:** And I have pictures of that too. I took pictures of that. You know, before they tore it down, the first Fontaine. When we had to move to Fontaine and we were so far removed from the middle of campus, it just was never the same. We loved being in Adrian, but the office was getting so big. We had to have a bigger space.

(16:57) **GN:** Yeah. How would you describe Jack's position? Was he alumni or was it fundraising? Or was it PR? All three?

(17:07) **JW:** It was fundraising and PR.

(17:09) **GN:** Fundraising and PR.

(17:10) **JW:** Fundraising and PR. I mean, if he called you up and said, "Gus, how about I take you to the diner for lunch?" If you didn't know that you were gonna be poor after that lunch, then you didn't know anything. I would prepare a card for him with the name of the person and like a thousand dollars and ninety-two percent of the time he would

come back and hand it to me and I would process it. But there were people that--. And he would say, "he was crying, his tears were flowing out of his shoes because he said he was poor." [Laughter] Jack knew he wasn't poor. But anyway, he was very good at getting money from people. He really was. That was his charm.

(18:01) **GN:** Yeah right. How about Rich Rancourt? Do you remember him?

(18:06) **JW:** Oh yes! [Laughter] Good lord. Loved him. He called me once, Gus. Because Claire and I were almost like his mother and he was up in the penthouse and he said, "JoAnn, I bought this chicken and I didn't put it in the freezer and I've had it for a few days and I'm really not sure if I should cook it." [Laughs] And I said, "brother, do you have two weeks to be sick?"

(18:40) **GN:** [Laughs] Uh huh?

(18:40) **JW:** He said, "I have to throw it out, don't I?" And I said, "yes."

(18:44) **GN:** Yeah. Well, he survived on his own for as long as he did. You know?

(18:51) **JW:** He did, he did. Yeah.

(18:51) **GN:** Yeah. What do you know about Marist, from the talk out there, of the off campus activities, the students involved? What would you say is the feeling of the community?

(19:10) **JW:** The feeling of the community, especially for people who have lived in this area all their lives, it just boggles the mind to see what has happened at Marist. Especially now that they've gone east and there's talking of a medical school. It's just impressive, is the word I would use. They're just so impressed with it. And I just can't

believe that this little college that they used to go past has just grown and grown and grown.

(19:42) **GN:** Have you heard of the Marist Poll?

(19:44) **JW:** Oh, well, the Marist Poll, The Marist Institute, was in Adrian. They occupied the front space in Adrian when we were there.

(19:53) **GN:** You know Lee Miringoff?

(19:56) **JW:** And Barbara [Carvalho]. Yeah. I knew Barbara when she was in Regina Coeli. She was in the school in Regina Coeli where my children went. And then I got to be, and still am, good friends with Joan Neese, who was their secretary years ago.

(20:09) **GN:** Very good. Okay. So, you got a good background of these various people, [Laughs] and you knew them, and you knew them pretty well. Changing the page here, what do you think the current needs of Marist are? What does Marist need? Is it a rich college? I mean, are we too uppity-up?

(20:41) **JW:** You know something, I've been gone since '05, so I'm not sure I'd be the right one to say, you know? But, Marist has, I know, an excellent reputation from talking with the alumni years ago because I was in touch with so many people.

(21:01) **GN:** Yeah. Okay.

(21:02) **JW:** And that was the best part of my job, the people part.

(21:06) **GN:** Yeah. That's the feeling I have. It's that Marist kids draw Marist kids. I mean, the same spirit kind of pervades the operation here, you know?

(21:16) **JW:** And based on the caliber of students that not only worked for me, whom I know well, but, other people in the office had students and I'm telling you, they were of the highest caliber. They were wonderful, wonderful people. And some I kept in touch with for a number of years.

(21:42) **GN:** Okay. One of the reasons I ask about things changing is because when I first came here, and most of my classmates in the following early years as well as when I first taught here, many of the students were the first time the family had sent somebody to college. So they were the beginnings and now that's not quite the same, you know? And I think we have a different mindset. I think the financial--. Father LaMorte talks about when he first came here, maybe two seniors had cars and they looked like they had been hit by a train. [Laughter]

(22:27) **GN:** Now he can't afford the cars that the kids are driving.

(22:33) **JW:** I know I've seen them.

(22:34) **GN:** The tide has come in and all the boats have gone up and it's a much better, higher thing. But it's expensive and so the question is, is it worth the investment? And that means, the time you have to stay here, you have to go to these classes, you can't stay in the dormitory. So you have to pass, you have to pay a lot of money. After four years it's like \$200,000 now. And so, is it worth it? That's kind of the question, you know? So how would you respond?

(23:11) **JW:** I would respond by saying that, I think today, when a child graduates from high school, it's expected that they should go to college. Not all of them should. There are so many things that people can do, you know? Not everybody has to go to college. But that's what the mindset is now. So you get some of these kids and they just can't cut it. Because they either shouldn't go or didn't want to go and their parents thought they



should and whatever. But, yeah.

(23:56) **GN:** Well, we do need other people. We need auto-mechanics and bricklayers and carpenters.

(24:00) **JW:** Exactly. Exactly. And really, if you wanted to get your shoes repaired, where would you go around here? Where would you go? They don't do that anymore. They just get new shoes.

(24:12) **GN:** Yeah. Alright.

(24:13) **JW:** Years ago you went to a shoe repair and there were a number around. Not anymore.

(24:19) **GN:** Yeah. You mentioned, what was the name of the place across the street? There was a little bar there.

(24:27) **JW:** Skinner's.

(24:28) **GN:** Oh, Skinner's, yes.

(24:28) **JW:** It was McManus'.

(24:30) **GN:** Oh, before.

(24:31) **JW:** Oh, yeah. And I remember Ron and Brian Maloney and Doc and everybody, talking about being over at Skinner's or McManus'. That's where they hung out. That was the place. That was the place.

(24:46) **GN:** There used to be drinking on campus and then they passed this law. You had to be twenty-one, you know? And so that stopped.

(24:55) **JW:** Well, I think, what was it, Founder's Day? Founder's Day? Is that--?

(25:03) **GN:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. No, River Day!

(25:05) **JW:** River Day! Ron Zurawik told me how it happened. You would be in the dorm and somebody would say, "oh, it's a nice day" and say "River Day!" And everybody would go down. Of course, it'd be a lot of drinking. Eventually, I think a student fell someplace on River Day and he survived but that's when the College said, "we're going to sanction this. We're going to keep control of River Day." So they still had it but it was much safer.

(25:45) **GN:** Oh yeah. Yeah. Oh, Dennis put his hand in.

(25:49) **JW:** Oh yes. Oh, and it was right to do that.

(25:50) **GN:** Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Now of course, it's entirely different. You should see the campus around ten o'clock at night. They have taxis lined up, so they take them out too and they're gonna have their own little fun anyway. Make it as safe as possible.

(26:09) **JW:** Exactly. Exactly.

(26:11) **GN:** And hope that nobody gets hurt.

(26:14) **JW:** Exactly. And, you know Gus, that's going to be true of every college. It's going to be true of every college today.

(26:19) **GN:** So, let me see, one other thing. There has been a development also in the way things are done in the offices. Were computers in place when you were here?

(26:39) **JW:** Oh, no, I ran the entire Marist Fund Campaign, the letters, out of a memory typewriter.

(26:48) **GN:** Were they individually typed?

(26:50) **JW:** Yes. One by one.

(26:51) **GN:** One by one. And not Xeroxed or anything like that?

(26:57) **JW:** No. No.

(26:58) **GN:** Dear friend or Dear--?

(27:00) **JW:** Richard (), God love him. He came into my office and he sat and he took it very seriously when he was gonna have a reunion. So we would do the letters for him, and it was down to the very last part of the paper, and he had to get every single word in. And it came to the very, very end. I remember. And I so enjoyed working with them to do stuff like that for their reunion because they so look forward to it. And they wanted as many people to come back as possible. You know, for their class.

(27:34) **GN:** Let me say this, with the coming of the medical school, and now the physical therapy is in place here, I'm wondering how much of an impression, this is gonna make in terms of the staff that comes here now. It seems it has gone through three different stages, the first years we were fighting to survive. The next phase we were fighting Dennis because he had his way and the faculty wanted to have its way and the two clashed on different issues over the time. Now it seems as though a lot of

people come here as a kind of a stepping stone, you know? Faculty don't last as long.

(28:36) **JW:** No kidding. I didn't know that.

(28:37) **GN:** Yeah. Yeah. It's a prestigious kind of: "I taught at Marist." And you can go higher, you know? So there's that.

(28:48) **JW:** Well when I was here, people retired. I mean, they just stayed and retired.

(28:53) **GN:** Oh, we had, we had the twenty year certificate! But, that's not today.

(29:04) **JW:** It's a different world.

(29:05) **GN:** Part of it, do you remember Donnelly and the offices around Donnelly?

(29:10) **JW:** Oh, certainly.

(29:10) **GN:** Yeah. See, there was a certain unity and bond in that.

(29:13) **JW:** Yeah. Everything was in Donnelly. I mean, we were in Adrian and the copy center, the business office, and so many different places. In the winter, I didn't even bother to put a coat on, so over I went. Everything was in Donnelly.

(29:28) **GN:** With the breakout now of the science building over there. And the industrial and math people over here and the English people over here. Even the faculty don't know each other the same way.

(29:42) **JW:** Yeah. Well, it's gotten so big. Years ago, you just knew everybody because it was smaller. And, now it's, I don't know, has it gotten impersonal because it's so big?

(29:57) **GN:** Right. I've talked to one guy, his name is Archie. He runs the Xerox room, the digital press.

(30:07) **JW:** Oh, I know Archie.

(30:08) **GN:** You know Archie? Yeah. Alright.

(30:09) **JW:** And I understand it's downstairs in Donnelly now.

(30:13) **GN:** Yeah, right right. Well, he came here about a month ago, and I interviewed Archie, and I said, "what do you think we need?" He says, "it's really a shame that we don't have more interaction. That we don't have a commonplace where people would come and meet. Now they park their car next to each other, and they take off in different ways." And he said he was hoping that there could be some kind of sponsoring, like the English Department would sponsor coffee and donuts to gather both staff and faculty together and administrators. And then the next week, the athletic department could do it. Or not next week, but next month, ten months of the year you had an opportunity. So his idea of intermingling was really part of it. You know? I'm doing all the talking, but--.

[Laughter]

(31:21) **JW:** Well, you know, I think the other thing is: progress is a double-edged sword.

(31:27) **GN:** Oh, right.

(31:28) **JW:** Because you have progress and you have what Marist has become now, and across the street in the science building, we wouldn't have known anybody in that building. You know?

(31:39) **GN:** Right. Even now, I mean, there's a recreational center, in one of the new

dormitories over there.

(31:48) **JW:** Oh, really?

(31:49) **GN:** Yeah, treadmills and all that stuff you see. There is also the gym over there, so even the students are not necessarily in the same place, you know?

(31:59) **JW:** Yeah. And it's amazing what they're doing with McCann. I took my granddaughter to a volleyball game. She's only twelve but my daughter wanted her to see it on a division one level so we went to a game. I saw Deb DiCaprio and I said, "Deb, what are they doing with this building? Are they gonna go south and west or something?" And she said, "no, they're going up!" [Laughter]

(32:25) **GN:** Oh.

(32:25) **JW:** So I don't know if that means there's gonna be three levels instead of two, but, it's just that when I came, that was new. It was brand spanking new and to think of what they're doing now.

(32:38) **GN:** But that was twenty-five years ago.

(32:40) **JW:** It was. Well, it was even longer than that, 1980.

(32:43) **GN:** They were saying that next summer they're going to redo the Dyson building.

(32:51) **JW:** Really? Really? Well, that's been there a long time. That's been there a long time. I have pictures in there of the groundbreaking with Jeff Chance and he was here a long time ago.

(33:04) **GN:** Yeah. But this is the thing about changing things. And then they're not sure where the medical building will be, you know?

(33:14) **JW:** Yeah. I know. *Where?* People through the years have asked me, because I worked at Marist, “well, why don't they go--? The state hospital has got all this?” I said, “I don't know!” But that's a little further down. I didn't think they'd ever want to do that, and obviously they haven't.

(33:36) **GN:** Do you have much contact with Marist now? Do you see Claire occasionally?

(33:39) **JW:** Oh, I absolutely see Claire occasionally and I still go to the games, since 1980. Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. I talk to Shea occasionally and once in a while I run into Brian Maloney.

(33:58) **GN:** What was the glue that kept you here over those years?

(34:02) **JW:** It was the people.

(34:03) **GN:** Who were the people?

(34:03) **JW:** There was no question about it. It was the people that I worked with and it was the alums that I had contact with. I'll give you a short story that happened. Jim Norman was my boss and it was the culmination of homecoming weekend. We were having brunch on a Sunday over in Champagnat someplace. Anyway, we're sitting around this table and it was a group of alums who were from the seventies, the early seventies and they got to talking about their yearbook. So there was this, that, and the other thing about the yearbook. And one man piped up and he said, I can't remember if there was a flood or a fire, but his yearbook was destroyed. And he just felt so badly.

And of course he couldn't just order one. So I looked at him and I said to him, "I have good news and bad news for you." And he was taken aback. And he said, "well, what's the good news?" And I said, "I have a copy of your yearbook for you." He said, "well, what's the bad news?" I said, "the bad news is that it's in a box and it's so heavy I can't pull it out. So you have to come over to my office with me and get it!" [Laughter]. And when I handed that yearbook to him it was like I was handing him gold. To think that he had a copy because we had a small inventory. I'm not saying that we had sixteen copies of it, but as long as we have got one, then we wouldn't give that one away. We'd have to keep that. But if I had more than one and the inventory was in my head and I knew I had it, then we went over to Adrian, went in, took it out, and I made that man so happy that day. [Laughs]

(35:54) **GN:** I'm glad you said that because I thought it was the money that we were giving you! [Laughs]

(35:59) **JW:** Oh that didn't hurt! And the medical benefits were wonderful, but it was just the best place to work. *I loved my job.*

(36:10) **GN:** Oh, wonderful.

(36:10) **JW:** I loved it. It was the people. It was the people.

(36:15) **GN:** I really don't have anything more to ask about, but you have kind of hit the nail on the head with that people thing. There's a course at Harvard now that talks about "what is happiness?". And the question is raised, if you had a job and you were going to get twenty-five percent more, but you had to give like two hours more for work or there's gonna be a case where you're going to get more time off, but less money, which would you take? And they're saying that people who would take more time off would be the happier people compared to the people who would try to get more money, because



research shows that there is no doctor who will say he's ever seen somebody on their deathbed who wished they had made more money or had spent more time in the office. You know? But to have more time with the people and their family, though? That would kind of be it.

(37:23) **JW:** Oh yeah. And I have a wonderful family.

(37:28) **GN:** Alright, JoAnn, thank you very much. It was nice talking to you.

(37:33) **JW:** Thank you, Gus. I love talking about Marist.

(37:35) **GN:** We're going to have this transcribed. Let me just give you an example of--. Bob Lynch did this for me ten years ago and I have him coming in for a recap because a lot has happened in ten years.

(37:55) **JW:** Absolutely. Absolutely.

(37:57) **GN:** And I want to hear what he has to say.

(37:58) **JW:** You know, Bob Norman isn't here to interview, but Jim would be another resource.

(38:05) **GN:** Oh absolutely. Yeah.

(38:06) **JW:** Absolutely. Yeah.

(38:08) **GN:** Okay, thank you very much!

**End of Interview**