

DORIS PERRY WITH ANNE VOSS AND DICK MATTHEWS, ORAL HISTORY

MATTHEWS: Hello, welcome to another episode if we may call it that in the library's ongoing living history series which is, consists of I should say, interviews with former members of the Trenton State College community. My name is Dick Matthews and I am a member of the library staff currently and it is my great pleasure today to be present here and have with me here two ladies who have been involved with the College for over fifty years. First of all may I introduce Anne Voss who is a member of the class of 1937 and who lives just across the lake from the College so she can run in every couple of weeks and check up on us. And it is going to be Anne's and my pleasant duty to talk to a wonderful lady named Doris Perry who came to the college and joined the library staff I believe about 1934 and Doris spent thirty-five years here I believe and retired in the summer of 1969 and lived here in this area for a number of years on Parkway Avenue and then Doris I believe you recently moved across the river to Pennsylvania where you are now in Bensalem. Joyce Brodowski of our library staff, our associate director, came around and called for Doris this morning and whisked her up here on a beautiful day to the campus and brought her here to the TV studio where she is with us and so from now on we are hoping to find out more interesting well, tidbits and well I don't know history about the college as seen from the point of view of a wonderful person who meant so much to the library. Why don't I start by inviting Doris to tell us a little bit about what your life was like Doris before you came here, how you happened to connect with Trenton State, I think that's always a good question.

PERRY: Well I was a graduate of Columbia library school the year previous to this.

MATTHEWS: Well did you grow up in New York State? I had that impression.

PERRY: New York State.

MATTHEWS: New York State and you went to Genes-- did you go to a state college there?

PERRY: I went to Geneseo.

MATTHEWS: Geneseo. Well fine and then you went there to Columbia, now I've been to Columbia, Anne are you a Columbia graduate?

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Hey, here we are, we're Columbia lions here down in Trenton State lion territory.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: So you were in the library school, and I guess we all were at different times though I imagine.

VOSS: I would think so.

MATTHEWS: Yeah. So were you through Columbia when you looked around for a job here?

PERRY: Yes, I was through and I came to see the president of the college in the old building in on...

VOSS: Clinton Street.

PERRY: ...Clinton Avenue.

MATTHEWS: That's right yes, yes, yes.

PERRY: For the first time.

MATTHEWS: Whose idea was it for you to venture down here to apply for a job? Did you know somebody down here already?

PERRY: No, I think it was through Columbia perhaps.

MATTHEWS: Now, was Roscoe West president? He was president then, wasn't he? He just started a couple of years before you I believe about 1930.

PERRY: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Yes, I think he was the first person, the first chief executive officer of Trenton State, ladies, to be called president. His predecessors were known as principals. Is that right? Remember that? That would be the case.

PERRY: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Well anyway, so Columbia, through the good offices of Columbia perhaps you came down here and joined the library staff, is that right?

PERRY: Yes, there were very few people at that time but one of the people that I liked the most and enjoyed knowing as much as anyone is Janet Heath who was in the library.

MATTHEWS: Yes, yes. You bet. Janet was here and came about the same time you did and now the librarian here at the time as a lady named Lily Dodgen from the south, from Georgia. Now folks, we all want to hear about Lily because remember I never had the pleasure of meeting her, she's still living do you know?

PERRY: I think so.

VOSS: Oh, I don't think so. She was of the generation that lived a long time; Mable Bray I guess lived to be a hundred. I first saw Lily as a student and I thought she must be about a hundred then.

MATTHEWS: Thanks. That's what we look like to students?

VOSS: Well, I did, I came here as a student and I had to go down to the old school to pick up textbooks and some library books because half of the library was still down there.

MATTHEWS: Yeah.

VOSS: And twice a week we got on the bus, all the freshman who were out here in the new school, new buildings, we'd go downtown and we'd go into the library. It was, well it was probably one of the ugliest old buildings I ever was in and of course they were letting it go at that point because they were going to abandon it.

MATTHEWS: Tell me, Anne, was the building, I'm not even sure and I've been here so long, which side of Clinton Avenue was the college on? I'm not sure was it on the side where the Shriners are now or was across where the Grant school is?

VOSS: It was right, the Grant school is on the location of the old buildings and some of the houses and buildings across the street were used a dormitories I guess they're now apartments, those that are left.

MATTHEWS: When were the buildings taken down, did you know?

PERRY: I came, I rode the bus from those dormitories to the college out here and..

MATTHEWS: You lived then, when you first came you lived right next to the old campus.

PERRY: I lived on Clinton Avenue in a very distinguished old house. It belonged to the..

VOSS: Was it the Packer family?

PERRY: No, well.

VOSS: One of them.

PERRY: It was a well kept house at that time.

VOSS: Kusers lived there.

PERRY: I'll tell you that the librarian of the...

VOSS: The public library?

PERRY: Not the public library, where you were, the head of the library there.

MATTHEWS: The state library? That be it maybe? Let's see who would that be?

VOSS: Oh, Roger McDonough.

PERRY: Not McDonough, the one before that.

MATTHEWS: Before that.

VOSS: Oh, Jeff Goldman was acting librarian.

PERRY: With his sister.

VOSS: Yeah.

MATTHEWS: Well that's smart and I guess it was a good thing that the college was located where it was then. It was right near the railroad station and in those days not many people had cars. The college was founded in 1855 so it really made it quite convenient didn't it? It was really just a walk. You could carry your suitcases from the station to the campus, couldn't you, to the dormitories. Who was there at the Normal School then who lasted a long time such as Earl Dean and Carolyn Hammond. Do you remember them as part of the... you can I guess, maybe you can.

PERRY: Yes, and Hammond is still around, isn't she?

VOSS: Oh, yes.

MATTHEWS: But she's moved out of town. Well what did you think of Lily, let's hear about Lily, a southern lady right?

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Did she wave a rebel banner and look down on Yankees?

VOSS: No, I think she pictured herself as very much a lady and I think she was very terribly pleased with the library out here because it did give the effect of a southern mansion and she had her office up in the front of the building on the second floor with a little iron grilled balcony and I think she sat there and really visualized herself as part of an old plantation. And in the spring the first year or so we were out here, it was a day very much like this, she came out with a large leghorn hat and a chiffon scarf tied under her chin, little white gloves, a trowel and some bulbs which she planted along the side of the library.

PERRY: And that was a very important job for her over a number of years.

VOSS: Oh, yes.

MATTHEWS: Beautification, wonderful.

VOSS: Absolutely and she fancied herself. You could really see her fancying herself as a lady of the manor. She was very absent-minded at times. At one point she had little frown lines so someone had evidently given her what they called butterfly wings? They were little adhesive things that you pasted on your forehead at night to remove the wrinkles and every so often she would forget to remove the wrinkles.

PERRY: I remember going to Atlantic City with that one time.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Well, you know Lily, as I have done a little research on the older days of the library and I think I have discovered that Lily was really the first librarian we really remember. I supposed the college had a library going to back to 1855 it may have been just one room with a few books in it. So we went along from 1855 until World War I with probably a succession of ladies and people who looked after the library. Then Lily came, I believe, about 1921 and stayed until really from World War I, sort of, to World War II and one of the first people she got to join her was Dorothy Ferguson. Dorothy was a student here a member of the class of 1928 and I believe Dorothy just about stuck around from day one after graduation. Do you remember that? Was that the case?

PERRY: Yes.

VOSS: Yes. So that was at the time when if a woman married, she couldn't be hired.

MATTHEWS: And Dorothy?

VOSS: And Dorothy married before she was a senior I guess. So consequently, it meant that she would not be sent out on interviews because she was so...

MATTHEWS: That's fascinating I've wondered for years about that situation and in some places if you were married that could ruin your career. A young football star at West Point had to confess that he got married during his senior year and that was a no-no so when it came time for his graduation, he was not given a commission. He was given a degree but they didn't let him become an officer in the American army and ten years later he was a vagrant. His whole career was destroyed because of the fact that he got married while he was a cadet. So Dorothy got married and stayed and so you had Lily and Dorothy who I suppose was concerned with a lot of duties with just two ladies perhaps.

VOSS: Well then Janet.

MATTHEWS: Janet joined them and then maybe you joined those three ladies, how's that sound?

PERRY: Yes.

VOSS: Janet. Three were here, Janet Heath was on the staff when you came.

PERRY: Yes.

VOSS: In fact, I always thought as a student I thought Janet Heath was the librarian and I wasn't quite sure what Lily did.

MATTHEWS: That's interesting; Lily sort of didn't keep a high profile, as we might say.

VOSS: Well she did because I think she was obviously an original, a character and so you were aware of her. She did teach orientation lessons.

PERRY: She came down the stairs and stood at the bottom of the stairs to make sure it was quiet in the library.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: What kind of seating arrangements were there? You say the library, how many students could fit in would you say? Was it a room? Maybe it was only a room or two rooms.

PERRY: No, the library was...

MATTHEWS: Was it a separate building?

PERRY: ...pretty much the same. It was a few years ago they changed it but up to that time.

VOSS: No, there were stacks in the basement and a balcony that had stacks, usually for periodicals originally were up there. So there could be seating for a couple hundred people I would say at one time if necessary. Because you had this reference room and then there was a rather nice children's room. Janet Heath, because she wrote children's books had written several and was quite a good storyteller.

MATTHEWS: Yes she wrote her own and one's been translated into Spanish, at least one, yeah.

VOSS: Yes. We just all assumed she was the librarian and she had a gentle background and was extremely pleasant and easy to talk to and was interested in people.

MATTHEWS: Was Janet an alumna of the Normal School? Would you say?

VOSS: Yes. The Model School.

MATTHEWS: The Model School, yes.

PERRY: The Model School in the very old days.

MATTHEWS: You might clarify, you ladies. The Model School, well nobody was around then, the Model School closed at World War I which was before any of us. But I guess it was a training school for real live children who came who would be educated by our students at the Normal School.

VOSS: And the old Trentonians it was really the school to go to, there wasn't any Miss Fines at that time and the old Trentonians all were graduates of the Model School. Some of the teachers of the Model School then came out, Isabel Riddell taught over at Lanning School when it became--

MATTHEWS: Well the Lanning School I guess, well now that was I suppose, created? That was out here at the present, at this campus, so I suppose it wasn't involved until you really moved out here.

VOSS: No that's right it was simply the local elementary school and when the college came out some of the old teachers from the Model School came out there for a while there were several teachers who were still part of the district.

MATTHEWS: That connection has sort of been maintained. People who taught at the Lanning school faculty members often moved over to the college. My understanding about the book collection at the library in the early days was that until World War I, it was really just a few textbooks.

VOSS: That's right. In fact in 1933 when I first went down there, one of the things you did was you went around to a book room and there were textbooks, some basic texts that you could get. I don't even remember what they were. But very shortly after that, that was abandoned when the college came out here and you bought your textbooks as you do now.

MATTHEWS: Were you aware of the collection growing while you were here?

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Did that make things more exciting? To me, that's almost the most exciting part about being connected with the library, watching the collection grow and expand.

VOSS: I think when you really saw the growth was when Mary Gaver came.

MATTHEWS: Yeah, yeah.

VOSS: And for one of the things she opened the stacks. You know for a long time as a student, in fact, as a commuter, I went down to the Trenton Public Library to do a lot of my research rather.

MATTHEWS: You were a commuter?

VOSS: Well we called them commuters because I walked over here.

MATTHEWS: Sure, sure, yeah.

VOSS: And you mentioned cars, I can remember when there were three cars, three student cars parked on the campus. It was remarkable of course this was the Depression and if you had a car you borrowed your parents' car for some special occasion but students didn't own cars.

MATTHEWS: To me that would be another interesting topic right now because as you know or I imagine are aware of, the state is suffering severe financial difficulties and the ramifications I don't think have been totally felt here but now you good folks who survived the thirties as students or staff must have recollections of what it was like when money was awfully tight. Do you remember, either of you some effects of the Depression and how you had to scrimp?



VOSS: Oh, surely.

MATTHEWS: Your salaries must have been tiny.

VOSS: Yes, when I graduated in '37, I was one of the highest paid people to get a job. I got fourteen-hundred dollars a year and I lived away from home.

MATTHEWS: You didn't start right here did you have an interval where you were off-campus?

VOSS: Yes, yes, I went back to north Jersey where I had grown up and been in high school. It was about four years after that that I came back down. In the meantime, the only library experience or training that I'd had was I was playing tennis one summer my junior year and Mr. West was a great tennis player and he and Mike, Michael Travers, were playing tennis and he said, "Wouldn't you like to go library school? The commission is having one here this summer." And I said no, I didn't think I was interested, he said "Well, you can go for free if you will run the post office during summer school." So I thought, well I didn't have a job for the summer I might as well do that. And that's how I became a librarian.

MATTHEWS: I think that's what was so wonderful about the early days, if money was short, you were really a part of a family, everybody knew everybody and things were run very informally, right? Did you find it that way?

VOSS: Well there were only about eight hundred students, seven to eight hundred students on campus.

PERRY: And you knew everybody almost.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: How about the administration, then? Was Vernetta there? Decker.

VOSS: Oh, yes.

MATTHEWS: Who do you remember, Doris, from the administration? Either downtown or in the early years here.

VOSS: Lulu Haskell?

PERRY: Yes, I remember Lulu.

VOSS: Who was the registrar.

MATTHEWS: Just a name to me, what was Lulu like?

VOSS: She raised Westies.

MATTHEWS: Westies?

VOSS: The little white...

PERRY: Dogs.

VOSS: ...terriers.

MATTHEWS: Oh.

VOSS: And was really well-known.

MATTHEWS: I thought they were a name for Roscoe. Westie dogs.

VOSS: No, no. She was very pleasant, was able to keep track of everybody and all the schedules without any computers.

PERRY: One of the interesting things was again, his name?

MATTHEWS: Quimby?

PERRY: Quimby, Mr. Quimby, who went over all our book lists and so on that were sent to him because he at that time was the...

MATTHEWS: Business manager?

PERRY: Business manager and the books that cost over twenty dollars he had to check back on every one.

VOSS: Oh, yes, I remember taking over invoices after they were checked and Mr. Quimby sending them back and saying "who pays?" after certain titles.

MATTHEWS: That's terrific you; are the first people to talk about it.

PERRY: Now what do you get for twenty dollars or under?

VOSS: Oh, sure.

MATTHEWS: Not an awful lot. Was a fuss made over Mr. Quimby when he retired? Do either of you remember when he did retire?

VOSS: Yes. I think so. I remember things came out about Mr. Quimby that surprised me. I remember Steve Poliacci[?] saying that he was a student and he came back one summer and it was again the Depression and absolutely without any money to go on and Mr. Quimby personally

lent him the money. Now, of course, none of us knew that about him until he retired but Steve told us.

MATTHEWS: That's wonderful because if I may interject a personal note, that situation confronted my wife, who happened to go to the same college in Maine that Roscoe West started at, Farmington State College in western Maine. They both left after one year: Roscoe to go to Harvard and go on in educational glory; my wife completed her first year and didn't have any money to start her second year and they had to tell her, "Miss Gibbs, you will not be allowed to return." And she'd spent her first year working as a student there and I think that involved polishing the stairs in the dormitory and the dorm mother was a wife of a minister I guess and this woman would check up on Merle's dusting every morning and if she didn't do a good job would go into class and take Merle by the ear and say, "Come on Miss Gibbs you didn't do a good job on the stairs." And now you see our student assistants don't have to do that. At that college, when you were a freshman as a student assistant you were given the lower level jobs and to work in the library was something you aspired to after you proved your worth and your efficiency but now we do it another way and there's merit to that, that people can start in the library and they really develop expertise after four years, students can, so there's a good deal to be said for that and maybe that is better but in my wife's case. Well anyway, she didn't have the money and that was awfully nice. You know, right now a Notre Dame football coach is in trouble because he lent some players, a couple of players a couple of hundred dollars so they could stay in school and the NCAA got very upset and he might have lost his job this famous football coach so this matter of giving money to students is-- the coach said, "My, I wanted to help this young man; he belonged in school." So I guess he's going to be forgiven. So that is an extra fascinating story to hear that Mr. Quimby did something like that.

VOSS: I think everybody kind of laughed at him and thought of him as an old Scrooge but he really wasn't.

MATTHEWS: That just shows, isn't it, that's wonderful that something like that can happen. I'll tell you, I wasn't here then, but I understand the college as late as the fifties was really not too much more than a sort of a, really a fancy secondary school. It was really almost run like a high school, you had weekly assemblies, Roscoe West assembled everybody in Kendall Hall and everybody, all the students had assigned seats and absences were noted and reported and the students told who--

VOSS: I think you have to remember too that there were only eight to nine hundred students. Now you couldn't possibly do that. At the same time I think we had instructors that were very good. Rachel Jarrold was, I think there are people who had Rachel's class and of course.

MATTHEWS: It is true that as I've looked over the rosters, faculty rosters, of the old days and in the old days not everybody came with a Bachelor's degree. And I think even Miss Dodgen might have, I don't know. Maybe, I'm sure she acquired a Bachelor's degree and maybe a Master's, a library degree while she was here but I don't know that she showed up with one.

VOSS: I don't remember anyone who didn't have a Ba-- at least.

MATTHEWS: Sort of, we've progressed from sort of that arrangement I think.

VOSS: I don't recall.

MATTHEWS: I think the academics initials began to proliferate.

VOSS: Roscoe West was in hiring was adamant.

PERRY: Very careful about that, yes.

VOSS: I don't know of anybody who didn't have one.

MATTHEWS: Yes, I'm going back I think to the early years before 1930, yeah that's true.

VOSS: I think Mary Gaver was the person who really did a great deal in developing the library. I think she was one of the things in contrast to Lily Dodgen, Mary was very active in professional organizations at the state and national level, in fact she was president of the American Library Association at one time and I don't think a lot of people weren't used to somebody who took time out of being off the campus to do something that was professional. She was also very active in helping to develop the Rutgers library school.

MATTHEWS: Yes.

VOSS: And served on that thing.

MATTHEWS: Lily, then, just after being here about twenty years did she reach an age where it was time for her to retire?

VOSS: Yes, she retired.

MATTHEWS: Did she live around here? I don't...

VOSS: No, she went back to Georgia.

MATTHEWS: Back to the south.

VOSS: And I don't know of anyone except Dorothy Ferguson who kept in touch with her. Did you, Doris?

PERRY: No, and I don't think Dorothy even knew of her death.

VOSS: I don't know that she did. I would say she was a person that you never thought about. I never worked with her, I only knew her as a student and Mary Gaver and I came at the same time to college.

MATTHEWS: Yeah, I see. Well, dear me, I've got ask you. You may know I like to eat, and I often wonder what people here on the campus do for their noon meal, I like to walk around the lake and then eat my lunch somewhere. What did you do? Did you all eat a campus dining room either downtown on Clinton Avenue was there a place where you all gathered?

PERRY: The Inn.

MATTHEWS: Inn, the Inn, out here.

PERRY: The College Inn.

MATTHEWS: Yes, that's right, yes. You all ate there, you ate your lunches.

PERRY: That's where everyone ate.

VOSS: Yeah, you could, I don't think I ate. I don't think I ate in the Inn more than--

MATTHEWS: What did you think you did downtown on Clinton Avenue though, in those days?

VOSS: Oh, there was a cafeteria.

MATTHEWS: Was there someplace to eat there, did you join say the students or the faculty?

PERRY: No, I lived separately and had a very nice apartment in this home which was very close to the students.

MATTHEWS: Did you walk home for lunch then?

PERRY: No, I got my lunch here at the college. And it was a good lunch at the College Inn and they had people who had been there for years. Where I am now we have a new group just coming in.

VOSS: Well in the old days, the help in the dining room were hired by the college, it wasn't a concession. Now, most food services are out on bid and separate companies but these were in fact, Mr. Rutan, who was a steward, head steward at the college dining room built the house next door to me. He and his wife had worked over here at the same time. All the help then - the waiters were students.

MATTHEWS: I understand. I think I've seen maps of the campus, I think along about sometime in the 1930s the annual college catalog included began to include inside the back cover a one page map of the campus. And I remember only by seeing this map that there was an archery range out at one edge, can you ladies verify that.

VOSS: Oh yeah just over in the athletic field they had targets and things.

MATTHEWS: How about the water tower, did either of you climb up the water tower?

VOSS: Oh, no.

MATTHEWS: Did you know anybody who did?

PERRY: Yes!

VOSS: Oh sure, oh yeah, oh yeah.

MATTHEWS: Roy Van Ness did, didn't he, I believe?

VOSS: I'm sure he did. You know, the phys. eds I think felt that was some kind of coming of age.

MATTHEWS: Initiation or something, yeah.

VOSS: In fact, I remember when a member of the faculty was hung in effigy out of the library. The little pediment has a little round window in it in the front entrance over the old, well what was the original entrance. And somebody got up there and hung the poor soul an effigy.

MATTHEWS: Does this gentleman have a name this effigy, do you happen to recall?

VOSS: Well it was a woman.

MATTHEWS: A woman?

VOSS: Yeah, it was Bertha Lawrence.

MATTHEWS: What? Why yes, Bertha was a dean and lived on Pennington Road. Yes, want to talk about Bertha, would you please? My gosh.

VOSS: Oh, I can't think of the guy's name. We all knew who it was. Mr. West always came to work very early and he saw it and he got in the library. You climb up through one of the corridors there's a little trap door and you can get out.

MATTHEWS: I guess there is, yeah there still is.

PERRY: He got it down.

VOSS: And took it down. I have forgotten what the objection was. I think part of it was what you referring to before, the kind of running things like a secondary school with assigned seats in auditoriums and you couldn't cut and all that kind of stuff. And Bertha had a great deal to do with the disciplining.

PERRY: And she was a high school teacher previously.

VOSS: Well she has been with an iron hand at the old Trenton High School when there were four thousand students and it ran very well.

MATTHEWS: That's true that was another outstanding school, high school to attend in this area.

VOSS: That's right, you made it in the upper quintile you were... But I think the students were, there was a real, and she was also the kind of person that once she decided that you were in wrong, there was nothing you could ever do that would be right. And as Doris said before, it was a small school so everybody knew everybody.

MATTHEWS: That reminds me of what Jessie Turk once told me. You ladies remember Jessie and I hope we'll have her seated here before the semester is out, she lives up in retirement in Newark. Jessie told me that her claim to fame here was being the first woman to dare to smoke in public in defiance of regulations and in fact, Jessie would say in defiance sometimes she would hide behind a piece of shrubbery to light up, how's that. Dean Lawrence attempted to enforce that on faculty members because Jessie was a faculty member not a student. Well I also understand that in those days in the fifties before Roscoe West retired, faculty were expected to be here five days a week from eight thirty to four thirty and at their telephones they should be accessible anytime President West might call them up. Now,

things are different and they have different schedules but I think faculty members really were expected to be on the premises five days a week almost and a full day. What's that sound like to you?

VOSS: I don't recall any rule like that. I did for three years I had the library science program, eighteen hour program and I think people were in their offices when they, but not, I shared an office with Elisabeth Hirsch once, at one time.

PERRY: Really?

VOSS: And we would take messages for each other if I happened to be in but no one ever said anything to me.

MATTHEWS: You know with whom you were sharing that office? You were sharing that office with someone who was the chairman of not one but two departments: Philosophy and Religion and also Modern Languages, Elisabeth Hirsch. There you were two whole departments plus you from the library in one office. Now that's togetherness, Anne, I'd say.

VOSS: Well it was a fairly large office and then I was moved down to another single office.

MATTHEWS: Yes, wasn't it true that all the campus departments were housed in Green Hall except for the Physical Education department? Science, everybody, is that right?

VOSS: No.

MATTHEWS: No?

VOSS: No, I never had an office over there.

MATTHEWS: Oh, maybe the library was the exception.

VOSS: No. The History and Geography department were in the library.

PERRY: Those two were in the library.

MATTHEWS: I guess the English department, I think Al Holman told Frank Erath in their interview with Al that they were for a while in Green Hall and their arguments they would get excited and yell and carry on loudly and their conversation could be heard down the corridors. Oh, gee. Well now what about World War II? You had to survive the Depression, and you hardly got over that and then war time. How about talking to us about the college as you remember during the war, girls.

PERRY: I have nothing to say except the boys were not here, very few of them.



MATTHEWS: How about victory gardens?

PERRY: Victory gardens - we had green beans growing out our ears.

MATTHEWS: Did you tend the gardens while you were on campus maybe.

PERRY: No, I didn't but the students did.

MATTHEWS: Oh, the students did.

PERRY: I think they had green beans until maybe last week.

VOSS: You know, I didn't live on campus and my father was a bit of a gardener and we always had a garden.

PERRY: What I can tell you about the World War is that I was the night librarian. The night war was, as they said the other day, was finished, was over.

MATTHEWS: V-J Day?

PERRY: V-J Day. I looked around and everybody was out on the campus on Mr. Quimby's prairie enjoying what was going on. So I, without the official notice of a higher person, went out, locked the door and left the library which I something I never did before and I went to the store I didn't know where else to go, I was just, so I went to the little store up the corner and had a drink with Mr. Barber.

VOSS: Oh, for heaven's sake.

PERRY: Now isn't that an exciting evening?

VOSS: Wow, yes.

MATTHEWS: Well, if may suggest, wasn't September second another reason for you to celebrate, isn't that your birthday? September second.

PERRY: Well...

MATTHEWS: I somehow got that impression.

PERRY: I guess you're right.

MATTHEWS: That was V-J Day, September second 1945. If that was the case, Doris, you could have done cartwheels all over the campus and yipped and yelled.

PERRY: I guess you're right.

MATTHEWS: Oh, gee, that's great. Well I suppose after the war, did things heat up and get more hectic?

PERRY: We got a lot more boys here.

MATTHEWS: More boys, how about more books?

VOSS: Oh yeah that was really the time.

MATTHEWS: And Mary Gaver was in the saddle running the library.

VOSS: Yes.

PERRY: And we had Mary Gaver in Europe for a while.

VOSS: Iran.

PERRY: Iran. And another person, what was her name?

MATTHEWS: You mean from the library?

VOSS: Oh, Fair, Miss Fair.

MATTHEWS: Ethel Fair.

VOSS: Ethel Fair came down. I think Mary decided that it would not be very wise to leave Dorothy Ferguson, you and me without having someone from outside acting as the head librarian.

MATTHEWS: Well, Charlie had come along at this time; he succeeded Janet Heath didn't he? Charlie Packard.

VOSS: Well yes, more or less.

MATTHEWS: I believe that's my understanding. And he was introduced to the student body by President West as 'that spy from Montclair'. Both Charlie and Jessie Turk were classmates and member of the class of 1942 at Montclair, I believe, so there was that connection with Montclair and the college just I suppose flourished, would you say?

VOSS: Yes, I would say I think it really did, I think Del Botts came on, Al Holman.

MATTHEWS: Herman Ward and Leon Wolcott. And Cynthia [Hamm] joined the library staff as cataloger about the year after Charlie I believe. So the sort of modern library staff was beginning to take shape, funny to use that word. Not really appropriate. Well, what else? Let's see, the fifties and we've moved into the sixties the library staff began to expand. I was hired as a new person, I think at that time Felix came, for gosh sakes, Felix Hirsch had come in 1955, he succeeded Mary. What was the circumstances there? She was just there about twelve years and you know we're spoiled by having people come to the library and stay for decades like you and Dorothy and Charlie. Did

Mary have an opportunity to go up to Rutgers? Would that be what happened?

VOSS: Yes.

PERRY: Yes.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: And the Felix had had some connection with the library here, he'd come in the summer?

PERRY: Summer.

VOSS: There was a Bachelors program in library science which Mary ran also during the summer, it was a summer program.

MATTHEWS: Yeah. And Joyce [Brodowski] came. Joyce came about that time. I think Joyce, one of Joyce's claims to fame is that she might be the first person Felix hired.

VOSS: I wouldn't be surprised.

MATTHEWS: Joyce said she was probably exiled to Lanning School. Well no, to be in charge of the library over there. Did we have such a setup?

PERRY: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Was that true, did Joyce do that?

VOSS: Yeah, well I had said, Mary Gaver had asked me if I had left school libraries because I didn't like children and I said, "No, I like kids" but it was during the war and I couldn't get any gas for the car and if I came down here I could walk to work. Really carefully planned career. And so I said sure, I'd go over there and I think by that time I was the only one on the staff who could walk that far, you know from the college over to Lanning School and back hauling books.

MATTHEWS: Hauling books?

VOSS: Well sure.

MATTHEWS: Just carrying them in your arms?

VOSS: Well no, I used a tote bag when I needed it. But the PTA or they were called homemakers over there had organized the library. I guess it was a WPA project originally and it was the wildest thing. Of course, it was everything that was in anybody's attic so there was a

whole set of Gene Stratton-Porter and Horatio Alger. Well, gradually with a little funding, we began to build up and there was a good children's collection here so we could borrow books. And then the county library also deposited books and I just went over there a few days. Well, at that time the kindergarten teacher had only a morning program, and Miss Hollies would come down to the library in the afternoon and I would go over in the morning about four days a week and try to organize the library and work with the teachers who were over there. Then Miss Hollies could check out the books in the afternoon. Then I came back and worked over here. Then when I took the library science program over there was a Laura Broom who Mary had established as an undergraduate minor. When I took that over then Joyce inherited, Felix sent her over there. I think it was sort of a trauma for her because one of the things--

MATTHEWS: I've heard her say so.

VOSS: I know she came to me and she said the kids in the second grade or third grade had climbed up on the chairs and were hanging on the heating pipes that ran overhead. She said, "What would you do?" I said, "Turn up the heat". I said, "I've never had anything happen like that, heck, it's what I would do". But they were nice kids, really. It was very much a local school; there was no selection, special training school or anything.

MATTHEWS: While this was going on, Doris, you were in charge of the reference room and the reference collection, that's right? And then you started the children's collection.

PERRY: No, I taught children's...

MATTHEWS: You did?

PERRY: ...literature over a period of time, quite a long time. And of course I taught summer classes, you know cataloging and all the other things.

MATTHEWS: That's great. When did you begin to concentrate on building up our New Jersey collection?

PERRY: Oh.

MATTHEWS: You did a wonderful bibliography.

PERRY: I did a bibliography on that and did good work on that and enjoyed doing it.

VOSS: Well that again was some of the influence of Mary Gaver. Mary Gaver was the kind of person who was very direct and she always expected you to do something which if you had been left on your own you never would have bothered but Mary expected you to so you just went ahead and did it.

PERRY: I didn't feel like she was as much on that topic as..

VOSS: Yeah. But Mary had started that with the Rutgers Press and I think probably Felix felt..

PERRY: He should go on with it.

VOSS: He should go in with it and it was really, it needed to be developed. He was lucky you were here.

PERRY: We needed more material in that area.

VOSS: Yeah.

MATTHEWS: Well we got some books from Charles Philhower, didn't we?

PERRY: Yes, that's right.

MATTHEWS: Five sets of old county histories, didn't we? Three volumes on Union County or something. They don't write them like that anymore and thanks to him and you for preserving them and publicizing them and having them used, they are the foundation of our New Jersey collection.

VOSS: Well I think the other thing that is part of the New Jersey collection too is the mural that's in the library.

MATTHEWS: Oh yes, yes.

VOSS: It is..

MATTHEWS: Do you remember?

VOSS: Blossom Farley, sure.

MATTHEWS: Yes. Doris, do you remember something about that mural? Did it come from the old campus?

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: It did.

VOSS: It was in the auditorium.

PERRY: Anne remembers those things better than I do.

VOSS: It was in the back of the auditorium. It was on the second floor and really the stage wasn't a stage it was more a platform with an arched mural. So when it was, it's on canvas and it's not part of the plaster thank goodness or it never could have been moved. When it was brought down of course there are these rounded corners and Blossom Farley came down when it was put up and painted in the two corners, filled it in. The little red berries really mark is where he cleverly joined it so that it didn't show. You'll find it in several art books.

MATTHEWS: Yes, I should think so. We had a little brochure about it.

VOSS: Yeah but this is collections. Well, muralists, there's one called American Muralists. I haven't seen it or thought about it.

MATTHEWS: Do you know how it was transported from Clinton Avenue to Hillwood Lakes? It's a huge-- was it in sections? Or did it spread out on a big platform flat. Do you remember when it came out Doris?

PERRY: No.

VOSS: No, no it's canvas and canvas can be rolled.

MATTHEWS: Oh.

VOSS: I didn't see them bring it in, it probably was over a weekend or sometime but I didn't come down and watch. And in fact one of the things was in that hall there was a very handsome brass candles, brass chandeliers and crystal and they decided to take them down because it interrupted the view of the--. And then later when Effie Kuhn put on Disraeli as a show for the great ball scene, ballroom scene, they took the old chandeliers out of the basement of Kendall Hall and had them as part of the stage set, it made a very handsome set.

MATTHEWS: Let me ask you both what you remember about the Centennial, 1955-6? That was a big deal of course.

VOSS: Yes.

MATTHEWS: So, do you remember something about it Doris? How you were involved in planning?

PERRY: Part of it was the party we had afterwards.

MATTHEWS: You remember the party, well good, you danced on top of a table or something.

PERRY: With Dr. West. All the people were there that were the most important I guess, at the Centennial.

VOSS: Oh yes, there was a committee that worked over a year. I don't know, it seemed to me it took minutes.

PERRY: Dr. Martin had just come.

MATTHEWS: Yes, he wasn't president though?

VOSS: No.

PERRY: What was very interesting was we had a friend of Hilda's from New York to come down to help with the party and as he went to the door, when Dr. Martin entered, Dr. Martin looked at him and said "oh my goodness" and he was a boy that Dr. Martin had taught in Sunday school out in Springfield, Missouri or one of those places.

VOSS: Well the Centennial was quite interesting. I know there was a play that was quite--

MATTHEWS: A pageant or something?

VOSS: Well no, it was kind of a series of skits and I can remember going over to a small school in Pennsylvania, a one room school and getting the desks. I went with Laura Crowdsdale who is principal over in Tinicum Township I think and we brought those back and I remember going down to the old print factory which is part of the iron works and getting rolls of white plastic. What they printed were shower curtains and things on plastic so we got a roll of that. And then going up to Tilton's 7-11. It was an old store and Mr. Tilton got a hayrack--rick and we decorated the hayrick with this white thing and they we went to Dunham's store and got a whole lot of white ostrich plumes and over to one of the theatrical agencies and got a cape that had been in, Carol Channing had worn in Gentlemen Prefer Blondes for Miss Hillwood. And I can remember one of my jobs that final day, there was a kid who was supposed to be a little boy in the play and he was so interested in seeing the parade he climbed up a tree and I had to go out and get him down out of the tree in time for the play.

MATTHEWS: Well, you know, those are fascinating memories and we're indebted to you for recalling them and I understand that we've whipped through this interview.

VOSS: Good.

MATTHEWS: Good? Well I think it's just the kind of interview to have where we do talk and we find out some things and I don't know, afraid I've probably done too much talking and you haven't done enough, so modest.

PERRY: I've learned some good things.

MATTHEWS: Hm?

PERRY: I've learned some good things that I didn't know.

MATTHEWS: Well, we all have and on behalf of the college community today and people who come after as well as people who have been here before I thank you both very, very much for being here today and doing this, this wonderful interview. Thank you, Doris, and thank you, Anne.

VOSS: I really enjoyed it and I hope some of these pictures can be--

MATTHEWS: Yes I hope that the media folks here can put some of these pictures on film. So I believe then if we're through so we'll sign off and say we enjoyed it very much. Goodbye.

VOSS: Goodbye.