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## Earl Wallace "Wally" Henderson Memoir

### Henderson, Earl Wallace "Wally"

Interview and memoir

Digital Audio File, 52 min., 20 pp.

UIS Alumni Sage Society Legacy Project

Henderson, architect for the University's Public Affairs Center (PAC) building, discusses his early life, education and career. Born in Springfield, Henderson attended the University of Illinois and earned a degree in architectural engineering in 1954. After a period of service in the armed forces, Henderson worked for William Muchow's architectural firm in Denver, Colorado. Following this, he returned to Springfield and opened his own architectural office, Ferry and Henderson, with his partner Donald Ferris. Henderson describes feeling strongly about the need for higher education in Springfield and cites his early support to establish a university in the state capitol. Henderson discusses the challenges and the successes that were involved in constructing the PAC building and is particularly proud of the Sangamon Auditorium. He recalls charter President Robert Spencer and John Kennedy, director of the auditorium. The interviewer is Janice Spears, former school administrator and UIS alumnus.

Interview by Janice Spears, 2010

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Narrator: Earl "Wally" Henderson, Jr.

Date: June 15, 2010

Place:

Interviewer: Janice Spears

Q. This is Janice Spears with the SAGE Society. It is Tuesday June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and I am interviewing Earl W. Henderson, Wally Henderson, who was the architect for one of the first permanent buildings on the SSU/UIS campus, the PAC, the Public Affairs Center, where the Sangamon Auditorium is. Wally, would you tell us a bit about yourself and your background?

A. Springfield, Illinois has been my home since I was 9 years old. I was born in Mishawaka, Indiana and I was the first one in my family, which goes way back to...we have some relation to President Polk from Tennessee but I'm the first from my family ever to go to college. My folks had high hopes that I'd get two years of education and that was sort of a goal except, some place along the line, I got interested in looking at the moon and it wasn't romantic, I just, I believed there were opportunities to get to the moon.

So when I entered the University of Illinois, I entered as an aeronautical engineer and that was the study that I fully intended to, I couldn't even spell architecture to be honest with you. But when I went to there, I ended up living in a fraternity house that was a very long ways from the engineering campus and it was a long walk and we had no automobiles in those days. This was 1949.

I had gone to Springfield High School and Springfield High School was an outstanding resource to begin with. Elizabeth Grant, I always want to put a plug in for her because she taught us English 13 at Springfield High School, which you'd immediately...you'd take the test and all of a sudden have so many points with the University. In any event, when I went to the University and on those winter days going over to that engineering thing was a real pain.

The other interesting thing about that was that freshman students in aeronautical engineering were allowed into this...today we hang airplanes in big wind tunnels and they blow smoke over the wing profiles and so forth, but in those days, they had a very small thing. It was 2x2, almost like a slide projector, that did the same kind of thing. Freshmen were allowed to come in on Saturday nights, which happened to be date night. I've always been attracted to having dates, so these were sort of two negatives.

Anyway, I come home in Easter of the following year, in 1950, for spring vacation. My parents are happy, here's there son who, an only child by the way, who's studying at the big University. So they invited a bunch of friends over and the friends all said, what are you studying? And I

said, aeronautical engineer and invariably they said, oh, you're designing airplanes. And I said no, I want to be the first man on the moon. Which is exactly the right answer, it's what I meant.

As those folks departed, my mother said, here sit down, your dad and I want to talk to you for a moment. Here I am, the only child, sitting between my two parents that I had this respect for and my mother says, you know it's alright to say that to your dad and me, about going to the moon but everybody else thinks you're crazy. That was sort of one of the slaps, that, my mother thought I was crazy too. That was another way to translate that.

I ended up going back to the University of Illinois, to the counselor and asking what on the campus will take the few credits that I've earned at this point, which was only one and a half semester's worth, and they suggested architectural engineering, and I said, that's it. And that's how I became an architect. So there was no ambition, even though I'd broken into the Frank Lloyd Wright House in Springfield...

Q. (laughs)

A. ...when I was 10 or 11 years old. It was a haunted house during World War Two. So, I knew the word architecture I guess but had no plans in it. It was a five year course and I'd always hoped to get two years in.

When I really graduated, I graduated from the University in 1954 which was the full course. I left Springfield at that time, didn't want to come back to Springfield, ended up going to visit Indianapolis. I had an uncle in Indiana University and Herman Wells, who was the President at that time. They were thinking I'd come to IU but I didn't. I ended up where I was at U of I.

But anyway, their friend in Indianapolis, they suggested I go up there looking for a job. I ended up not with them but I ended up with Lennox, Matthews, Simmons & Ford, who were an engineering company in Indianapolis, 35<sup>th</sup> street, which, I did some engineering work but at the end of about six months I was drafted into the army and went to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, Fort Hood, Texas and, because at this point, I'd already been...during my time at the University of Illinois I was in ROTC and had an Air Force commission if I wanted it.

But it meant you had to be in for three years and I didn't want that so I took the draft. I ended up back in Fort Hood, Texas, though I'd been at James Connally Air Force Base, with the ROTC. I put in for overseas duty and though I missed England and France and all the other places I wanted to go, they said, well, we'll put you in the Far East Air Force but nobody's going to Korea. When the airplane came down, I was on Caucasian only orders in a black battalion in Osan, Korea, Air Force Base K-55. That's where my story came about, with the child with...Have I told that story?

Q. No, you haven't told it on the record. About...

A. Do you want it now?

Q. Go ahead.

A. Alright, they take your money when you're in a warzone, although this wasn't active. Shooting had actually stopped about 8 or 9 months before I arrived there. So the danger wasn't there for that purpose but they take you money away from you and leave you only with a penny. That's the only coin you had. A quarter was a monopoly penny or whatever it might be. So you had no money.

And these people actually would work in the company area and get whatever they could, military payment certificates, they called them. This little kid, 11 years old, is up in our tent and he was polishing my boots and we were talking a little bit. He proceeds to tell me what a great hometown he's got and his hometown was a little village someplace, not the one down at the bottom of the hill, but one of the others. And of course as the ugly American that I refer to ourselves as, I started bragging about my hometown and I reach in my pocket and there was the penny, the only coin we had, and just on the spur of the moment held it out to him and said, I'm from his hometown.

And this little 11 year old, oriental, Korean boy, never probably been out of a ten mile circle of the area, proceeded to tell me more about Abraham Lincoln than I knew about and I lived my whole time in Springfield, Illinois, which was from the age of 9 on, only ten blocks from Lincoln's home. It was amazing because this young boy and I heard it on a couple of other occasions while I was in the Far East, Abraham Lincoln was everything and all of a sudden, I happen to be from Abraham Lincoln's hometown. This little boy just really lit up and told me the story of Lincoln.

I came back with an attitude at that time. I ended up when I came back at Fort Carson, Colorado, which was south of Denver but I ended up there six days later marrying my wife that I had met at Boulder University when I first returned, still in the service, from Korea. So in any event, at this particular point and I ended up, as a matter of fact, getting married, when I got out of the service, I had a GI Bill. So I started my master's because now I've had a five year degree, which was the bachelor's degree but to practice architecture, you had to have a master's at that particular point.

So I started my master's degree by getting out three months early, getting out of the service. I ended up applying at the University of Illinois and went back and put in the first semester of my master's degree. That was, I want to say, 1958, '58, yes and then came back to Denver, got married, stayed there and for 4 years worked for, W.C. Muchow was his name...

Q. How do you spell that?

A. M-U-C-H-O-W, William C. Muchow, who was really one of the stars of what they call the Rocky Mountain region, as far as the American Institute of Architects is concerned. He was an

outstanding designed, won great prizes, as far as architecture was concerned. He had studied at the University of Illinois and had got his master's degree at Cranbrook under Eero Saarinen, Eero being an international architect and Muchow had many of the characteristics.

Apparently, Saarinen was a very powerful person to be associated with because it was amazing. When I joined Muchow's office, and I got my job by pure accident because for years, I worked for him for 4 years, for all those years, I used to interview the people coming into Muchow's office and they came for a purpose, because he was such a great designer. Invariably I would ask them, what is your reason to come To Muchow's office? They'd say, well, he's a great designer and I want to go on this experience with him. I didn't know that line and when I came looking for the job and I was getting married, I needed a job and I said to him, I can do anything, including sweeping the floors and running the mimeograph machine.

And for years, Muchow said to me, you're the only guy who came in looking for a job as an architect who said I can run a mimeograph machine, but I got the job. I was there for four years and I became an associate in the firm for a little bit. But the experience was one that gave me a completely different attitude about architects. Design was everything. In other words, you didn't cut things short. I was an architectural engineer, by the way. At this point, I had my bachelor's in engineering, which meant I could be a structural engineer, which is what I was doing when I practiced for the few months in Indianapolis. This was Lennox, Matthews, Simmons & Ford, structural engineers, did the bent, which is a structural form, for the fairgrounds which was right on 35<sup>th</sup> Street in Indianapolis. In any event, that was one project that I did...

Q. Spell that project in Indianapolis. Bent, you said?

A. A bent, B-E-N-T, a bent.

Q. Mm-hmm

A. It's sort of like the elbow; you've seen these sort of things...

Q. Yes

A. ...and they put them together but it was a long span, I think it was a 240 foot span or something, which is pretty unique. I had a lot of people looking over my shoulder, you know, but I was pretty proud of it because you don't start with bents, you start with beams and they're usually 20 feet long and this thing was 200 feet. So in any event, it was pretty exciting.

But I had experience, First of all, in Springfield in my summers I had worked, never for an architectural firm, I had always, in Springfield, I was with well, State of Illinois Division of Highways. I built models for some other bridges during that one summer and worked for several engineering firms.

And because we're so close to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birthday, I can remember exactly where I was on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1950. I was in Joliet because we were in the process of surveying. They have quarries up there and the quarries were being used for a building and I

was up there for an engineering firm in Springfield. We were up there staying the night in Chicago, at the Bismarck Hotel and that day, the war broke out in Korea, in 1950.

And we just happened to be up there and the leader of our party happened to be in the Air National Guard in Springfield. Bill Kluchstall was his name and as a fighter pilot, somebody, and we were all wearing fatigues. This was 1950; everybody still wore those kinds of clothes. In any event, when the word got out, here was a guy who was probably going to end up in Korea. You know, he all of a sudden became the light of the night and stood up and sang his songs and drank too much and it was fun but I just recall that we're about to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that and that's where I was. Kluchstall by the way went on to Korea and ended up dying in Korea, getting shot down in a P-51. Anyway, that's the long and short of it.

Q. Okay, so you said you were never going to come back to Springfield. What brought you back to Springfield to practice architecture?

A. Oh, thank you. I had now practiced in 3 capitols; I mean architecture or engineering, In Indianapolis and in Denver and in Springfield. Now, I'd been halfway around the world and been to a lot of different places and no place I had been to needed architecture more than Springfield. Well, in Korea they did but I wasn't talking about Korea. I'm talking about contemporary architecture.

We had buildings, but the buildings were typical, sort of Midwestern buildings, get'em in on the cheap or whatever it might be. One of the biggest things which really bothered me, up until that time we did not have any kind of higher education. Springfield College in Illinois was it. There wasn't anything else.

Q. It was a two year college...

A. A two year college...

Q. Which is now Benedictine.

A. Yes.

Q. Mm-hmm

A. But at that time, that was it. I had no notion of thinking about going to a junior college, so I thought, if I come back to Springfield, they need higher education. I got involved in that one. Literally, that was one of the motivations. Another one was...

Q. How did you get involved in the beginning of Sangamon State University?

A. Well my partner...First of all, I'm in Denver and Don Ferry, who's still in Springfield...

Q. And that's F-E-R-R-Y?

A. Yes ma'am. Don Ferry and I knew each other. Well, his brother-in-law was my best friend in high school. I knew him when he was over at the University of Illinois and I was at least one

year ahead of him. In any event, he was here as a hospital architect, a licensed architect by the state of Illinois. I was in Denver and someplace along the way, they were looking for another person. It happened to be in the Stratton Building but they were looking for another person in public health, as an architect.

Don Ferry contacted me and said, you know, asked me to come back and take a look at it. I came back on a train on Thanksgiving, spent a little time in his office in the Stratton Building, which wasn't very appealing and said, Don, I don't think I'm very interested in it at all. Well, there are points in everybody's life where you have turning points. I was working on a church in the First Range of mountains in Colorado, which, again, the building had been designed by Bill Muchow. He was an outstanding designer and we had in our office, everybody in there was, other than me who could mimeograph, which I never did one lick of but that's what got the attention.

Anyway, these were a pretty classy group of people. They went to Harvard and Cornell and I can't even name all the places but a class of only ten people in the office. We also had a weaver who came from Cranbrook. We designed furniture, we designed the fabrics. We did the stuff that the old timers did. But we did them with, and I'm not saying every single job, we had that capability. But to sit around and talk at noon with ten architects who have had all these experiences and Illinois was no second class education, but when you hear some of these people who are concentrating on design like, from Cranbrook or like, well, some of the other that's I named, it's a great experience, very exciting. So everybody was really tied to this kind of thought process.

I'm working on this church that's up in the mountains and Bill Muchow had put it all together. I was assigned to the job and I worked with the pastor and, you know, we got close, the pastor and I. But this was thirty miles up in the mountains, in the First Range and he'd call me in the middle of the night and said it's raining as if I could do something about it. So I knew everything about that church because I made so many trips up there. And of course, when Bill Muchow assigned something to somebody, that's when he sort of dropped out of the events, expecting everybody to pursue this taste of design.

Well, the taste of design was Bill Muchow's. And we got a bent and we were oriented so the chancel was behind the altar and the altar was facing the Rocky Mountains Second Range, which had snowcaps on it. The whole altar area was glass and we felt it would be pertinent to cross it and part of it was, we had the pulpit, and this was a nondenominational church. The minister could push the button and the curtains would part and here'd be this glorious view facing west. So, for the morning services, snowcaps were lit up by the sun and then it was pouring into the church.

And the back of the Church, we were up against the side of the mountain, with lichens on the stone. We didn't even cut them away. Our back is with all this stuff growing down on us. In any event, the dedication day came, and this was right after the Thanksgiving when I had come home and looked at the Stratton Building and Department of Public Health and said, no, I'm not

interested. But I'm there and Bill Muchow says, we're going up to the dedication and he said, I haven't been there in so long, I don't even know the way up, can I follow you up? And I said, sure. So my wife and I, and I guess we had one little baby at that time...In any event he follows us up and we sit in the back row, back against the lichens and the whole bit and the minister proceeds with the presentation that I just said to you.

And he says, we owe all this beauty to our good Lord and he pushes the button and the curtain opens up, and our architect. And I remember my wife and I were leaning forward and he says Bill Muchow, which was exactly right, except that, boy, when you've worked with a guy for almost a year and the whole bit, you sort of want to say, and this kid who worked with him, because I was 28 years old then. At this point my wife just nudged me and she said, you're leaving.

Three weeks later I was in Springfield, Illinois but with a condition to Don Ferry. You quit your job, I'll quit my job, we'll open an office and Springfield needs higher education by God and a bunch of other things. We came on with the fact that we're not competing with anybody. There were about a dozen offices in Springfield at that time. But the whole thing we said was, we're not competing with anybody. We're going to bring contemporary architecture to Springfield, Illinois. We didn't say anything about preservation. That wasn't a word to us. We were never taught anything about preservation.

Q. But you were involved in preservation?

A. Oh yes...

Q. In the Old State Capitol...

A. Well, that's a whole new story all by its self, completely...

Q. Well, we don't want to hear that story right now. Ferry and Henderson was the name of your firm?

A. That's right and we opened on West Jackson Street...East Jackson, I'm sorry. I want to say 328 East Jackson but that might be wrong. The building's just been replaced...they moved the building down the street. It's right across from the Lincoln home area now.

Q. Mm-hmm.

A. Which wasn't the Lincoln home area then, it was a slum...well, not a slum but a very rundown neighborhood, on the other side of 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

Q. What year was that?

A. We opened up in 1961, March 1961, in one room, smaller than this room. It was about a 20x20 room. I got our first job by telephone. We had two stools and a drafting table and a telephone. When they built what...well we used to call it the purple goose, it's the Revenue building over on Adams Street. Actually it was done by an engineer out of Minneapolis. It was a

bid type thing and they needed a local...somebody to superintend the job and I sat with a portable typewriter and typed saying we're a new firm, we'd like to have the opportunity and that was our first money. The first year, we made \$1500 and it was on that job, which is kind of interesting.

Q. Well, were you involved in the start of Sangamon State University? Who were some of the people?

A. Well I had to begin...jumping straight to Sangamon State University. There wasn't a Sangamon State University. There wasn't even a junior college and Otto Kerner...

Q Governor Otto Kerner...

A. Yes, Otto Kerner always will be, should be, one of the great heroes of Springfield because he saw and in fact, even made the comments, I remember at a community meeting of some kind. In those days, it used to be called, instead of the chamber of commerce, association of commerce and industry and he made the comment that Springfield because we were losing industry and he made the comment, Springfield is not a smokestack city. You know, we ought to be thinking about tourism, Abraham Lincoln. As a result, that and higher education, he was the guy who stood behind doing the junior college and then we came along, fully...

Q. Doing Lincoln Land Community College?

A. Lincoln Land Community.

Q. Mm-hmm

A. A whole junior college system...

Q. Oh.

A. As the governor, he wasn't just concentrating on Springfield...

Q. Mm-hmm

A. ...but the whole system. The same thing when it came up to having a three year university and that's what, that's where it started...or two year. 3 years was the way it was brought out. In other words, they didn't have any chance for master's degrees or anything else. But to get a university, he was the guy who championed it for Springfield. I happened to be on that particular committee.

As a matter of fact, I was glib and young and dumb and had time on my hands. But I always remember George Hatmaker, who was President of Franklin Life at the time. He headed up the group that put the 1,000 acres together that made possible both Lincoln Land and the University. This was a cornfield. In fact, I took my, I had a boy scout troop, to a hike out on Lake Springfield, through all these woods there and cornfields and whatever it turned out to be, but what is now the University. So this particular thing, when it started, I want to say Hoffman...

Q. George Hoffman.

A. George Hoffman

Q. He was an attorney.

A. Yes.

Q. Mm-hmm.

A. He always walked from Leland Grove or wherever he lived, right close to Leland Grove, to downtown. You'd see him walking. That was a great good hike and he was an older gentleman. Well, I'll always remember, this was for this very installation. There was a meeting, a final decision. I think it was for either Lincoln Land Community College, or, I do believe it was Sangamon State, a hearing heard by their group, in Chicago and I don't remember what month it was but it was a snowy day and we took the train up and the doggone train ends up late getting into Chicago and we hit the building at about five o'clock in the afternoon, expecting, and it was the end of the week, that this was a kiss off.

But by golly, they sat and listened and because the time was so little, George Hoffman said, if you want to go ahead and start. Well, I took off and I was very glib at that time, just poured it on. When I got done, George just stopped and that was the end of it and we left. George didn't really have any remarks to make and he said, I've never heard someone say so many words in such a short amount of time. But we were out of time and we didn't any choice. But we got it and that was the whole point.

Q. What was it you got, exactly?

A. The fact that we will construct or, the state would support the construction of a three year university in Springfield. I mean, that's what we were there for. If we could get the budget because the land was all put together and all these things, if we could get the first building in there or the planning, that's what you had to get. We've got a great idea and the land and all of these things but well good luck brother 'cause...We had trips over to Champaign, talked to Champaign and tried to get them but this was freestanding, exactly like Northern was freestanding and...there's one more someplace but anyway.

Q. We weren't just tied to the University of Illinois in Champaign. It was to be a separate entity.

A. Yes, yes. Exactly like Governor' State in the northern part of Illinois and Northern Illinois University.

Q. There was some opposition to Sangamon State coming into existence, with some of our state legislators. Do you remember any of that?

A. I really don't.

Q. Senator Horsley? No?

A. Well, he was a good friend of mine. As a matter of fact, he was the guy who gave me a legislative scholarship that got me through 5 years, I only intended to go 2 years to the University...

Q. Oh.

A. But Bill Horsley, I do not remember that he was against it.

Q. Were you involved in the design or construction of any of the historic campus, for example the building we're sitting now?

A. I was really temporary and the answer is no to that. First of all they had to come up and get an architect, a planner rather, a master planner. I don't have it on the tip of my tongue but it's a group out of St. Louis, very well-known campus designers. They came up with that circle design road and all the elements were in there. So once you had the plan, you're referring to the beginning of it. The whole thing originally just went all the way around as a circle. In fact, maybe there was...

Q. And you brought with you today a map of the University of Illinois at Springfield and it only shows that drive as a half circle now but originally, University Drive was to encircle the campus?

A. Oh yes and I'm sure you've got those in your records someplace. I tried to acquire as many things as I could.

Q. Well when did you start working for the University?

A. Oh, for the University, let's say it that way, you said it that way. I don't remember...if we were even invited. Some of these things, you know, you're capable of doing but we were invited to submit our interest in the Public Affairs Center. The initial building was done by the man who did the planning for the library, which is right across the little green area here on campus.

Q. Was that the first permanent building, the library?

A. Yes and the second permanent building was supposed to be the power plant. Now, everything got jumbled around a little bit because funds were not flowing like they should. So the power plant...actually, you usually start with the infrastructure before you do anything else but the library was the first building in there.

Now that said and this is starting to give an answer to your question, you've spent time in the library, which I've made an addition to since it was built, but the library is set up on a module, or let's say, a design module. Ordinarily we're talking about, you know, right angles and everything else, but a 60 degree triangle type thing. So the whole campus started with being a

circle and everything pointed to the circle. The center of the circle is right off the point of the Public Affairs Center.

Q. It's right there.

A. Yes, and that's exactly how it was pointed. Here's the library that was the first building in there and by going into this arrangement had been started. We had to pick up on this module. Well, I don't want to say had to but it was an interesting idea. So that's how the shape of the building started and our location was right there. And this was not only the Public Affairs Center, it was also going to be the location of the...back then they called them at least, the President, of the Sangamon State University. And so that was our program as we started with.

Q. So, what was your inspiration for that building? It was the circle?

A. Let's put it this way...

Q. In 60 degree angles?

A. ...when you're doing a building, first of all you start with what they call a program. In other words, much as we're doing right now, you meet with the people who devise this. Actually, we happened to write most of the program ourselves, though they obviously knew the area they're going, which you're trying to say, what do you really want in this building? It was going to be several things. It was going to be a classroom, to some degree. It was going to be the office infrastructure and it was going to have the speaking theater.

Then as the program came out, this was the earliest program, it was a 1,200 seat speaking theater. Now, 1,200 seats is not a lot of seats, unless you're used to thirty seats in a classroom. So as we started with the building, Springfield Symphony...Springfield High School had always been used as their auditorium space. The old Orpheum Theater had come down and so, all of a sudden, the Symphony is running out of room to perform. They approached the University and said you know, can we...and Dan Walker was the, and I'll remember this one. We were right in the middle of the building...when, I wish I could tell you who the head of the Symphony was at that time, not the maestro but the Symphony guild or foundation. In any event, he made the appeal that can we expand...

Q. Governor Dan Walker.

A. That's the one we had to work through at this point.

Q. Mm-hmm.

A. But, in any event...the foundation president contacted the state of Illinois and said, is there a chance we could get together with you folks and expand the capacity of this speaking theater to

accommodate the Symphony? And so the only thing you could do was say, hey, we need a bigger budget and we've got to do something quick. Now, what you're looking at, and you told me about a little rumor that you'd heard, the building if, and I've got pictures of it, where, actually, it looks like a fork. In other words, the point is right here but these two wings are coming out. This big bulge on the back is the auditorium. Okay when we...

Q. And the rumor that I heard was that the building was actually two triangles and the first funding was just for one of the triangles. Then funding came through and you expanded and put the two together. And that's not true?

A. I Never heard that.

Q. Okay.

A. What actually happened was, we had the building designed and then it was agreed upon, if we can get it in there, we should get it in there, if we get money. I spent an afternoon, literally an afternoon, it started with lunch and went right on through...let's see, another one of these stories. It started at the Sangamo Club. The Symphony people and myself and I can't remember who represented the actual University then, but I was the architect working on this particular building. I want to say...

Q. Durward Long or Spencer?

A. Spencer.

Q. Dr. Spencer.

A. Dr. Spencer, good guy, I liked him. He, you know, he had a lot of ideas, a lot of kooky ideas too, contemporary kooky. In other words, stretch it don't just...

Q. Non-traditional.

A. Non-traditional, thank you. Yes, and so we spent the afternoon with the governor and explaining all the reasoning behind it and the governor made certain conditions and everybody compromised. All of the sudden we walked out of there with the building stop what you're doing there, don't go any further with that auditorium space. We've got to go back to the boards and see what we can do. So if you've got a building that's already designed, has two wings and otherwise, would have been a triangle. It was not two triangles...

Q. Was the atrium in the original design?

A. Not as an atrium. Here's the point we were at and here's, this little space right here, was where we were going to have the speaking auditorium. And these were all classrooms and this

was and all that was on the same thing. Well, all of a sudden, this little 1,200 seat space, since we're going to double it or whatever we can possibly do. Double it is essentially what we did. So we had to get into this thing and go like this, and that's how you get the shape of it. In other words, this wedge, this...

Q. It's more like an arrow now.

A. Yeah, it's got that big base because we needed the fly and so forth that goes with the...This is actually off a working stage for a legitimate theater in New York. So that's how we can bring all these other things in...

Q. How many people does it seat?

A. I'm told it's 23 something, 2,300. We would have liked to stretch it. I went up to Bloomington, because in Bloomington they share our Symphony and they have 3,500. There was no way we could get 35. The budget didn't allow us to go to 35.

Q. And the acoustics are very good. There are no obstructions in that auditorium...

A. That's right.

Q. ...Every seat is a good seat.

A. Thank you, are you asking me or telling me?

Q. I'm telling you.

A. Well, that's exactly what we...I got a theater designer out of St. Louis whose name slips me and I have to apologize for that because these people contributed. The philosophy, now, go back to Muchow. Get your best consultants; don't just say, well, we can do it, good luck. Anything that we did on this particular building...we organized a group of people who could think with us. But that theater designer came out of St. Louis and he was outstanding. Of course, you know, your acoustics, the acoustician was out of...oh, outside the Chicago area but one of the great ones in the United States.

So all the materials and everything that were in there, were designed to make that. So, performers who were actually on the stage and I can't remember some of the names but I've been told, have mentioned how surprised they were that they were in a theater that worked as well as this particular one did. So the theater was really driving it. Now, part of the conditions were, at the meeting, sitting with the governor, that you can operate this building independent of the University, to be able to go to the theater, to go to the Symphony. The Symphony wasn't part of the University. So that means we've got two buildings that we're trying to do. So how do

you work a building where you have classes and also operate the auditorium, without screwing the whole thing up?

And this is why everybody says, boy is this confusing. But you see there are three towers. Each of the towers has independent elevators and if you know where the tower is, you also know where the restrooms are. So, you can completely close the doors on the theater part and operate that theater, without going any further. I mean, you can get in and out of the building, you can do all the things and still have your classes work and offices and everything work. It was all designed for separate operations, which actually works very, very well and of course, they've expanded it. The flow, where we have the atrium space and the upper level for...I'm not sure exactly how they use it now but it was for expansion.

Q. Was that same thing true of the HVAC system, that you can operate them separately?

A. Yes, oh yes. Yeah, you don't have to have that whole thing going. And the power plant, you might notice on the one entry area, the money was saved there. We took on the power plant and that's why, when you're looking at the building, you're coming down the entrance space; you see a little notch right here. Right there in the notch is the smokestack. It comes right up the side of the building. It's right on the front of it. That was part of the compromise. We're not going to build a separate power plant facility, which is pretty typical of campuses, particularly the University of Illinois. They've got steam tunnels running all over. Which, by the way, when the original design was put together, not by us but by the group out of St. Louis, you were going to be able to drive between these major buildings underground.

In other words, when you think about it, you take Brookens Library and you take the Public Affairs Center, and you come into the Public Affairs Center, that large, broad corridor that's next to Brookens that is partially underground, is for an automobile. You could drive in between them. The whole thing if you went through before they changed the location of the bookstore, that back wall is a knockout wall that you can drive straight on through supposedly to the next building which was going to be the Student Services. They just gave up for some reason. So they cut off the tunnels. But that tunnel was supposed to be able to, vehicular wise and student wise, to move between the different buildings and the same thing with that building next to the library. You could get between them by car or by pedestrian.

Q. How much did that PAC building cost?

A. I don't remember. We made the budget though...

Q. So when bids came in you did not have to do any redesign?

A. Well, I don't know if I'd say it quite that clearly but we made a point of being on top of the game, at least trying to understand costs. In fact, if you were an unknown client of some kind and the only thing I always said is, you know, give me the budget, don't take the budget and think, oh, well these architects will over spend. So, as a result, we make our budgets.

Q. What year did that PAC building open?

A. I'd have to get into records. You know, it goes back a lot of years. They could tell you.

Q. If there's anything you could have done differently in that building, what would it be?

A. Make that auditorium bigger. I mean only because it's such a great success. And that's the one complaint we've always had is it's, you know, boy, if we could just get some more seats we could afford more and more and bigger productions. It's limited. It's a cost operation. In every case, if they can't make their money, they don't try to attract certain venues.

Q. Did you do any other design work on the campus?

A. We made an addition to Brookens, for one. I'm trying to think...basically that's it. You have to understand, the Public Affairs Center and the cafeteria, I'm saying the food service area, the underground and the connection, that's all part of the Public Affairs Center. It's not just that building. It's the whole connector between those buildings.

Q. Mm-hmm.

A. And even the outdoor, well not the outdoor seating area but where people...the awnings spilling out from the cafeteria, that's all part of our building. And as I say Brookens, but I think that's the extent of it.

Q. Did you work with any other Presidents or Chancellors?

A. Well, we worked with all of them, one way or another. When you get older you forget a lot of things Janice, in case you've forgotten that.

Q. (laughs)

A. In case you're not aware of that yet. So, yeah, I just can't remember their names. Yeah, we worked with all of them. In fact, I made a point of getting to know them quite well. But, you know, if you're in a small community, the best thing you could do is shake hands and kiss babies to get work and that's not being crass. That's just the way it works. So, it was important that I be aware of them and they be aware of Ferry and Henderson Architects. So yes, I probably danced with all of their wives at one time or another.

Q. (laughs) I'm going to stop this for just a minute.

Q. We are continuing part two of the discussion with Wally Henderson on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010. What were you saying about the particular thrill of...?

A. Here's what you get. When you're doing a building, you start with a program.

Q. Wait, wait, just one...

Q. This is part two of a discussion with Wally Henderson, who is the architect for the PAC building. If we've lost the first part, I'm going to be very upset but I think I'm in a new file now. This is Janice Spears and Wally, what were we just going to talk about?

A. The excitement of doing a building.

Q. Okay.

A. In this particular case, the Public Affairs Center was a program. We were chosen to be the architects to solve the new Public Affairs Center. Well, the title doesn't tell you what the building is. So, and I can't recall in detail, the program we were participating in writing, in other words, what is the Public Affairs Center? It turns out to be a building that has several functions.

Function is what's actually driving the use of it. We're having a structure that actually has the offices of the then President, today Chancellor. It has meeting spaces. It has office spaces for other staff people and departments of the University, as well as classrooms and public space. Also as part of that program was a food service in way of a cafeteria, a bookstore and some of the other elements. And then of course, we're being conditioned by what the whole master plan is about. So when you're starting to orient all these things, you put them down and everybody throws in the ideas and pretty soon you start relating them.

As I told you in the earlier discussion, one of the elements that had been put in the program was an auditorium. A speaking, quotation marks, a "speaking" auditorium, which means you're not trying to plan for Symphony or mixed staging or scenery or anything like this. That changed in the process from a 1,200 seat "speaking" auditorium, to a symphony hall and a legitimate stage, which has a New York standard of depth and height and the fly galleries that actually drop the scenery and so forth. It was a complete, different change from a speaking auditorium.

So all these things had to be negotiated back and forth and we did this over a period of time. You write the program, people sign off on it and you make the modifications as you go through and that's exactly what happened as far as the change in the auditoriums is concerned, but also to be able to operate that theater and staging and restroom facilities and so forth, independent

of the business offices and so forth, and classrooms, of the University. It's a pretty tricky thing to do but you take a little bit of pride in how you put it all together.

As far as I could see, we have been more than reasonably successful. We've made a little bit of an addition by actually moving some of the...a later project and I failed to mention this before. The glass line on the very upper right...I call it the first level, the grass level, the glass line was further into the building and we had more of an overhang. We moved that as a practical thing. Several years after we occupied the whole building and expanded the space because the gathering space out there was simply becoming encumbered by having outdoor space instead of indoor space. So that was it.

Also, our entrance to the whole campus was altered. You come down the ramp, we had a little different automobile approach to it but from a budgetary standpoint, we reduced the amount of paving and all the elements that go into it. You actually enter the building on the lower level and can move between Brookens Library or the Public Affairs Center and the bookstore and the cafeteria and other elements. It's just fun going through a building but that was our major contribution. I went to other University buildings. Of course, the University of Illinois was my campus, Illinois at Urbana but I traveled to look at some of the other universities including SIU in Carbondale and picked up a few ideas that we incorporated here.

Q. This was really a unique building to Springfield wasn't it?

A. Oh yes ma'am. In fact, it was unique in a very unusual way. I wish I could remember whoever was the state...he was either President of the Senate or head of the House of Representatives and we were in the process of putting together the building and I asked him to come out and give us a little critique. On the lower level of the Public Affairs Center there are several classrooms. One is sort of like an amphitheater arrangement. There are several that are flat.

There's one that's like a whole theater, as a matter of fact, which was to be used as a miniature theater. Anyway, we had this representative. He was a very important guy. As I recall everybody acknowledged what he had to say. He walked out there and he told me it's really nice. Then he stops cold turkey and he says, where's the bar? And I said, what're you talking about? He said, you want a bar where you can put your foot up on a brass rail and have a drink with somebody and discuss it.

That's where, and again this building was a practical teaching area for government. It was intended that way and that's why we had meetings that could be called council chambers. They could be called an amphitheater; they could be called anything you want because they varied in size and in design. It was very interesting when he said that and he said go up to the University of Chicago. They've got exactly what I'm telling you. And apparently, at first you're a little startled because this is the Bible belt or something close to it I'm afraid. From a practical

standpoint, it's not what you do while you're sitting in your workstation but the fact that you wanted to talk to somebody. When you want to talk to somebody, you don't yell across the road. You say let's step over here and talk a little bit.

And he said if you have a bar and that doesn't mean you have to have liquor but someplace where you could put your elbows down and say, what do you really mean by that? And I thought that was so important because, you know you can design all kinds of cute spaces that are very nice but they don't get it done. So, someplace along the way, this was all incorporated. I've forgotten how we solved the problem but we went to great lengths to get practical input from people to functionally design the buildings.

Q. Now, looking back from today's perspective, what stands out in your mind professionally or personally about your interactions with the University?

A. Well, I think I said to you, I met this John Kennedy who was the head of the auditorium facility to start with. You know a building can do a lot for you but if it doesn't function, or the people who are in it are not able to understand the capabilities of the building, but John Kennedy did. John Kennedy was familiar, as a matter of fact, with the...well, we got a consultant in, when we were doing the auditorium itself, which I mentioned earlier is a legitimate, functioning stage for a legitimate theater.

Well, John Kennedy knew the man who was our consultant and had worked with him before and so was perfect. Of course, John Kennedy was always a real advocate of what could happen on the stage. When we opened up and this is another key for future people, we didn't have any rigging in the gallery. In other words, we had the high hat in the back of the stage so you could pull full screens up or lower the screens but we didn't have all the rigging that goes with it and that's pretty expensive.

But we knew if we built the box, we could probably figure this one out later with budgets or something like it. So we built the box without the rigging. So we operated it a little while without that. The someplace, a legitimate theater in Iowa, was closed down. I think it was Iowa. I was told that, anyway. All of a sudden, in comes a truck one day with stuff either bought on the cheap or something similar to it and put in there. It was wonderful.

I remember climbing up which is like you're 3 stories or 4 stories above the stage area when you get to the very top catwalk. Up there is where all the rigging is. It was imported several years after we got the shell finished. Don't stop just because you don't have a 100% of the budget. Don't stop when you've got the roof on and have got it secured. If your idea is big enough, you can get it in there. John Kennedy was a champion of all that and got it done well. He did the same thing with the electrical circuiting and all that and the other things that went in there. I can't speak highly enough of that.

I was acquainted with many of the people who functioned in...well, the office of the president, who became good friends. They knew how to use the facilities and encourage John. It was something that Springfield's always been very, very proud of and certainly I have been proud to be a part of it.

Q. Thank You.

End of Interview

54 minutes 22 seconds