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Interviewee: Robert Henry “Ty” Robinson

Interviewer: Annie Pontrelli

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Annie Pontrelli: This is Annie Pontrelli interviewing Ty Robinson on August 6, 1991. Ty, why don't we start this out with you stating the years that you were affiliated with the University and in what positions, and we'll just go from there.

Ty Robinson: I came to the University of Montana in the fall of 1935 and I left in 1940, just before the beginning of World War Two (WWII), and then I came back in 1946 to conclude my stay at the university, and graduated in the spring of 1948. I first came as a student and received my B.A. in History and Political Science. At that time, why, that was a combined degree, which is different than it is now. I did receive my degree, and left to go work for the Department of Justice in 1940. Then when I came back in 1946, I came back to attend law school and received my law degree in March of 1948. When I came back after WWII, I worked—or had the opportunity to work—with the president of the university in the President's Office on personnel matters. It fit in quite well with going to law school at the time. I had a wife and two children and a mother-in-law. We were all living together. My wife was working at the university. She's a graduate also. She graduated in 1938, so you see she married a man much younger than herself. (laughs) She won't believe that and it isn't true at all. So I was a student here during those years.

Then following, starting in 1950, I taught at the university in the School of Business and Business Law for 11 years. After WWII, we had an influx of students, of course, and tremendous. The school was just overloaded and the School of Business had a dean by the name of Ted Smith. Asked three downtown lawyers to come out and help, which we did. Our classes ranged from 70 to 80 students—really sizeable. But those were interesting years for, I think, the students, and interesting for us. Certainly I always appreciated the opportunity to be working in that respect because it kept me up right to snuff on business law matters, and I was involved as a business lawyer at the time.

You're wondering maybe why I came to the university. I had a scholarship out of high school to Whitman College, where I attended my freshman year. I came here my second year of school and came from Kalispell. Probably because there were many graduates from Kalispell and there were a couple of lawyers who had encouraged me to come to school here. They were more or less my mentors, in the sense that I was playing baseball in the summer with both of them and they convinced me that I should come down to the university and play baseball. Anyway, came I to the university and I've never regretted the fact. It's an excellent school, was an excellent school then.

In those days, our teachers, I must confess—we were smaller. We only had a student body of 2,000, so the teachers had a greater opportunity to have interaction one to one with students. There was more of that than I think we see in the modern day schools of today, due to the fact that we are restricted, perhaps, in faculty, and other things. The faculty we came to know very well, and of course we became very good friends with them, particularly as we grew older, settled in Missoula and started to earn our living here. We became socially interested with them and they with us. I could tell you some interesting things about the university.

I saw when we arrived here it was only a small school. Missoula was a small town—about 12,000 people—and I say small in the sense...But it was a big city as far as I was concerned, coming from Kalispell, maybe of 4,000 or 5,000 people. We always talked about going down to the city, which would be going down to Missoula. The people in Missoula were wonderful to me and when I came to school I worked in one of the downtown clothing stores for a while, which was Dragstedt's. It was one of the old merchant stores located at the end of Higgins Avenue. I guess I landed there because I pledged a fraternity and the fraternity happened to be the same fraternity as the Dragstedt brothers. (laughs) Not what you know, maybe, but who you know. Missoula was a little town. It was a lumber town, strictly, when I arrived. A beautiful town along the river, and of course at that time we still had...The last of the streetcars had gone, but we traveled back and forth between downtown and the university in buses. We came to know that handled the bus situation very well.

Times were different then. I was courting my present wife and for about a dollar, we could get a bus ride downtown—the two of us—go to the Wilma for a show, and then go next door to the Plaza, or whatever it was—Sunshine Parlor—and get a cherry Coke and ride home on the bus, all for a dollar. So times were different, economically.

We didn't have automobiles on the campus. We had the beautiful oval, which was at that time a regular street and you drove your cars around the oval. As a matter of fact, in the spring, when we had the state track meet here—which we did every spring, and it was a big affair, bringing high school students to the university—we would have lots of decorations around the university. The fraternities and sororities always had outstanding decorations, trying to encourage students to come to the university. We would have long lines of traffic of the few cars we had to drive around the oval and down University and around in the springtime of the year when we were all young.

Missoula was a nice town then and has grown since that time and it's been interesting to live here and watch the growth. The university is the key. It was then and still is the key part of the city of Missoula, Missoula County's culture. We had the headquarters of the Forest Service and we had some other things here, but the decline of the railroad population...Universities remain static, that is, the stable employer in the community. Has been, still is.

When I first arrived, we were right in the middle of a transition of presidents. Dr. Clapp, who had come out from South Dakota years before and somewhat of a geologist, had been the

president of the university here for several years. I don't know how many—12, 13. He had died. We had an interim president, a man by the name of Professor Scheuch, a demure fellow who had come out from Purdue University and he came here to head up the Engineering School at the university, which of course, on a compromise, was moved over to Bozeman. But Prof decided to stay here. He liked the area and he liked the people, so he stayed. This very handsome (unintelligible) type looking fellow, he was the president of the university, acting.

Then we went through a rather serious time in the university's life when the state board of education determined to raise out of the faculty a man by the name of George Finley Simmons, a professor of zoology—and an outstanding zoologist in the country, by the way—who was on the faculty and had been two or three years, and they made him president. Well, there were some parts of the faculty who didn't like this. There was a division within the ranks of the faculty and it became within the ranks of the student body. I remember that there were students who were asked to go to the legislature in the session in 1937 to plead for whatever the amount that the university was asking for then, and it seemed to me it was less than a million dollars to operate the university, as against some 30, 40 million today. Anyway, those people went over at the request of Dr. Simmons, the president. They were blackballed by the faculty that didn't like them. I think it is not well known, but students who supported Dr. Simmons...Dr. Simmons was ultimately removed when the next governor was elected in the spring of 1940. In the fall of 1940, the first thing the governor did was remove Mr. Simmons. Anyway, those students who supported him, many of those gradually faded from the university. Did not see them again for various reasons. But I think certain faculty members just earmarked them. It was a traumatic time, but it was a wonderful time to be a student, aside from the political trauma that was taking place from the selection of the president. Following that, we went through a series of presidents, ten more presidents to the present president. On average, a tenure of about four years per president.

AP: Ty, do you recall certain characters that stand out among those administrations?

TR: There isn't any question about who stood out. We had a dean of the faculty by name of Richard Jesse, a tall man, probably six foot four or five, a big, huge man, who had graduated as a young man at the age of sixteen from Harvard. He was a brilliant man, an exceptional student, as I understood. He scared every student to death, he intimidated you, but he ran the faculty the same way. Richard Jesse was the outstanding person that I'd have to say was the one with whom I lived was the dean, a man by the name of J. E. Miller, Burley Miller. He probably had as much effect on my life in the university as any professor, mainly because I did live with him. I was his houseboy for two years, along with other students. I came to know him and his family very well. His daughter still lives here in Missoula—Patricia Jewell is her name. Dr. Jesse raised an interesting family. He went and married a girl who was, I want to say the athletic director. She was director of women's athletics, Lucille Jesse, a very strong-minded person. The two of them together made a great couple. But they had a great influence in the university. As dean of the faculty, I learned this when I lived with the dean [inaudible] because I was party to it at

times. New professors brought into the university, they went to dinner at the Jesse house first. Then if Dr. and Mrs. Jesse thought they were okay, they were in. If they didn't, they moved on.

There were a lot of fine professors that we had. I majored in History and Political Science, as I said, and in that we had some very outstanding professors. A professor by the name of Dr. Edwin Bennett was exceptionally good in history. Paul Phillips was the outstanding American history professor, particularly as to Indians, the Indian lore of the Northwest. He had written several textbooks on it. He went through a scandal during the Simmons administration that was, as we found out many years later, a staged scandal to try and...He was a supporter of Dr. Simmons and he was charged with having sexually molested one of the students. He went through a public trial. He was found not guilty, but nevertheless, it was a stain on the Simmons administration. He was an excellent professor. We had excellent professors over in the School of Journalism and Dean Stone, who had founded the School of Journalism and had started out in a tent instead of a school. And during the time that I was in school, 1936, I think it was, they built the journalism building, which was quite a stroke of business we thought at the time. The School of Forestry was outstanding. Had a dean by the name of Spaulding and had a group of characters as faculty people. They were rough, tough, but they turned out a fine product, and in those days the Forest Service, the regional offices of the United States Forest Service in Missoula would take practically any one of those students that wanted to matriculate into the Forest Service. Years later, that was not the case, as our forestry school got into the political agenda and sort of went down hill. I think our forestry school is back today, not quite of the prominence it had under Spaulding in those days.

We had some interesting women professors over in the School of Home Economics. We and (unintelligible) went out of their way to teach students, those of us who had come to the university and probably didn't know which side of the plate your fork or knife should be. They would attempt, through our dinners in the dormitories on Sunday, or if you were in a fraternity, to visit, usually on Sunday or in the evenings, to bring that type of training to us. We had a lady who ran the dormitories by the name of Monica Sweringen (?). She was an outstanding person and a character. She ran things with an iron hand. I happen to have been assistant manager of a dormitory, which was Corbin Dormitory. It was a girls' dormitory, but they made it into a men's dormitory at that time, moved some men in there. We used to have to lock the door of our dormitory at 11 o'clock at night for men. We could leave it open until one-thirty on weekends. Every once in a while a student took exception to that and would pull the front door off by hooking a chain to his car. We had those things that happened. But she was a good administrator, there wasn't any question about it. These were people that you looked back on, the people who were the house mothers—I don't know whether that's correct to say—in the dormitories. But we came to know them and people who lived in those dormitories came to fully respect them and their work as well. The same thing in fraternity and sorority houses, I think, in those days.

Students apparently had less rights than the law says today, the courts say. So you did as you were told to do and you didn't challenge anybody. Changes have accrued over the years at the

university. We've seen the changes over 50 years. I just celebrated my 50th graduation last year from the university for my B.A. I (unintelligible) in 1948 if I'm still around. The changes I think are no different, probably, than they were. Social standards have changed. I think one of the things that a larger student body isn't as cohesive to doing many things as a small one. We were here during the small years. We watched the others in the university who went through the tumultuous '60s and the Vietnam stage, when we had Bob Pantzer as president, who worked diligently to try to keep things on an even keel, and I think he did an exceptional job. He managed only to burn part the R.O.T.C. building because the students felt they had to show us some interest.

We've had political scandals on the campus. During the days of the McCarthy hearings, we were voted to add people here who shouldn't be here. We did have people who ran away when it came time to be questioned as to their political preference, whether they were communist or otherwise. We had a librarian who couldn't get on a ship fast enough to get out of the United States. He ended up in Poland and eventually in Russia and he's been there and, I guess, since died. He had been pointed out to us in our early days as a communist. But no proof was ever made of it. The assumption was that he was running away because he didn't want to answer some questions.

What would I say to you that I like best about the university? I think I've already indicated some of the things. There was great fraternity, cohesiveness, among students. And we knew every student. There wasn't any question in the school, whether you were a sophomore, junior, or senior, you really became acquainted. I think we did a lot of that through...We had lots of convocations. Every week we'd have a convocation because they just built a brand new building called the student union building in 1935, '36. It was large enough to take care of the whole student body so we would hear professors there, we would hear lectures, we would hear outstanding people that would be brought here by the university under its auspices. And you'd get to know people that you lived with, people in the dormitories or wherever you lived.

Of course, I think I was fortunate that I was in student government and active in many areas of student government, I guess, as I look back on it. I was on the Store Board. Store Board was a seven man—we actually had a couple girls on it at that time. We don't call them girls, we should say women on the Store Board. That was the board that managed the university store. It had a manager by the name of Morris McCullum who unquestioningly was one of the outstanding people in our lives. He was the man who ran the student store. He was the man who saw to it that people that needed work in order to get through college would get work. He ran the university baseball team on the side. That was his hobby. It was a good baseball team. He loaned students money when they needed it. He was kind of their banker. An interesting man who died here a few years ago. But many students probably the fact that they were able to get educated to the fact that Morris McCullum saw to it that they had work. You'd get to know all of the people who were working at the student store in student government.

I was the business manager for the yearbook, the Sentinel. We don't have that anymore. That's one of the changes that took place, I guess, about the '60s or thereabout, or 1960 or after WWII. And through that you would get the smattering of most students and what schools they were. Because if you were publishing that kind of a book, you would have to be doing it with the cooperation of the people at every school and those who were graduating. I've been fortunate that, living in Missoula, we have been close to the university through the years and been able to see the old alums as they come back each and every year and those are our friends and, of course, friends are the greatest thing in the world.

Favorite teachers I've told you. I guess Burley Miller, the dean of the men who was the head of the History Department was one of my favorite teachers. Another favorite teacher was a fellow that went into the political world by the name of Mike Mansfield. He taught us Far East history. There were many students, including myself and others, that went out and helped campaign for Mike the first time he tried to run for public office and was roundly defeated. But we had lots of fun. We were learning the political process. It was a good laboratory for us. We've known Mike personally ever since that time. One of the things I think about the professors—we knew them personally. In the Law School, there was a teacher by the name of Howard Tully that was an outstanding professor, as far as I was concerned. David Mason, who died here a year or two ago, was one of the finest professors I think we had on the campus. Stern, but you learned to do your work in order to come to his class prepared. We had some other professors in the Law School off and on, from time to time. In our early Law School, we used people from downtown. A long-time professor in the Law School was my senior partner, Jim Burlington. And Russell Smith, who later became a federal district judge here, was also a professor. Donovan Worden, Sr., who had been a county attorney and a prosecutor, and eventually became the attorney for the Western Federal Savings & Loan was a teacher. These people brought active, practical experience to a law student. They weren't academics. They were the people who were really teaching you what goes on in the real world out there in law. I think we were fortunate to have had those. The Law School today uses some of that same technique. They use some downtown lawyers that are available.

Favorite classes at the university: they had a lot of them. As a sophomore, we had what we called survey courses. Are you familiar with a survey course?

AP: Go ahead and explain it.

TR: Well, a survey course, of course, was one that, in order to quality yourself and take care of your science requirement, you took a survey course in which professors like Dr. Jesse in Chemistry...And by the way, Dr. Jesse was the professor who taught the Nobel Laureate Harold Urey. Dr. Jesse, a pretty fair chemistry professor, he was one of the professors you'd get in that survey course. You'd get other professors in Chemistry. You'd get them in physics. You'd get them in geology. You'd get them in archaeology. And you'd get some of them in anthropology. Then you would take a survey course in social science. Maybe you'd be getting somebody in history, somebody in social welfare types of courses, and then you could get over into the math

area if you wished and you'd have Dr. Linnis (?), who was the head of the School of Math. An outstanding Norwegian professor, hardheaded as could be, but believe me you learned your math. He had a very fine assistant, who still lives here in Missoula. A very bright girl who had come to the university from Sand Coulee, Montana—Emma Lommasson.

AP: I've interviewed her.

TR: She's a lovely lady. She happens to be my neighbor. She's a great lady, but she was his assistant and she made the study of math palatable to students because students would be frightened by this fellow who was a giant in his generation, unquestionably, as a math teacher. I didn't particularly like math. I didn't particularly like accounting. I regretted that I didn't take some typing because we had a lady who really...I think every student that went through the typing course for 40 years will remember Brenda Wilson. She ran a very strict school teacher but turned out some very fine secretarial people in those days. Many of those secretaries went on to have excellent positions around the country.

The activities in the university in those days helped us, in some ways, be better people and learn to live with each other better. We had lots of organizations. If you were a member of the Bearpaw, for instance—that's the softball organization—you were active in trying to police university functions. A counterpart of that is the Spurs for the women.

AP: How were those members chosen?

TR: I'm not certain I could be correct on that, but I think that the dean of women, the dean of men, and the administration selected those students, probably on the basis of maybe their scholarship activity and possibility of how they might flower in the future, and so forth. The [inaudible] Sentinel and the Mortar Board were selected pretty much on grades to start with, and activities in student government, the leadership activities, normally, I think in both areas. We had whatever school you might have been in. If you were in the English Department, you spent a lot of time in debate and oratory and you might end up in [inaudible] Kappa Alpha, which was the honorary forensic fraternity or sorority or whatever it was.

I look back on the university and I'm very much interested in athletics, because when I came to the university, I was a walk-on for the basketball team. At my height, which isn't over six foot one inches, I played center for the university Grizzlies when we were playing in what was then the Pacific Coast Conference, playing Stanford, Oregon, California, University of Washington, both the Oregon schools, and Idaho was in the conference with us. Montana and Idaho were kind of the doormats for the conference. We were always in the bottom. Our record wasn't very good in those years. When I was here we had a new coach come in, a man by the name of Lewindowski (?) was the coach in basketball and he left us to go to the University of Nebraska to become the athletic director of his home school. A man by the name of [George] "Jiggs" Dahlberg, George Dahlberg came along to be our basketball coach and he was a part of the famous Dahlberg family at Butte. Four brothers had come to the university and they all had

outstanding records in athletics. He went on in life to do very well. Jigs Dahlberg is one of those that I would have to say was one of my favorites, and certainly a man that, when you had problems, you could go sit down with him a little bit like a father and he'd help you out. And to this day—Jiggs is still alive and still very interested in university athletics. He was the athletic director. Many of us, who had the privilege of being one of his student athletes, organized several years ago to have the university field house gymnasium named for him. The field house was originally named for Harry Adams, who was the track coach here for many years, and that was done because Jigs Dahlberg insisted they name it for Harry Adams. The thing is backwards. The track that we have, the beautiful university track, should be named for Harry Adams and dedicated to him, and the field house should have been dedicated to Jigs Dahlberg. Anyway, the basketball court out there is the George P. Dahlberg basketball court. If you're in the field house time you'll find a copper plaque, a beautiful copper plaque on the first floor as you walk in with a bronze feature of Jigs. We're pleased about that.

I think being in athletics...You know, we had all types of athletics. We had lots of intramural athletics, and they still do today, but our intramural athletics was very important to us. We had activity in both boys and girls athletics at that time. We thought we were very modern, very far advanced. The girls have always had a good athletic program.

AP: There was basketball and baseball and football and track?

TR: Yes, we had track. We had intramural track.

AP: And that was the same for the women too?

TR: Women didn't have track. The women had basketball. You know, they had something else. I want to say it was something like lacrosse. They played it with sticks. The women played it, the men didn't. I don't know what it was.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

TR: My father had played baseball with a man by the name of Ty Cobb, and that's where I received my nickname. My father, like all fathers, wanted his son to be a baseball player, so I played a lot of baseball when I was in high school. When I came down here to the university I played baseball. They had a very good team here, and I wasn't one of their best players. I could run and I could field, but I wasn't a good hitter. And of course you don't stay in baseball unless you hit quite well. So that was sort of the end of my baseball career. I enjoyed the university, I think, for the baseball. Sometimes it got in the way of spring classes.

As I really look back on it, I tell my wife many times: if I hadn't been involved in some of the things and activities that I liked—student government and these other things and putting out the yearbook—I probably would have had better grades, and maybe that would have been better. But I don't think it seemed to matter in the end, because I graduated from Law School. My grades were fairly good, good enough to let me go out and practice law. And for almost 40 years, I practiced law and I couldn't wait to get to the office every morning to practice. I'm now retired, or semi-retired. But I'm sure the grades are important. But I look back on it and I probably could have done better. Dr. McCain, for whom I worked when I was going to law school, used to tell me that law school was easy. I don't think Dr. McCain knew how difficult law school could be. And I'm certain it's more difficult today and I'm glad I graduated when I did. Trying to carry on a job every afternoon, working weekends in the President's Office, and working at night, and trying to study for classes, I think it was difficult, but we did it. Lots of students did it. I was no exception to that. Many of them did better.

AP: How did the position when you were working in the business office come about?

TR: In the President's Office?

AP: Yes.

TR: Just after I came back and started to law school. Dr. McCain had been a naval commander and he seemed to surround himself with people who had been in the Navy with him or had been in the Navy. Somehow I became acquainted, I think, with one of his assistants, who had been in the Navy, and I had known him at Pearl Harbor, where I had been in the Navy. And the next thing I knew, I was asked if I would like to work with Dr. G. D. Shellenbarger, the head of the Physics Department, one of the finest human beings that ever walked the face of the earth. A German professor, graduated at Oklahoma University and, I think, Tulane University, who came to the university in 1920 and stayed until he retired and then was elected County Commissioner here and served as County Commissioner, I think, for six or twelve years. I can't remember. I think it was six years.

The university asked Dr. Shellenbarger to set up a task force to look at personnel matters on the campus, particularly among the secretarial staff members and others, other than faculty. And

they called it a class A and B task force. Well, between the man in the President's Office and Dr. Shellenbarger, they asked me if I would be interested in serving on this and I told them I would. So they said it would be a job for me, so I went to work and the next thing I knew I was in an office next to the president's office. And here were all these other Navy people. Ty Robinson's a Navy man, so I think it was a Navy operation. Well, we worked on the project for a year and a half and then submitted it to the president and I think he eventually submitted it to the state board of education. It was adopted as a program—how they operate the secretarial staff—and it's still in effect today in part. If you were to come in to the university, you'd come in at certain class levels, and that's how you progress. Your evaluation, if it's all good...It was something similar to a civil service system of a type—without the tenure situation, et cetera. That's how I happened to get involved.

It was great working for Dr. McCain. I think he was a graduate of Stanford University and one day he said to me, "What's your goal in life?"

"Well, I guess it's to get out of college as soon as I can and start supporting my wife and family."

He said, "How would you like to go down to Stanford for a couple years and work on a doctorate?" Because I had a Master's from the University of Hawaii that I was able to pick up during the time I was in Hawaii in the Navy. We could go to school at night out there. Thousands of Army and military personnel went to the University of Hawaii. We were very fortunate because during the war there were lots of very fine professors from all over campuses in the United States and Canada and England and elsewhere were there as visiting professors, so we had an opportunity to do that. Dr. McCain said, "I think you'd maybe like to be a college president someday."

I said, "I don't think I would, thanks."

But he said, "Stanford has a training school, in fact, for college presidents, for those who have the interest and probably the possibility, the feasibility of it. I think we could arrange to have you attend school there." It's apparently a separate school in one of the divisions (unintelligible). I had never heard of it before, but anyway, he thought maybe I ought to take that road. I'm glad that I went through what I did as a country lawyer.

AP: Actually, Ty, there's one question down here too, and this would be more applicable to your teaching period, but just what your philosophy or your vision or your attitude—whatever the correct word would be—in your approach to teaching?

TR: I was fortunate in teaching business law. To attempt to teach students and help them understand the practical aspect. In business law, you get banking and those type of things, and we had a lot of that. I'm not certain they thought I was a very good teacher, but somebody like Jan Davidson, that I had in class, had quite a time with him at times keeping his interest in class. Do you know Jan?

AP: Yes, G. A. Davidson.

TR: G. A. Davidson. He tells me that some of the things we taught were very worthwhile. I tried the practical aspect because I really wasn't an academic type. I realize that in much of our teaching today we still must adhere to some philosophy, but I'd like to see more of, I guess, the practical aspect taught. We come into the world and nobody teaches us. We have children and nobody teaches us how to raise children. Nobody teaches us how to be successful in married life. It seems to me that the success in those things comes about with a practical application. I guess that would be my philosophy, not downgrading all the other things that we had to learn. The courses I took at the university, I enjoyed them all, even as tough as some of them might have been and as poorly as I might have done in some.

Take history, for instance. I think history is important to us. Historians have said it better than I can say it: if we forget our history, we're in trouble looking at the future. I still go back to the university and through the years we've been fortunate living here in Missoula to be able to go to many interesting lectures, seminars, and other things in the fields in which we have an interest. If we're interested in music, the best music in the world is available to us sometimes here.

History, and of course, the law. Our law school is a good one. We're very fond of the present dean of the Law School. And in our own lives. Here we have the former dean, Jack Mutton, is a partner. So we've been very close to the law throughout the years, naturally. We've been a part of the Law School and seeing it grow, particularly since both Sherm Lawn and Jim Gardington taught. And Sherm taught for many years in the Law School. He replaced Jim in teaching practice court in the Law School. He retired here a few years ago, as you eventually do. But I know he enjoyed it and he was an excellent teacher, just as Jim Gardington was, from what I've heard.

Walter Pope, a downtown lawyer, who became a federal circuit judge in San Francisco, was also a teacher in the Law School and he taught me corporation law when I was taking it in the Law School. And that was the law which really was my main forte in the practice of law. I was somewhat of a corporate lawyer. I was a constitutional lawyer also.

One of your questions you ask is if you had the chance to go back in time, what would you do differently or what memory [or] experience would you relive? What would I do differently was the thing I spoke about a while ago: perhaps maybe study a little harder. I'm hoping that I would broaden my education and diversify it a little more. I don't think I would do anything differently. One of the nicest things about going to school was I met my wife here and we courted during her senior year and my junior year. And those were memories that really live with me forever. We just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary, so it had real meaning for us.

There were so many things about the university. You haven't asked me what I think about the modern university. Well, the modern university is somewhat different. I see the difference because for many years I was a lobbyist, and I don't mean to be putting Ty Robinson—I, I so much—but in order to tell this and make this point...I was a lobbyist at the legislature for 11 sessions for the railroads in Montana. During that period of time, I was afforded the opportunity to really lobby [inaudible], very conveniently, for The University of Montana in Missoula. One of my first lobbying techniques was to make certain that Billings, which had a normal school, didn't ascend to the status of a full-blown four year college. And I think we were successful at that for many years until finally Dr. Newburn, a good friend of mine, was then president, came to the legislature and we had an evening meeting him. He said, "We have decided that it's going to be alright for Billings to go ahead and have a four year school and be in full academic operation as a status of a college." So that came about.

But during the years I was at the legislature, I was almost a defense counsel for the university, because so many of the legislators, particularly from Eastern Montana—I call them the cowboy type. Wonderful people, meant well, but they're close to the soil and they couldn't quite understand some of the things that take place at a liberal arts educational institution. Let's take as an example, in the legislative session I'd want to say of about 1963 or '65, we had worked very hard as a group over there and the president and the administration worked hard to get the appropriations that they needed. And we always had the opportunity of knowing the legislators personally. And if they trusted you they worked well with you. And the chairman of the Finance and Claims was a good friend of mine and he had told me, he said, "I think we can get the extra three quarters of a million dollars for the university in the project that you've been pounding us for." That was three days, two days, before the legislature.

A man by the name of Clancy Gordon, who was an outstanding environmentalist at the university and a teacher and a good teacher, went up on Mount Sentinel, up to the "M," and gave the ten commandments of environmentalism or something and two of them castigated the legislature. Well, it didn't take very long for word to travel from Mount Sentinel to the hallowed halls of Helena. The Finance and Claims committee summoned me to their meeting and said, "We think perhaps we may have made a mistake in talking about the three quarters of a million." Bang, down the drain.

It was an attitude like that that I think I found myself defending the university quite often. I'm not certain...At times, the administration and the students showed bad judgment in handling their affairs and the perception that they gave to the legislators. Through the years, our standing at the legislature really went down as Bozeman went up, and there was a good reason for that. Bozeman has a program where the agriculturalists, through the county extension agents—and there's one agent in every county—so that Bozeman has its own PR person sitting right there and recruiting students to the university. There is no question about it. That's one of the things. If a student indicates an interest in agriculture or mechanics or engineering, the

county agent's job is to see to it that the student is made familiar with what is offered on that campus. But for several years, we didn't have that. We didn't have our people going up.

We had some administrations that felt that research was more important here than public contact. And we lost ground. We lost ground in Great Falls. For many years, most of the graduates out in Great Falls High School were finding themselves down to Bozeman or going to the University of Minnesota, the University of Washington, not to Missoula. Many people called us the University of Missoula. My hometown of Kalispell had a superintendent that became upset with things down here and the next thing I knew, some of the top athletes out of Kalispell were not coming to the university and were not interested in the university.

Where are we today, in Ty Robinson's estimation? We're over the hump. Dr. Jim Koch went out and ate apple pie and drank a lot of coffee with the legislators and he went into the school rooms and took off his coat. I was with him on two trips and I watched him fascinate the students. The following spring, our applications here increased and are still increasing as a result of that effort of that administration. I think that we're moving back. As a matter of fact, the other day I heard from someone at the university that we might possibly have more students this fall than Bozeman has. Of course we've always been...That's been the other school. Our school here is the flagship school, as far as we're concerned. It is a flagship school. Fortunately, we've been able, through the years, to entice people to come here as professors who are qualified and outstanding, even though we haven't been able to pay them what their peers are getting. Apparently there are other things here. We've always said it's the fishing and the hunting and the skiing and the snowmobiling and the beauty and the type of quality of life that they're willing to sacrifice honest dollars. We've been, I think, fortunate in that respect.

As a person who looks back to the days that I was in the university, of course, my love goes back to those old professors who spent a lot of time with us on a very personal basis. And I, again, reiterate that I doubt that today professors have that feeling. I've attended and sat in classes just to watch and see how things are going. I had the feeling professors either felt they were overburdened or not interested or committed to their task as much as those professors that we had. That's not to say that...We have a lot of fine faculty. I think our administration is considering the amount of funding that the university receives from the legislature. I think we do very well. I think we keep pace. It's easy, I think, to believe that. You look at the number of students that we send over to—is it Oxford? We rank very high in the United States...

AP: The Rhodes Scholars?

TR: The Rhodes Scholars, yes, the Oxford Rhodes Scholars. And the number of scholars that we send to Washington, D.C. under other programs, I think we rank very well. I think in some areas through the years, we get disgusted with, not our professors alone, but the way they were running certain schools. We've been very critical of the Kaimin through the years. When I was in school, we thought the Kaimin was a great thing because I was a student that and that gave us a voice against the administration. Not as strident as it is today and not as caustic. The

university administration feels that it can't in any way trample on first amendment rights of those people who operate that. The Kaimin is truly separate from the university. I'm not certain that that's correct, but that's the policy of the university. I know over at Montana State a different policy is adopted and the administration there feels that it has a lever on its [inaudible]. Certain news organs and so forth. It has through the years. I remember visiting a Dr. Renny years ago. He told me how at the start of the school year he would call in the editors at the news organs and their yearbook and all of the deans and said that anybody was free to say anything they wished, write anything they wished, as long as it didn't in any way disparage the university or then at the time it was the State College.

It's interesting, you know, you talk about something. When I came to the university in 1935 we were the University of Montana. Then, as a member of the student body, I was one of the leaders to change the name to Montana State University. Why did we do it? Well, at the time, it was the thing that was supposed to be done as far as schools across the country, so we changed it. I have a diploma that says I graduated from Montana State University. Then after WWII, we came back here. Then the state college wanted to...I think colleges across the country, particularly land grant colleges, felt that they should have a better logo and a different type of name, so of course it had to be a university. So with the help of some of us, we changed it back to The University of Montana and that name, Montana State University, went over to Bozeman. It's a little bewildering when you're giving a resume sometimes that you graduated from Montana State University. Both of my diplomas are from Montana State University, my legal graduation and so on. It's just an interesting little bit of trivia.

I think I've talked too much to you.

AP: Oh no, you haven't. It's been very interesting. There might be some other questions that...Certainly this would be something (unintelligible).

TR: Some of the goals as a teacher?

AP: When you were working for the...

TR: For the university? The goal at that time, I think, was to institute a system that put in place a system of something like the civil service system so that people who were in the types of work throughout the university campus, whether it was here or whether it was up at the Lubrecht Forest or whether it was in elsewhere, that if they were working for the university that they knew what types of challenges they had, what their job descriptions were. We didn't have any job descriptions until that policy was put into effect. And what the starting salaries would be and what they would expect for reimbursement remuneration throughout the years. And it was the first time we talked about anything very serious in the way of pensions. There was a pension system in place at the state level, PERS I think it was. But many of the secretaries apparently, as I recall, and staff members at that level below the faculty weren't included in this. So all they were included in was social security. And then there were faculty people who

were not included in social security who then were able to become a part of the social security system as well as to have their separate state pension system for retirement. I think that was one of the goals that we had, one of the challenges we were asking, one of the parameters we set out to complete.

What period of time was your favorite or most memorable at the university? During the time that I was a student in 1936, '37, '38. During those years when I was playing basketball, playing baseball, working, living with the Dean of Men. And at his home you would be able to get in on the gossip on the campus and other things, what was going on in the faculty and listening to the attitude that the Dean of Men and his family might have toward some of the scandal.

How did the University of Montana effect or shape the person you are today? It had a very definite effect on my life. When I came to the University of Montana, I really was planning to go in to the ministry, but it didn't take very long for me to find that I didn't really have the call. So my next interest and the interest at that time—because not many jobs were available—was to perhaps go into the Foreign Service. And we did have graduates that we knew that were going into the Foreign Service and many went into it. Well, as you went along, it seemed that the more charismatic type of people that were getting jobs might be over in journalism. So you could be a journalist, because we had some outstanding graduates in the School of Journalism who had been covering events in Europe prior to WWII. They were by-line writers and they were getting a lot of notoriety. So I suspect this sort of thing influenced us a little.

But finally I got around to the point where I decided that maybe I should get a teacher's certificate for insurance. In order to do that, I had to have a B.A. of some type. So I ended up in the history and political science. And I had an opportunity to go teaching. The university had a real effect on me. It was Jigs Dahlberg who, when I was getting ready to graduate, called me and said that there was a small town called Outlook in northeastern Montana—it's about a mile and a half from the North Dakota border and about three miles from the Saskatchewan border. They were looking for a teacher that could coach boys and girls basketball and teach five subjects. And I went to look at the job and decided that...My wife, who was already a teacher and teaching in Dixon, had been for a couple years, said I wasn't cut out to be a teacher and she discouraged me and she said, "You won't last as a high school coach for very long." She was absolutely right. So she guided me, as she always has, along the way and I think the university really shaped my future, particularly after WWII when I came back and was able to get a degree in law and to be able to live in Missoula.

I've lived in many towns in Montana. As a matter of fact, I played high school basketball on four different high school teams. Just the fact that my family moved around each year—almost, as I say, when the rent came due—in little towns. I played basketball in Highwood to start with because they only had enough for seven students on the team and I was the seventh. A little school of 46 students, a high school. Then I moved to Great Falls, where we had 2,000 students and I played basketball there. Then I moved to Columbia Falls right in the middle of the school year and I hated to leave Great Falls because I was playing basketball and that was important.

Played basketball for Columbia Falls and then I moved to Kalispell, where I graduated, and I was captain of the basketball team. So I think today, as I see a lot of these alums and people we know who've gone back to these various towns—by virtue of the fact that I went to the university, I became acquainted with them—and those memories stand out like beacon lights in your life.

What advice would you give today's university teachers and students? I think I mentioned in that in the fact that I think at times I would like to see bringing a little more realism into the classroom—not forgetting philosophy, not forgetting the actual history that they teach. Mathematics doesn't change. Two plus two still equals four. But I know right now in this morning's paper—you perhaps saw it—where the university received a 3.7 million dollar grant to teach mathematics. The first thing they're going to have to do is to make it interesting. I guess that's what I'm talking about. The teacher has to project him or herself in a manner that interests the student.

When I was teaching business law I got in trouble because I told these students, I said, "I'm here as a teacher. I have a contract with the state of Montana. They're paying me a total sum of 25 dollars to teach this course, and they have a contract with you that as a student you're going to attend class. If you'll be so kind as to show up, just put in an appearance here, I'll try not to flunk any of you." I had students wander in in the morning that had been out drunk all night and everything else. To be there, they had learned that they weren't going to be flunked and they could get through that course. Well, when the dean heard about this, of course I was on the carpet: "You can't grade people that way."

I said, "Yes I can. I'm going to teach them enough so that they'll go out of that class at least as good—D plus or C students. Leave that to me." In the middle of the quarter, they made us change teachers to monitor us to see what we were learning. At the end of the semester my students rated the highest of all the three teachers. So then I went to the dean and I went to the faculty meeting and stood up and said, "See. Keep these kids in class, they're going to learn something."

A lot of the students I've had have gone on to the business world and we talk about things. I was visiting yesterday with a former bishop in the Episcopal Church who just retired from Spokane. A man by the name of Lee Wallace from Great Falls. We were talking about the class. He was telling his wife all about the things I used to do to keep them awake. He said, "You couldn't anymore do those things today." He said, "Do you remember? You had a small young lady in the front row, a beautiful blonde. And you were having trouble with a boy in the back who wouldn't stay awake so you went back and got that boy by the hand and got him up and sat him in a chair with this blonde and had them hold hands during the class hour. You couldn't get away with that today."

AP: (laughs) You actually did that?

TR: I actually did that. Do you know what that boy turned out to be? The general manager of Boise Cascade. He's been on and (unintelligible) the university since.

AP: What other kinds of methods did you use? Those are some very creative ones.

TR: Yes. For instance, when we were teaching things about how to make out checks—how do you write a check and what happens to the check—I set up a bank. We took a class for three weeks and I thought I was going to get fired for that too because the professor that taught banking and something...

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

TR: ...A part of the bank, a part of the group were cashiers, and another part were handling the checks that actually, we'd been able to write in paying each other. In connection with that, we ran a little stock brokering operation, where people were buying and selling stock. And to show them first where the checks go and how they were handled through the bank and how to make out a check and what it represents, what's good and what's bad about checks and how to avoid having trouble in handling your account. I was off on the tangent of trying to teach them a little ethics about being certain that if they're going to have a bank account that they always had money in it. This to me was a practical aspect and if they were the ones responsible for it they had to discipline themselves. We had a lot of fun doing that and the students entered into that with great spirit. They also entered into it on the basis of what we were trying to do over a period of a quarter of buying and selling stock. That had to end after one quarter because other professors in the School of Business were doing the same thing. That really wasn't a complete part of the business law course, as it was outlined. So we gave that up.

Those are the things that I thought were teaching the actual every day practicality, how to do this, how to live with it, and I think that many students have told me that some facets of the course really have helped them in later life. Well, at least it came out right as it came out on a positive, and the reason I taught in terms of having some realism brought into the classroom. Trying to encourage students and be a professor to give 110 percent of yourself, you as a professor, you as a teacher already have the knowledge. Now you impart it. It's going to be the techniques and tricks you use to get those young minds to first be attentive and then two, to absorb, and then three, to relate it back to you in tests. It was difficult to have written tests for 75 students to grade. We used to have a lot of true and false which weren't always the best way of grading. At least we could find out how the student reacted. I think probably I've talked to you enough about this, unless you have any specific questions.

You were referring to social standards at the University and as an undergraduate student we had a, what I'd say were very high social standards. For instance, you were expected to attend the University functions such as dances and so forth, but one of the things you as a male student must always remember is at the function, first place you were not allowed to drink. Second place, you were always expected to dance with a chaperone. You danced with your date first, and in those days we had date cards. You made up your date list of who of the dances you were going to have, with the friends that you knew, before the dance. But the second dance normally was reserved for the chaperone. Or you would vary it. Maybe you knew that the friends you were going with were going to have the third dance with the chaperone maybe you would set up the sixth dance. Your sixth dance with the chaperone. But that was always expected, and you paid the chaperone homage, and the Dean of Women was usually always there, often times the Dean of Men and his wife, a Mrs. Miller. When you went to parties on the University you were sometimes well chaperoned. The unchaperoned parties we did have were in the spring when we went up to Montana Power Park, on what were called "bear picnics"—off the campus. (laughs)

I remember a fraternity brother of mine coming back one time in a Model T Ford and he had with him the secretary of the Dean of Men. And they came across the old Van Buren Bridge, and my friend apparently had had too much beer and missed the bridge. And into the park river they went, and I remember going down that evening later with about 50 other students to pull our lone Model T Ford out of the river with broken front axels and so forth. (laughs) Nobody was injured, nobody was hurt. We had lots of social functions. The fraternities and sororities had them. The independent students had them. Both in the fall, during the winter, and we had activities with the military group called "Scabbard and Blade."

ROTC was a very active factor on the campus in those days prior to WWII. Every freshman unless you were physically unable or a conscientious objector was expected to spend two years in ROTC. In the spring time, we'd be out in the campus right on the oval where we practiced, marched, and drilled. And all of our girlfriends and students and faculty would come to see us. We wore heavy, wool, green outfits and in May it was tortuous to be out there. Many of those people in ROTC were then taken as second lieutenants and other officers into the war when it started. Bob Pantzer was an example of that and the most of them were sent into the south pacific and many of them didn't come back from the south pacific. Our standards socially, the wife of the Dean of Faculty, Mrs. Jesse, was one that attempted, as I told you early on, to maintain high social standards in our decorum and our eating habits. But there were other things we were trained a little bit on too. I think the standards in that day, the expectations were higher, there was more discipline, and today we have latitude in our social graces that we were not allowed then.

One other thing I would comment on, the health service in those days. We had a single nurse, a Mrs. LeClaire. An interesting lady, she was the health operation at the University when we first arrived. And in the spring time, we had to worry about the Rocky Mountain Tick Fever, so everybody had to have an inoculation. In those days they took the tick, and just ground up millions and billions of ticks, and from the fluid of that they would inject that into you. Your arm would swell up for three or four days and you would go around as if you were in a haze. The athletes, it was interesting to watch them line up and as Mrs. LeClaire would come over with her snub nose needle, they'd faint dead away, these great big football, basketball players. Within a year or two, 1936 or '37, the University added a doctor. One of the first doctors was a man who became an ophthalmologist here in Missoula, Dr. George Sale. Very shortly thereafter from the University of Minnesota came Meredith Hester who would become the head of what was then the medical department at the University, and Mrs. LaClaire was retired. Then from there we built to what it is today the student health center. But for many years, Mrs. LeClaire handled health matters in the student body, and then Dr. Hester, then Dr. Sale. Dr. Sale went away in, I think after he had been there three or four years to take more training and came back as an ophthalmologist rather than just a practicing physician. In the old days if you got sick and had to have something done, like you had a tummy ache, they'd back you up and take you down to St. Pat's hospital and the local doctors would take care of you.

Dr. Hester and Dr. Sale were more and less referring doctors. I think their main occupation was they were the doctors for the athletic teams. They travelled with the football, basketball and the track teams. They were always along, and those were the days when we had only the trainer, the outstanding Naseby Rhinehart. He was the trainer when I first came to the University, and he stayed right on until he retired there a few years ago.

I think Naseby was one of the persons we best remember in the fact that the University of Montana really does not suffer much in the way of racism. We opened the Fieldhouse against the University of Montana basketball team, I mean the University of Indiana, pardon me, which was the number one basketball team in the nation. For the opening game, and we had packed about 8,000 spectators, and that was the night they honored Naseby Rhinehart. It was the same day that President Eisenhower had ordered the troops in Little Rock, to take the students, the black students, to the front doors of the schools, in an attempt to integrate the schools. Naseby Rhinehart had a standing ovation that lasted over ten minutes in that crowd. An interesting person, you know when we talk about at the University that we think about through the years, well Naseby is one of them. Not because he was black but just because he was a special human being.

I guess there were probably I should have cited then through the years in our student union office, we had a very nice lady by the name of Grace Johnson. She had working for her a lady, a single lady, who at a Christmas time in 1937 married a basketball player from Whitefish, a good basketball player. And after we assembled the team after the holidays, the coach said, "I understand one of you married during this little vacation we had".

This basketball player stepped up and said "Yes coach I did. I married Mabel so-and-so".

The coach said "Very good. If you'll just take off your uniform and check out your locker. This team will be without you from here on. Thank you. Any of the rest of you got married over vacation?" 1937. You didn't get married and play basketball.

AP: Did they just feel there was a conflict of interest at the time?

TR: It just wasn't done. I don't know. Marriage would have taken the interest, I suppose, the way they looked at a marriage, it divorced your interest that was supposed to be in this basketball team. You'd be thinking about things, about your wife, and such, and maybe your mind wouldn't be here. I don't know.

AP: Times have changed.

TR: Times have changed. They really have. Well perhaps we should say in many respects have changed for the better because we know that knowledge and education today is greater than we had in the days when we were in school, and we thought we were very well educated. So students today should be getting an even better education, we hear that that isn't true. We

hear that students are coming in to the University and putting a burden on the University. Just recently I was listening to a Tom Roy who told me how much time the University has to spend in remedial courses, teaching students to read, write, let alone speak, and also in the mathematical field. Something has to be done about it. Apparently at the level in grade school and high school, the job isn't getting done. If we come to the place now when we talk about students coming in to the University system being admitted only if their grades are of a certain nature, I wonder what this is going to do. It will be interesting to watch. Because to the present time the constitution of Montana has said that any student who graduates from high school, was eligible to matriculate into the University. And that's changing. The board of regents has changed that. So we will see what happens. But it's nice of you to come by and let me talk to you. Ramble on.

AP: Thanks, it's been great.

TR: Talk about the things that go back, the positive things are the ones you remember you know? I'm sure we had some heartaches at times, otherwise those just passed by the book, because you remember the very interesting and beautiful things. The campus I walk on every Saturday and Sunday usually when I take a walk with my wife. And we stop at places and remember various things and people who were there and instances and friends today who aren't here any longer, who have died. The University has a special place in our heart. And this October when the University honors its distinguished alumnus, I have a brother in law who was in school with me, and was my roommate, and we were fraternity brothers together. He and I married sisters. He is being honored as a distinguished alumnus. He was one of J Edgar Hoover's top six or seven men. He was one of those who disagreed with Mr. Hoover on civil rights, and he's the man who took James Meredith through the front door of Mississippi, University of Mississippi. And today he lives under continuing death threats.

AP: Death threats?

TR: He lives in El Paso, and he's had his house broken into several times. It's a long dying thing, but this man was apparently in charge of the FBI office in New Orleans at the time. He'll be here, and so the University takes on a brand new focus again for us, I know for him, and for his wife. They're Montana people, he's a graduate of the Fergus County High School in Lewiston. His family was in business there for many years. So he'll be glad to come back and see how things are at the campus, he comes back about every two or three years to visit us.

AP: What's his name?

TR: Carl Dissly, D-i-s-s-l-y. You'll have the opportunity to meet him when he gets here.

AP: Oh I hope so. Thank you.

[End of Interview]