Transcript of Interview

DAVID GLASMIRE

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INTERVIEWER:

When did you first come to the university?

GLASMIRE:

I came to the university as a part time instructor in 1950. At that time, the university music department needed a low brass teacher, trombone, euphonium, and tuba, and they had a part-time teaching position here, and there was also a part time teaching position in the public schools; so they combined the two and the public schools paid me half my salary, and the university paid my other half of the salary. At that time it was $3000.

INTERVIEWER:

Was that considered a lot?

GLASMIRE:

Well, that was the beginning salary for a young man who just came out of college.

INTERVIEWER:

Where did you attend school?

GLASMIRE:

Where did I attend school? I went to the Cincinnati Conservatory from 1946 to '50, and was a veteran coming out of the second World War. And this job interview was at, I think, around the middle of August when I was asked to come out. Dr. Litherland was the man who interviewed me from the college of education because the college, the department of music at that time was in the college of education, but Dr. Merrill McEwen and Francis Wilcox and Arthur Zuelzke were part of the committee from the university, and then there was a man from the public schools, James Grable, who was also on the committee when I auditioned. And after a few weeks of waiting, they offered me the job and I took the job and continued at the university part time until 1958 working with the public schools and supervising the instrumental program in the elementary schools assisting with the high school band director which was Mr. Grable and then Mr. Falk, and taught the low brass instruments at the university until 1958. Then I became full time because Francis Wilcox left and that opened up a position which allowed a full-time position and it was offered to me and I took it.
INTERVIEWER:

I've never taken a music course at this school and I was wondering what you taught and like how it goes about like becoming a music major just like what goes on in the department basically?

GLASMIRE:

Well, in the early fifties the department of music was under the college of education, and there were certain rules and regulations handed down from the state that were minimum requirements for the music major to be certified to teach in the public schools. And my job was to teach each music major. Now we mean by that, a person who has a particular interest in singing or tuba or french horn or clarinet or violin or cello or something like that, and we as what we called studio teachers at the time, and still do, taught these students how to develop their musical skills on that particular instrument. And that way they learned to express themselves through their instrument be it voice or piano or what, and they develop into a better musician. And right along with that, the classes that were required by mostly music education people at that time were such that taught them how to teach in the public schools. In the early goings of the department of music, we didn't have a performance major as we do now.

INTERVIEWER:

I was wondering, OK, you said you began teaching here full time in the fifties?

GLASMIRE:

'58.

INTERVIEWER:

'58. OK, from interviewing other people, they said like there was a lot of unrest on the campus in the late sixties and early seventies, and I was wondering if you noticed that there were more music majors during that time since it is a more liberal major or has it decreased now or?

GLASMIRE:

Well, I think one of the reasons that the music department and then the school of music and now the college of music grew so rapidly was a number of things. First of all, there was a great influx of veterans coming in, and Dr. Kennedy who was at the helm in fifty-seven, fifty-eight I guess it was, had it in his mind that the college should have an outstanding music department. And it was through his efforts in attracting
top-notch faculty which in itself and in turn attracted
top-notch students. So by the sixties we may have had within
the university together about 8,000 students and then from then
on it got to about 16, 17,000 in the middle seventies and our
music area grew accordingly.

INTERVIEWER:

What type of music was popular then I mean with students
studying it? Was it more rock oriented, like do you do anything
like that or is it all classical?

GLASMIRE:

Well, most of the music at that time was not rock oriented.
We more or less as a college of music now are much more varied
than we were then. It was a little bit compartmentalized and
you learned the classics. Jazz in a sense was not forbidden,
but it was looked down upon. Now that is changed considerably
and we have progressed, I think, immeasurably over the last
fifteen, twenty years because we have expanded the offerings in
the college of music. We just don't only teach the classics,
but we also teach jazz and we have what we call new music
festivals which allows composers to branch out and compose
things that are not of the standard repertoire. And we have new
music festival now in its sixth year and this allows composers
to come on campus and have their compositions performed by, not
only the music faculty here, but also music students as well; so
that the offerings have been much greater and have been expanded
over the years compared to what it was in the early fifties and
even the early sixties.

INTERVIEWER:

With each new president at the university, has the president
of the university affected the music department's growth at all
or?

GLASMIRE:

Yes, I would have to say definitely. When Dr. McDonald came
here in the early fifties, he was one of the first to set up a,
what we called music talent awards at that time. And through
the movement of Mr. Weger who was the band director at that time
he spoke with Dr. McDonald and because of his association with
Dr. McDonald they were able to come up with 10. Now that seems
a small number right now, but at that time there were none.
There were very few if any. So Dr. McDonald was the instigator
in a sense through Mr. Weger's persuasion that we set up some
scholarships for music students, and it's been, he was very
favorably impressed with Mr. Weger and I think hired Mr. Weger
primarily for one reason, and that was to upgrade the band
program, particularly the marching band.
Succeeding presidents have always been very solicitous to the college of music or the department of music, whichever it was, to the point where Dr. Moore who is now deceased, the Moore Musical Arts Center is named after him because of the interest that he had in the arts and primarily music at that time. And he was one of the main movers to see that we haven't got a new music building because the music building that we were in in 1957 which is now West Hall was our home for about 20 years, but we outgrew it so rapidly because we had so many students wanting to come to college and major in music that he saw the necessity for a separate building, a gain for the college of music and that's what we have now.

INTERVIEWER:

Now this is Dr. McDonald?

GLASMIRE:

Dr. Moore is the one who died, I think four or five years ago, on Easter Sunday and because of his influence he was able to convince the State Legislature that we needed a classroom building of this size for the college of music alone. I might interject that the Kobacker Hall that we have now was not built with tax money because the state does not allow that. Concert halls must be privately funded because they do not consider it a classroom building. So Kobacker Hall which is named after Kobacker, a major donor, was built by private funding alone. So that yes, all of the presidents since I've been here have had a great deal of confidence in the college of music and the necessity to have a strong music program, and because of the nature of music the outreach of music to the public is more like a personal relationship. They reach out into the public and attract a lot of students to the university particularly in music.

INTERVIEWER:

During the late sixties and seventies, I had heard that Bowling Green had like a, like they didn't give out grades, there was no grade policy system them. Is that right?

GLASMIRE:

No.

INTERVIEWER:

No?

GLASMIRE:

That may have occurred in some areas but ever since I've been here I've always given grades. I'm sure that there were
times when this was debated in the Faculty Senate and in many other committees of the University as to whether or not grades were. Yes, I think what you're thinking about is that when we had this major upheaval around the seventies when college was sort of in an uproar most college campuses there was a movement on foot and there were courses that were given that did not mandate a grade. In fact, there are still some courses now that you can take on a pass-fail basis or you can take them on an audit basis. So that in a sense there are some courses that you can do that with but the majority of courses, classes that are given now all professors give grades of one sort or another.

INTERVIEWER:

OK. I misunderstood that whole thing then. OK so, then during this upheaval on campus you said there was an increase in students going into music. How are the students then, how have they changed to the 1980's. I mean do you find a difference?

GLASMIRE:

Yes. I think early on lets say in the late fifties and sixties the calibre of student grew, and it continued to grow. In other words, we got better musicians coming in as freshmen because of a number of courses and options that the music department came up with, and that one was what we call the performance degree option which is a degree that you come in and major primarily on your instrument and you do not necessarily take education courses. In other words, its a course of study that prepares you to play instead of teach. It prepares you to be a professional player on whatever instrument or voice or whatever you might major in. But the calibre of student increased no doubt about it. We had many more better students then we had good students, but we had more of them the longer we got into the seventies and into the late seventies and early eighties. And now we find that there is a little bit of a trend the opposite direction. Because of the emphasis in the public schools in areas that do not necessarily prepare students for a career in performance or teaching, and it was, I think, in the middle seventies where the college of education was the largest college on the university here but now is only about half the size it was then. And this was primarily due to the fact that there was not a demand for teachers. Now we find that that cycle is coming back. We need more teachers now.

INTERVIEWER:

Both my parents teach and they always tell me not to teach or I'm going to regret it.

GLASMIRE:

That's right. So we see things going in cycles. Now I would say that the number of students in the university college of music now are fewer than what they were five years ago.
INTERVIEWER:

I'm interested in your opinion about this idea. I've talked to like Robert Bashore and to other women who, Marion Steller, she used to be associated with the music department a long time ago. But I've noticed that a lot of them feel that this generation is very conservative very self-oriented, business-oriented, they want to just make money. That's why I was wondering if you found a change in attitudes of students going into music or if you feel the students that are majoring in music their value system might be different than others that are majoring in business.

GLASMIRE:

That's true. I could give you a couple examples right in the trombone area. About seven years ago, I had recruited about five or six top-notch trombone players to be music majors, and within two years because of the computer science coming in and the need for computer science every one of those trombone majors switched to computer science, which told me that there was a feeling that music at that time did not offer monetarily what business did, and that they could get ahead better financially, you might say, by going into the computer science degree option. This did not, however, keep them from continuing to play their own instrument. The fortunate thing about being an instrumentalist is that you can play as an avocation and still have a profession like computer science and they felt that that option for them was better for them. The fact that they had more opportunity for jobs and financial success where in the teaching profession the initial monetary salaries are considerably lower than in the business world. So that's an example of what you are saying. There was a tendency for the student to look at the business world where there are more opportunities for financial gain.

INTERVIEWER:

Has the music department at all tried to, I don't know, almost have like a little public relations department started about maybe if you go into music finding money for it because I know I'm a popular culture major and they are kind of using me sometimes to say that you can do things with a popular culture major. Have you?

GLASMIRE:

Yes. I think we have. The college of music has seen the necessity for expanding their degree programs. We have now not a degree program, but we do have courses in what we might call orchestral management or music management. We have courses in church music which is not a new one but it is something that is, most organists use. Yes, we have a definite public relations
input or emphasis, shall I say, from the administration of the college of music constantly checking with the alumni and keeping in touch with the former students of the university college of music so that we have a tie in with those people so that they can recommend students to come to the college of music. So that in a way we do have a public relations area right within the college of music. And each large ensemble director has an outreach for his own ensemble which helps this a great deal too other than coming just from the college of music office. So yes, we do have a lot of that going on.

INTERVIEWER:

I was wondering this is just a personal question. I had thought a long time ago about majoring in music therapy. Have you incorporated like a program into that?

GLASMIRE:

That's one course option that we do not have. In fact, I think the state of Ohio may have two or three colleges that have musical therapy as a major. It's something that I think we should think about but again it reverts back to whether there's a demand for that within the state that we could have five or six colleges having that option. So that I think maybe that's why there are only two or three colleges that may have that option because of the lack of demand for a degree program like that. But yes, we have thought about it.

INTERVIEWER:

I was disappointed that they didn't have it.

GLASMIRE:

But we'd have courses that I think, in a sense, might help that music for handicapped children which are taught by Mrs. Buckwell and at least at this point in time she's the one that, and music for the disadvantaged child and things of that nature. Those are new courses that she has implemented as she came here. But as far as musical therapy is concerned, no.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any idea when the music department started at Bowling Green, I mean when it first began?

GLASMIRE:

Oh my! I think if you read the history book done by Dr. Overman that would tell you. I think there was a music department almost immediately after the, I should say the
college was a state normal school back in 1912. And I believe that there was some sort of musical emphasis even from that time on. It goes way back. Dr. Tunncliffe was before that and before Mr. McEwen who was, I think, the chairman of the department at least up until 1957 when he died. And then Dr. Kennedy became the department chairman and then the department became the school of music eventually growing into a college of music. But when it really started, I don't know. But I do know this that the instrumental degree program here at the university started in 1948. So in a sense that's not very old compared to some other schools within the area. The instrumental degree program, that is a degree for an instrumentalist like a trombonist or a trumpet player in music education. Most of the time it was either voice or piano or string instruments at one time. But then the instrumental program was implemented by, I think, a fellow by the name of Dr. Ecker and Arthur Zuelzke who was then the band director.

INTERVIEWER:

So your specialization is the trombone, tuba.

GLASMIRE:

Well, I'm really a trombonist. One that I play well enough to be a prof at the university and play. But I can if I have to and am called upon to teach the other brass instruments. I've done that over the years but my specialty since 1958 has been teaching the trombone.

INTERVIEWER:

And that's what you studied at the conservatory?

GLASMIRE:

I studied that in the conservatory from 1946 to '50.
cannot be denied both physically from the physical standpoint of the physical plant and building program as well as the upgrading of the faculty. Because I think there at one time when Dr. McDonald's tenure was here there were two-thirds of the faculty had doctorates, so that he was a very intense man. One who made all of the decisions, practically. There was a feeling that he didn't leave his deans or people of that nature do much of the decision making but anyhow we have to give Dr. McDonald credit for the building program that came to this university in the ten years that he was here and it really grew and I think he was the impetus in developing this university to what it is now. And lets see who came after him?

INTERVIEWER:  
Offenhauer?

GLASMIRE:  
No, Dr. Harshman was sort of an interim president after Dr. McDonald resigned. I think under somewhat of a pressure situation, but Dr. Harshman was sort of an interim president for a while and again was one who was a mending of fences kind of president because he was in a situation where some of the faculty and some of the administration were not, they were sort of at odds with each other. And he was sort of a fence mender and did a very fine job until they got Dr. Jerome to come in. I think he came in from Syracuse University. And Dr. Jerome was the one who was here during the upheavals of the late sixties and early seventies in the college campuses.

INTERVIEWER:  
And how did he handle all that?

GLASMIRE:  
And he handled that with a great deal of expertise. I think because of Dr. Jerome's, shall we say, sensitivity to the students and their problems and he was a great person to believe in the freedom of the students in dissent. And it was through him that I believe Bowling Green weathered the storm so much better than the other campuses because his leadership, I think, had a great deal to do with softening the attitudes of many of what we call "radicals" that were on the campus and we might say that some of those were not students. Those people who instigated some things weren't necessarily students but we, it was a period of time where the college student became more aware of what was happening in the world and I think that's good because sometimes we get into a cloistered situation where we are in college for four or five years and we really don't read a
newspaper, we don't listen to the radio much, we don't really know what's going on in the outside. But at this time, and through Dr. Jerome's leadership, I think he was a master at being able to handle this kind of situation and did very well by the way. And then Dr. Moore came after Jerome left and another quiet man. I'd say a person who relied heavily on his deans and his other administrators to help run the university. He was very well liked, I think, in the main by many people. He was a conscientious person, I think, and certainly we as musicians would naturally say that he was a supporter of the arts which was very true. And we're eternally grateful to Dr. Moore and his wife for the music building that we have now and we don't want to forget that.

INTERVIEWER:

Does Dr. Moore's wife still live in Bowling Green?

GLASMIRE:

I think she resides in Perrysburg. She did at one time after his death she stayed here for a year or so but I think she resides in Perrysburg right now. And then of course, Dr. Moore because of his ill health in his last two years Dr. Ferrari who was the provost at that time was actually helping him a great deal to run the university and unfortunately for some of us Dr. Ferrari was a (change tape)

There we go. Lets see, I just left off from Dr. Moore, Dr. Ferrari and now we have Dr. Olscamp who came in from, I think, Wellington, Washington. He's in his fourth year. And naturally with every new president there's going to be new ideas, new procedures, and certainly not everybody is going to like them. But we have to give any man a chance to implement his thoughts and his feelings and his expertise in how he feels the university will grow and I think with some of the changes that have been made I think his thrust is to make this a highly academic oriented university along with many other things but that's his biggest idea right now that he'd like to see. The academics of this university grow, the calibre of student become much higher etc. and bolster in each area and if possible if needed to eliminate some areas that are not, shall we say, needed. That's right, so there will be some changes and there have been some changes and I think that we have to give him a chance to implement some of his ideas.

INTERVIEWER:

I know that they're becoming a lot more strict on getting into the university even since when I got here. Because I
transferred here my sophomore year and its only been two years and the standards have already gone up.

GLASMIRE:

Well, that's all well and good because actually the college of music has had this going on for years. Because in order for you to get into the college of music you have to excel in some instrument or voice or what in order to become a music major. So that the standards for getting in here have been very high over the years and we only accept those students that are capable of playing and we see a talent there that can be nurtured in four years and become a very good instrumentalist vocalist whatever.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. What's happened to some of the students that have graduated from the college of music?

GLASMIRE:

Well, many many things. Many have gone on to graduate school. I've had myself, five students who have pursued doctors degrees and have completed them. Some are playing in major symphony orchestras some are teachers in some of the top-notch schools, not only in the state of Ohio, but also in other states. We have a former student on the college of music faculty here. I won't mention his name because he'd be embarrassed if I did, but it's one of the only ones that so far we've had that have graduated from Bowling Green and have come back as a teacher. Others have gone into composition, some are performing in major vocal groups throughout the country, some are performing in Europe. We know several who are in the symphony orchestras, and opera orchestras in Europe, and band directors, orchestra directors throughout, vocal directors, choral directors are throughout the state and in many cases throughout other states of the United States. There's quite a few that we have out that have made the grade so to speak. We're very happy about that too.

INTERVIEWER:

OK. I guess that's all I have to ask, if you have any more comments?

GLASMIRE:

Well, I just might say one thing. Having been here for thirty-five years, actually thirty-three teaching I retired in 1983, I've seen this university grow from I think it was 2,800
students to a maximum of 17,000 at one time. And practically everything has been done at the university has been for the benefit of the students. And we as faculty are privileged to be part of the university that takes the student in mind and cares for the students and I'm just happy that I was part of the growing university for thirty-three years and very pleased that I can sit back and retire and look at what has happened because most of the things that have happened have been for the better. There's no doubt about that. And I'm very pleased that you've even considered asking me to talk to you.

INTERVIEWER:

You're welcome. OK, thanks a lot.

GLASMIRE:

You're welcome.