

Oral History Project: Transcription of January 29, 1983,
Interview of Leland Asa by Lynn Wilkinson

Joel Kropf

Prof. S. Stopforth

HIST 310

24 March 2001

Summary of Transcript

In this January 29, 1983, interview, Trinity Western University library staff member Lynn Wilkinson queries Dr. Leland Asa about his early life, his early adult years, his time at Trinity Western, his life circumstances in 1983, and pre-1983 happenings related to the university. The interview begins with approximately five minutes of discussion of Dr. Asa's pre-adult years. Dr. Asa tells of his father's occupation and of his own places of residence, varied living situations, religious activities, and salvation experience near the beginning of his teen years.

For the next six minutes, the interview shifts to his adult years between high school graduation and Dr. Asa's employment by Trinity Western University. Dr. Asa discusses his attendance at Northwestern College, the activities of Northwestern president Billy Graham, Dr. Asa's marriage, and the Evangelical Free Church in Nebraska. Dr. Asa also tells of his and his wife's undergraduate and graduate study, of their residence in Minnesota, Illinois, Nebraska, and Wyoming, and of some of their employment, including four years assisting in the establishment of a church in Omaha, Nebraska.

The majority of the remaining section of the interview deals with Dr. Asa's experiences at and knowledge of Trinity Western University. The discussion reveals that he started to work at Trinity in the school's inaugural school year, 1962, serving as a faculty member. The discussion covers the first school year, the initial unrefined state of the campus, campus improvements, humorous stories, Dr. Asa's work in development of extra-curricular aspects, and the activities and importance of various Trinity administrators, faculty, and other personnel. Dr. Asa also mentions his family's involvement with the Johnston Heights Evangelical Free Church and his wife's eventual activity as a realtor.

The later parts of the interview include mention of Dr. Asa's life after his departure from Trinity in 1975. Within a continuing discussion of Trinity facts and memories, the interview reveals that Dr. Asa joined the faculty of Westmont College, an institution in Santa Barbara, California, but also was a member of Trinity's board of governors in 1983. At approximately the 39-minute mark of the interview, Dr. Asa begins to tell of his wife's and children's activities as of 1983.

In the final three minutes of the interview, Dr. Asa and Lynn Wilkinson discuss the service of David Twiest, the director of the Trinity library, to the university.

Transcript

Lynn Wilkinson: * --Dr. Leland Asa, and we're recording it at Trinity Western College, on January the 29th, 1983. Very happy to have this opportunity to speak with you, Dr. Asa, and I wonder if you might start out by giving me some information about your boyhood and family background.

Leland Asa: All right, I was born in western Nebraska, just north of a little town called Morrill, on a farm owned my—owned by my grandfather, and lived on by my father, and farmed by my father. I grew up there for two or three years, then(??) we moved around quite a bit, as it was Depression time, and work, employment(??) were a little bit hard, and we stayed basically in the area until I was in grade five, at which time we moved to Colorado. (tape cuts out then restarts) That was probably about 1940 or '41 when we went to Colorado, and my father had previously—had operated a lumberyard, a trucking line, creamery, and done some farming, but he decided he wanted to go into electronics, and the war had, um, come or was coming very soon, and so he went again training in electronics at Greeley, Colorado, and after a period of time there, he went to Omaha, and then to Chicago, Illinois, where he continued his training. And I was sometimes with him, and sometimes I was with (chair creaking) uh, my relatives when housing was hard to find, because of the demands during the war. Then he was transferred to Kansas City, and I went to Colorado to live with my grandmother, until the end of the war, and then we all moved to Torrington, Wyoming, where I graduated from high school.

Lynn Wilkinson: And what was your Christian background; when did you come to hear of Christ, or was it, did you come from a Christian home, or—? (LA begins speaking) ___(??)

Leland Asa: Well, we uh, didn't go to church a lot. I was sent to Sunday school from time to time at the local Methodist Church, but, when I became a Christian was basically when I visited in the farm, or on the farm, where my uncle lived. (LW “um-hm”) The American Sunday School Union had come in and started a Sunday school, and I loved the farm and the horses and the farming, so I used to go there as often as I could, and they made me go to church on Sundays with them, (LW “um-hm”) and so it was through there when I was about twelve or thirteen that I became a Christian. (LW “um-hm”)

Lynn Wilkinson: Were they good Christian examples for you?

Leland Asa: Yes, I think they had an awful lot of influence on my life as far as Christian dedication, and Christian life(??) or light(??) is concerned, because before I really—I knew what morality was, I didn't know a reason for it, (LW “um-hm”) until I was bet--well, until they became Christians, and I saw a mod—kind of a role model in them. (LW “um-hm”)

Lynn Wilkinson: And when did you actually accept Christ, and when did he influence your life?

Leland Asa: Well, I accepted Christ when a visiting evangelist, an itinerant preacher was coming through in the rural church, at—it was in, I think I mentioned around twelve or thirteen—

* The recording begins at this point, in the middle of interviewer Lynn Wilkinson's introduction.

Lynn Wilkinson: Um-hm.

Leland Asa: —and, uh, really my life didn't do too much differently at that particular time. It was more about the time I was grade eleven, finishing grade eleven, that I attended a summer Bible camp, and made a dedication of(??) my life there, (LW “um-hm”) to uh, Christian work, (LW “um-hm”) or to at least be open to the Lord's leading, and at that time I also decided to (chair creaks) attend a—that I should attend a Christian college. So during my grade-twelve year I applied at three of them, the Kansas City Bible College, and Northwestern College in Minneapolis and Wheaton College in Illinois. I was accepted to go to each, but another aunt influenced me to go (sound of airplane flying overhead) to Northwestern because Billy Graham was president at the time, and she thought highly of him, as did most people, and so I went there.

Lynn Wilkinson: M-hm. Did you meet Billy Graham, or--?

Leland Asa: Not really personally, (LW “ah”) he was uh, around, and I saw him, but to know him on a personal basis, no.

Lynn Wilkinson: Wasn't this the time when he was doing great (**5 minutes**) revival lectures all over the States?

Leland Asa: He was just getting started then. (LW “um-hm”) He had been in Los Angeles, and had become known (LW “um-hm”) nationally, and then he was going to Seattle I believe during those years and several other places and, uh, had, uh, gained prominence as an evangelist during those years, early fifties, late—'49, I at—began in '50 and he was away from the college an awful lot (LW “um-hm”) at that time, because of the cam—evangelistic campaigns. (LW “I see(??)”)

Lynn Wilkinson: And you met your wife at, at uh, this college, (Leland Asa begins speaking) Northwestern?

Leland Asa: No, I met her at the Bible camp. She was a student at university, (LW “um-hm”) or, in the States it would have been known as the Shandron State College at the time. She attended the Bible camp on a weekend and I met her there, (LW I see) was interested in her and kept contact with her, and married her after two years of college, (LW “oh, I see”) and she then attended the college as well, so we were both students same time, full time, (LW “uh-huh”) and both working a lot of the time, (LW “I see(??)”) twenty to thirty hours a week, as well as going to school. (LW “um-hm”)

Lynn Wilkinson: And so what did you complete then in that?

Leland Asa: I graduated in 1954 with a Bible or religious studies major, (LW “um-hm”) and she was taking an education major and wasn't finished—she didn't finish until 1955—so I stayed around waiting for her to finish and took seminary, while she was finishing. (LW “um-hm”) But then by the time she finished I was interested enough in seminary that I wanted to stay and finish it, and so she, then, waiting for me to finish the seminary, went to Macalester College and earned her master's degree in educational psychology. (LW “mm”) But then the Northwestern Seminary

closed in 1956 so we moved to Chicago to attend Trinity, uh, the Evangelical Free Church school in Chicago, and finished my last year of seminary there.

Lynn Wilkinson: And was this really your first contact then with the Evangelical Free Church?

Leland Asa: No, my first contact with the Free—Evangelical Free Church was in 1950 in the fall when I attended Central Free, where Arlie Bragg (sp??) was pastor in Minneapolis. (LW “mm”) I had never heard of the Free Church before then; (LW “um-hm”) there was none in my hometown. (LW “yeah”).

Lynn Wilkinson: And yet, coming from farming communities, there were a lot of Free churches, well maybe not in those days, but (Leland Asa begins speaking) since then.

Leland Asa: Well, there were, but they were more in the eastern Nebraska where you found (LW “oh, yes”) the Swedish people.

Lynn Wilkinson: Oh, yes. It (LA “uh—”) was more ethnic then—

Leland Asa: Yes, it was. It was Swedish, Norwegian, Danish. (LW “um-hm”) But, I don't think there were any of them much west of the Holridge area at that time, Holridge, Nebraska, that is. (LW “um-hm”)

Lynn Wilkinson: And, uh, you finished seminary then at Trinity and what happened then in your life—you were married then.

Leland Asa: Yes. My wife had been teaching school in Bensenville, Illinois, for a year while I finished and then when I graduated in 1957, uh, immediately after I graduated she had finished up a last course she needed for her Master's in the Illinois area, so we drove back to Minneapolis and she went through the ceremony there, (LW “um-hm”) for her master's, although she had completed most of them(??) earlier, and then we talked to the Free Church. We had applied to go to the mission field during my last year of seminary, but that did not work out. So we were offered three places to work in Christian work, one was on the Canadian border, between Minnesota and I believe it would have been Manitoba (LW “m-hm”) and uh one in southern Minnesota at Saint James, Minnesota, and one at Omaha. The two in Minnesota consi—were churches, the one in Omaha was nothing (chuckles) (LW laughing “no(??)”). We were offered a chance to help start a church there, but because Omaha was a large medical centre with the University of Nebraska medical school there and because my wife needed some medical help, we decided to go to the Omaha (LW “um-hm”) opportunity.

Lynn Wilkinson: And you were there for four years, wasn't it (Leland Asa begins speaking) ___(??)?

Leland Asa: We were there from 1957 to 1961; (LW “um-hm”) we left in about August of 1961. (Lynn Wilkinson begins speaking) ___(??)?

Lynn Wilkinson: And that was to come to Trinity.

Leland Asa: No, that was to go to the University of Wyoming for one year. (LW "Oh, right, yes, okay.") But while I was in Omaha, (LW "um-hm") I worked at the church, I worked some at the University of Nebraska (LW "um-hm") psychiatric unit, and I also completed a master's degree in psychology at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. (LW "oh")

Lynn Wilkinson: And did you get a diploma in there(??)?

Leland Asa: I had a degree in (LW uh-huh)--a master's degree (LW "master's degree, yeah"), yes a diploma(??). (LW "um-hm") And, uh, I in 1959 was aware that Trinity was (**10 minutes**) starting, because it was approved at the annual Free Church conference in Denver that I had attended, (LW "um-hm") and then I had talked to Dr. Arne Olson about the possibility of coming here and he encouraged me. So then I drove to Minneapolis to talk to Cal Hanson about it, and Cal—encouraged me and uh arranged for me to be part of the original faculty or the(??) administration. (LW "mm") But—

Lynn Wilkinson: So that was a thrill. Had, had the planting of the church tha—or the beginning of the church in Nebraska, in Omaha, had that been successful, and I forgot to ask you, were you pastoring there, or—?

Leland Asa: Yes, it was—(LW "um-hm") church planting or, (LW "um-hm") getting it started, yes, while I was there we were able to begin a congregation, we built a parsonage and a (LW "mm") nice brick church building, which is still going very well today. (LW "good")

Lynn Wilkinson: And then uh this challenge came up with Trinity Western, so—(Leland Asa begins speaking) ____ (??)

Leland Asa: So I thought if I were going to be in college education I'd like to have a doctorate, so I applied to several schools. And the University of Wyoming offered me financial aid and a job, so I accepted and began my doctorate at Wyoming in psychology. (LW "um-hm") We were there one year, doing coursework, collecting data for a dissertation, learning French, studying statistics, and (LW "mm") generally getting as much done as possible in one year because we had to be in Langley in the fall of 1962 in order to be here for the opening of school. (LW "um-hm") (chair creaking)

Lynn Wilkinson: And I'd sure like to hear about some of the first days in Trinity Western, or it was Trinity Junior College (Leland Asa begins speaking) _____(??).

Leland Asa: It was Trinity Junior College then, (LW "um-hm") because it was a two-year program. (LW "um-hm") Well, when we arrived, we were greeted first by David Enarson, (LW "m-hm") who has been a very, very important factor in the background of the college. Uh, we moved onto campus and lived in a house right at the entrance of the campus for two years. Uh, the first few days were rather hectic; the beds weren't here, the kitchen wasn't ready, the library wasn't ready, the chapel wasn't finished, but through the efforts of many, many people, local church people and college people, we finished the wiring, finished putting down floors, David

Enarson, among others, was hammering down floors in dormitories. We personally brought some of our beds down (LW "mm") for students to use until the, uh, beds were, uh, cured.

Lynn Wilkinson: That's what I call real dedication. (both laugh)

Leland Asa: The uh—we set up sawhorses and plywood to use as tables in one of the (sound of airplane) dormitories for science lab tables to begin with.

Lynn Wilkinson: Was Doctor Walters here then?

Leland Asa: Doctor Walters was here, (LW "m-hm") Richard Walters, (LW "he was ___(??)") Leslie Garrison, Edna Modig was librarian, Cal Hanson was president, Enoch Mattson was academic dean and registrar, (LW "um-hm") Benno Friesen was uh instructor in history and, uh, and English. (LW "mm") My wife taught education and Christian education.

Lynn Wilkinson: I think in those days probably everyone had two or three jobs, and—

Leland Wilkinson: Yes (both chuckling) I was—

Lynn Wilkinson: Out of necessity.

Leland Wilkinson: —dean of students, and I taught sociology and psychology, and did the testing program. (LW "oh; um-hm")

Lynn Wilkinson: And, um, what other figures were prominent in the early days, ___(??)?

Leland Asa: Well, um, there were—the board of governors of course were very important. (LW "m-hm") I from memory can't recall who all the members were. I'm sure that's available from other sources. (LW "yes") Uh, local pastors were helpful: the Langley pastor, the Johnston Heights pastor, uh, the Abbotsford church was just getting going at the time, (sound of chair scraping) (Lynn Wilkinson begins speaking) ___(??).

Lynn Wilkinson: And what about Carl Fosmark ___(??), was he—?

Leland Asa: His time was a little before, I think (LW "um-hm") in the organising days. I don't recall—he was around from time to time, but I think his contribution came a little earlier, before the actual opening of the college.

Lynn Wilkinson: That probably is true, I think, uh, he was district superintendent and had a very large area (LA "yes, um-hm") in the early days of the college and probably was caught up in that. Mm. (LA "Yes, m-hm"). And what about, uh, Vernon Strombeck?

Leland Asa: Vernon Strombeck was important in two areas, uh, visible areas, plus he was also counselor to (**15 minutes**) Cal Hanson in a sense. Vernon Strombeck, I believe, if I'm not mistaken, felt that the Lord had called him to do something as far as a library at Trinity was concerned, and he personally accepted book lists that we sent to him, ordered the books out of

his own funds, (LW "hm") and had them sent to Trinity W—uh, Junior College at the time. He also, uh, gave money toward the construction of the library and toward the furnishing the library. (LW "mm") When it was time to expand it he came back, and made another contribution in helping to expand the library. Uh, in fact, not only did he help, I think he paid for most of it himself, (LW "mm") if not all of it. And then he also offered a matching gift, because we were desperate for classroom facilities, we were teaching in what were supposed to be dormitories, we were quartering(??) out the dining hall and giving lectures there, because of lack of space. And so he offered to match dollar-for-dollar what we could raise to build a uh arts-and-science building. (LW "um-hm") And so I personally, others, Cal Hanson especially, travelled (LW "um-hm") to churches asking for help to match—er, matching dollars. (LW "um-hm") I spoke to churches in the Seattle area, the Portland area, and other areas, uh, helping to raise matching dollars, and at the end of the Challenge period we had enough to construct the Arts and Science building and finish the upper story, (LW "um-hm") and we had some donations from the Brown Morris Company to furnish the science labs (LW begins speaking) _____(??)

Lynn Wilkinson: The Brown Morris Company, I'm not familiar—

Leland Asa: Brown Morris Company is owned by some Free Church people in Michigan, I believe. They manufactured what you might call a Cadillac of science equipment. (LW "mm") They (LW "good") made available some science equipment for us, (LW "um-hm") excellent equipment, which is still in place and still being used today, and that was about 1964-65 I believe that it was installed (LW "mm, um-hm"). And later, Sam Reid, who was, uh, building and grounds man, and others, made a large contribution toward finishing the lower part of the (LW "um-hm") Arts and Science building. (quite a bit of background noise)

Lynn Wilkinson: Would this be lending their time and (LA begins speaking) materials, or—

Leland Asa: No, h—uh—

Lynn Wilkinson: —or was this (LA begins speaking) financial?

Leland Asa: —Sam Reid was full-time employee here (LW "oh, yes") and did the work. (LW "um-hm") There were others that helped as well; he (LW "um-hm") did part of it and others did part of it.

Lynn Wilkinson: In those early days when you started and there was a few dorms (chair creaking) and uh, a few buildings on campus __ (??) the old barn, and Seal Kap House, did you, um, really ever feel really discouraged that the college would not make it, or was there a high hopes all (LA begins speaking) through(??) those times?

Leland Asa: I always felt that the college would make it in those days. I (LW "mm") wondered uh, at times whether Cal Hanson felt so, and I think he was under more pressure than some of the others, but (LW "um-hm") we took it as a challenge. In fact, Dale Winder, who was one of the first students here, and I, and several others went down to the old barn, and found that the loft (sound of airplane) had holes in it that one could fall through. So we took up old boards, and put down new boards where the holes were, (LW "um-hm") and patched the floor, and with the help

of Sam Reid, in fact he probably did most of the work, put up basketball hoops and strung lights, (LW "mm") and we had what we called a "barnasium."

Lynn Wilkinson: Oh, yes. (LA "uh—") (laughs) I've seen that word in—used in pictures.

Leland Asa: Later some of the people from the Free Church in Vancouver brought out plywood and put it around the, the walls to shield the (chuckling) players from the, (LW chuckles) the beams that stuck out into the (LW "oh, I see") playing area.

Lynn Wilkinson: I know I saw one comment that was well(??) quite funny, it was, um, "Official size basketball in length (laughing) but not in width."

Leland Asa: That's exactly (both chuckling) true. (LW "that was good") We had plenty of length but not enough width. (LW "mm") Later, people came out and put down a nice plywood (chair creak) floor, and it was varnished and (LW "um-hm") the stripes were put on for volleyball and for basketball and it served quite adequate. (LW "um-hm") Better lights were put in. I took my shotgun down sometimes, and shot the sparrows out of it to keep (LW chuckles) the floors clean, otherwise it was a terrible mess if the birds were allowed in it, but(??)— (LW "yeah, I see")

Lynn Wilkinson: Were there any other little creatures running around that bothered the campus in those days, or—?

Leland Asa: Yes, I su—have you heard of the skunks?

Lynn Wilkinson: No.

Leland Asa: I was appointed, I think, unofficial or official (**20 minutes**) skunk exterminator. (LW laughs) George Ney rode his motorcycle into the garage by the Seal Kap house and encountered a skunk. He didn't know what it was, and when he went to the dorm, he wasn't smelling too well, and the other students explained to him what a skunk was (both chuckling) (loud airplane sounds) and kicked him out of the dorm. I helped to get rid of the skunks, uh, in several places. They were all over and quite a nuisance for a period. (LW "mm")

Lynn Wilkinson: Was the uh, what we now know as the lake, was that kind of swampy at that time, or—?

Leland Asa: Down below?

Lynn Wilkinson: Yes, or, or (LA begins speaking) how—I'm not sure—is that where the skunks lived(??)?

Leland Asa: Oh, uh, well, no it was a—could be used as pasture land in the (LW "mm") summer, or grass could be cut for hay off of it. (LW "mm") But in the winter of course it covered with water, when (LW "__(??)") the Salmon River rose. (LW "um-hm") But the circle out here—um, let's see, it would be, uh, across from what's now the Thompson building and at the front of the chapel, was a swamp full of frogs. (LW "oh, what?") One of the funniest stories uh, to me was that my wife was in the right wing of it, which was the library at the time, preparing for a class

late at night. She came out of the building and shut off all the lights, and it was one of those foggy dark nights with no moon and no stars, and she started walking toward our pickup, which was parked in front of the library, and missed it, (LW chuckles) because it was so dark, and then she couldn't find it, she couldn't find her way back to the library, and in a few moments of wandering around in the total, black darkness trying to find the pickup, she was standing in the swamp, (LW chuckles) and she tried to get out of that, and both boots came off, (both laugh) (LW “__(??)”) and she lost her boots. Eventually, by feeling, she found the pickup, and turned the lights on, and by backing the pickup around and shining them into the swamp she was able to retrieve (LW laughs) her boots. But there were no--uh, light, there was almost no lighting on campus (LW "mm") at the time, and at night it was very, very dark. (LW "It was pitch black, it would be, yeah?")

Lynn Wilkinson: We have a lot of moles here, even today—

Leland Asa: They've always been here. (chuckles)

Lynn Wilkinson: They have, ____ (??)—

Leland Asa: They were here—

Lynn Wilkinson: Were there any cows, and—or anything(??)—?

Leland Asa: Yes, uh, the area where the Dining Hall is now, and to the uh—toward the freeway from the Thompson (LW "mm") building, we rented for pasture, (LW "um-hm") and there were Holstein cattle (LW "mm") kept there, and they sometimes got out of the fence and wandered about the campus, and Sam Reid or someone had to drive the cows out of the campus (LW laughs) and back into the pasture from time to time.

Lynn Wilkinson: So you had to be a bit of a cowboy, too, (both laugh; LA "right") at times. Oh, I saw a picture of someone horseback riding, and I just wondered if there was any o—was(??) that one of the activities(??)? (LA begins speaking) ____ (??)—?

Leland Asa: That w—could've been me. (LW "oh") I uh, was embarrassed once during a board meeting one of the girls had brought a horse onto campus, and being from Wyoming I thought I should show my cowboy (LW chuckles) promise and I galloped the horse rapidly around the chapel three times while the board was meeting. (LW laughs) But they kept me on anyway. (both laugh)

Lynn Wilkinson: Oh, there goes Asa. (both laugh) (chair creak)

Leland Asa: Well, I had on a suit, and a coat, and (LW "oh!") a tie at the time. (both laugh)

Lynn Wilkinson: Ah, I wish we had that picture, I'm not sure.

Leland Asa: I think there is a picture of that somewhere, I don't know where. (chuckle) (LW "m-hm, I'll(??)have to find it.")

Lynn Wilkinson: Um, what else about the early days? Maybe—I guess there weren't too many students. (LA begins speaking) Just seventeen, the first year.

Leland Asa: Seventeen, the first year. One of my early satisfactions was helping to set up some of the traditions, or some (LW "m-hm") of the events that would later become tradition. I helped the students to set up student government, helped them to build a constitution, helped them to select school colours. Actually, the way the school colours came were—which are brown and gold, as you know, (LW "um-hm") I had been at the University of Wyoming the year before, and the colours there were brown and gold, and I had a bit of partiality, and I suggested brown and gold, and they suc—uh, seemed to accept that, (LW "um-hm") and that first year they designated them as school colours, and for these twenty-one years they've survived. The students were looking for a name for their athletic teams, uh, (LW "um-hm") and they cast around and chose the name the 'Spartans' the first year.

Lynn Wilkinson: Oh, I really would be interested in knowing why that—uh, what, you know, what was behind that. I think it's an excellent name, and there? they? were an excellent team, (LA begins speaking) ____(?).

Leland Asa: I think there were a couple factors. One was, we were (**25 minutes**) in a sort of a rough-it situation here, (LW "um-hm") and we didn't have a lot of facilities and a lot of uh, plushness, and perhaps the, the name 'Spartans' came out of that. (LW "m-hm") Uh, of course there's an American team in Michigan called the Spartans. There an American university (LW "m-hm") uses that name, and perhaps they were familiar with that. (LW "um-hm") I, I couldn't say exactly; I don't know if anybody really knows why the name was adopted except that it had a nice ring to it. (LW "um-hm") (low buzzing noise—fan?)

Lynn Wilkinson: Well, that's interesting, and a lot of our students then were Americans, and they still are. That seems to have survived, too.

Leland Asa: Quite a few, partly because Cal Hanson was well known in the United States (LW "um-hm") as a Free Church missionary to Japan, and (LW "yes") a lot of people had faith in him, (LW "um-hm") and were friends of him or of his father, and he attracted, I think, quite a few people. (LW "um-hm") During that time we also started a school newspaper of sorts. I asked Ben Friesen to start a college choir, and he was the first choir director. (LW “ah, that's a good choice of man(?)”) We—I asked Les Garrison to be sponsor to the yearbook, and he operated and did a very good job on the yearbook the first few years. (LW "um-hm; ____(?)") So we (sound of airplane) started all those traditions, out of that first year or two, which are carried on today. (LW "um-hm")

Lynn Wilkinson: And there seemed to be a lot of activities, too, but(?) I guess some of it was fundraising, but I've seen pictures of work-a-thons, and walk-a-thons, and uh—

Leland Asa: We, uh, had—we started out with walk-a-thons. We would walk to the Peace Arch, (LW "yes"; chuckles) and get pledges to raise money for special projects, such as I'm not sure what the projects were now. I think they(?) were something like library books. (LW "um-hm")

Later it was thought by some people that instead of just walking we should do something constructive and so we had what we called work-a-thons, (LW "um-hm") and the students would pledge so many hours of work in return for a contribution for a project. (LW "hm") And then we had other work-a-thons where we would just declare a holiday on campus and do a spring clean-up of the campus, mowing grass, trimming trees. One year the faculty members during that-- Dick Walters, and Benno Friesen, Les Garrison, perhaps Cal Hanson, and I ran the cement in front of the chapel. (banging noise) (LW "oh, yes") Previously there were nothing but rocks about three inches in diameter, and women with heels had an awful time getting into the chapel without the rocks (creaking) (chuckles) rolling into their feet, so we put the cement down one day. (LW "um-hm") But that was typical. Les Garrison kept the clocks operating. (LW "um-hm") The uh King's College in Vancouver gave us a truckload of material. I (LW "mm") went in and—to King's College and drove back, and one o—some of them were benches, and some of them were mimeograph machines. One of them happened to be a timer clock for bells, and Les Garrison set that bell clock up so that he had a bell that would ring at the end of the hour, (LW "oh") and he kept that running ____ (??). (LW "oh, that's good(??)")

Lynn Wilkinson: You know it's still a bit like that today. When I started the archives it was a, just a room, unfinished, (laugh) (LA "uh-huh") in every way. And of course we were putting shelves in and I just got to thinking, You know, it's not a very big room and maybe there's a piece of carpet. And we found out there was a piece of carpet that would fit. And then I thought, Well, if we're putting in carpet, that takes a day; we might as well paint the walls, (LA "oh, yeah") and before you know it we had carpeted and painted and, (LA "um-hm") and uh, just before the uh stacks went in. But (LA "um-hm") we were doing it ourselves. And I (LA "good") don't mind that a bit; I think that's great and really get into the spirit of things.

Leland Asa: Each person in those early days seemed to have a particular skill, like, uh, (LW "um-hm") some people had a bit of a carpenter skill (LW "um-hm"); Les Garrison had an electr—uh, skill at electronics and electricity; uh, other people had other skills, and each one of us would get called on from time to time to go out of the classroom and do something that might be in their specialty.

Lynn Wilkinson: ____ (??), God had that all worked out, eh? (laughs)

Leland Asa: I (LW " ____ (??)") even was called to fly an airplane from, uh, let's see, it was Salem, Oregon to the Langley airport. It was part of the extra-curricular skills that was donated by, I believe his name was Roy Wood, to(??) the college. (30 minutes)

Lynn Wilkinson: Oh, I, I did hear about that. I think I read that yesterday in some of the papers I was looking through. (LA "um-hm") And, uh, yes, it was ano—it was just a gift, and—(LA "um-hm") was that the beginning of the aviation program, (LA begins speaking) or—?

Leland Asa: No, that had nothing to do with the aviation. It was just a gift to the college to do with whatever the college wanted, (LW "mm") and it was a Mooney aircraft, which is not a basic trainer ner--necessarily, and so (LW "mm") the aircraft was sold to the local plumber I believe in Langley and the money put toward the, uh, the funds on the campus.

Lynn Wilkinson: That was a nice gift(??). So you have your pilot's license, (LA begins speaking) ____ (??).

Leland Asa: Yes, um-hm.

Lynn Wilkinson: What about Robert Thompson? His contributions were maybe more in the off-campus and maybe in the consultant type area, or—?

Leland Asa: In the early years his contributions were more off-campus and consulting, although uh, he was a speaker at some campus events, (LW "um-hm") which I recall, one--the first time I met him and heard him he--we had a banquet, a fund-raising banquet, which was held in the Langley high school gymnasium, (LW "oh, yes") and he was the main speaker. (LW "um-hm") Then later, when he left Parliament, he came to Langley, **[cuts to side B]** and taught summer school courses and then later taught courses, I believe, in the winter school, served as development officer, raising (LW "mm") funds, travelling for the college. He's made a lot of contributions—(LW "um-hm") negotiated funds and pro—and funds for special projects like hiking trails and the dike around the (LW "____(??)") lake on the lower campus. (LW "oh, they did?(??)")

Lynn Wilkinson: I think he was probably really instrumental too in having the college changed from a two-year program to a four-year program.

Leland Asa: Uh, I think he helped in that. I think that's also a vision Neil Snider had. (LW "oh, yes") Some of us dreamed about it, (LW "um-hm") but uh, to really put—I left the campus in 1975 in January to become professor at Westmont College in Santa Barbara. And when I left as academic dean, I had been dean between 1969 and 1975, January. Uh, we were still a two-year college and just as I left I'd put into--tr--started to put into place the business program and the aviation program. But then the four-year program was not, uh, really even envisioned at that time. It was a dream, but the dream seemed a long way off. (LW "um-hm") And I think Craig Seaton had an awful lot to do with that after I left, and I think Neil Snider was a pusher in that area too. (LW "um-hm")

Lynn Wilkinson: I don't know too much about Craig Seaton's background, uh—

Leland Asa: He came after I left, and he served as academic dean for a period of time, and I think his great contribution was negotiations with the provincial government to get the charter for the university status, (LW "um-hm") but again, that was after I was gone, and I'm not that familiar with any details of what (LW "um-hm") he did. (LW "um-hm")

Lynn Wilkinson: It wasn't too long after you left that they had that; was it 1976?

Leland Asa: Uh—

Lynn Wilkinson: Or '77, (LA begins speaking) ____ (??)

Leland Asa: I don't know when, uh, (LW "I'll(??) have to check") that started. (LW "um-hm") It's been several years now, so I couldn't tell you when it actually—it was phased in—the charter was granted, and then the program was phased in, like the third year, and then the fourth year, and then the programs were expanded, sometimes one or two at a time. (LW "um-hm")

Lynn Wilkinson: And so are you quite happy in your work at—at the present time? You're on the Board of Governors (LA begins speaking) at the moment.

Leland Asa: Yes, I've uh--I'm in my second term, (LW "um-hm") and it is satisfying (chair creaking) to still be associated with the college. (LW "um-hm") Uh, it's t—uh, let's see, it's basically twenty-one years later. (LW "yes, a lot of changes.") Uh, we saw our kids grow up in the area. One of them was born in the area, (LW "oh, yes") and the other one was born before we got here, and so we had the ties, a lot of ties. We were very close to the uh people in the Johnston Heights Evangelical Free Church, and (LW "__ (??)") still consider s—them some of our closest friends, (35 minutes) and uh. (LW "mm") And, the Lower Mainland is probably as much uh a home to me as any place I've lived, in the sense that our family sort of grew up er— (LW "m-hm, m-hm") here.

Lynn Wilkinson: Do you miss Canada at all, or—? (chuckles) (LA begins speaking) __ (??)

Leland Asa: Oh, yes, I miss the Lower Mainland especially. (LW "yes") There were lots of things that we did here, uh, that uh probably don't get into the books, which ties a person to the area. For example, in the early days, Dick Goodsell (sp??), Dick Walters, Les Garrison, some of the others, would uh—and along with myself—would uh, load up a couple vans and go fishing (LW “oh, yeah?(??)”) the day after graduation. (both chuckle) And we would go to Jervis Inlet and fish for salmon uh, as a faculty for a few days, or we would go uh, to uh, a lake in the Interior fishing for a few (LW “um-hm”) days, (LW “um-hm”) just uh, after the—the academic year was finished we uh did things together (LW “um-hm”) like that ____ (??).

Lynn Wilkinson: And those are good times, when you get time to spend on just enjoying the company and the quietness of it all, and mm.

Leland Asa: Yeah, kind of reflect a little bit and uh—(LW “that’s right”) it was, uh, (LW “um-hm”) interesting and rewarding both.

Lynn Wilkinson: Um, did the—the uh—when you say you did interesting things together, I wondered if the uh, faculty ever put skits on for the students; were there any fun (LA begins speaking) parts like that.

Leland Asa: Yes, uh, that occurred; (chuckle) I think there was probably one faculty member, though, who was considered more of a professional. The rest of us were not asked that often; were (LW chuckles) more hams. But John Woodland, (LW “oh, yes”) on every special occasion, was asked to write poetry, and he involved all of us, in one way or another, in his poems. (both chuckle)

Lynn Wilkinson: He was good; he wrote a poem for Cal Hanson when he returned.

Leland Asa: Did he?

Lynn Wilkinson: I saw that. Is that the same John Woodland who's in the library in(??) New Westminster, or—?

Leland Asa: No, (LW “no”) John Woodland is still here on the faculty, (LW “oh, ___(??)”) and, uh, I think for the archives, if you could get copies of those old poems, if he still (LW “um-hm”) has them, (LW “um-hm”) dating way back into the midsixties, uh, you'd find out a lot about the faculty, because he brought out the humorous side of each (LW “um-hm, ___(??)”) faculty member in his poems, and I don't know where they are, or if he even has them, but if he does have them, (LW “hm”) they were uh excellent? (LW “make a nice display”) They might even make a history of the uh, of the faculty on (LW “m-hm”) the uh humorous side.

Lynn Wilkinson: That would be good. Well I'm looking forward to making up a uh, a little booklet, at—probably in June or July this year, so, (LA “uh-huh”) uh, I'll be using a lot of pictures and, and things like that too(??). Maybe if you know anyone and can encourage them (laughs) to send me things, that would be nice. (LA “all right, that—”) Or if you have anything, (LA begins speaking) that might do.

Leland Asa: I have a wealth of pictures of (LW “hm”) the old campus, uh, that probably I could dig out and contribute to the archives. (LW “oh, ___(??)”) The old house at the entrance that we lived in—I have a number of pictures of that; (LW “and I don't have any of that”) the old garage that was there; the house that was on blocks that we burned—well, we didn't burn it down; we asked the Fort Langley—er, not the Fort Langley—the Milner, I believe, it was the Milner fire department, to come and burn the old house, uh, (LW “that must have been exciting”) which was an eyesore. (both laugh) Yes, they had to spray our roof, to keep our roof from burning, because it was rather close. Those (LW begins speaking) are a few of the events.

Lynn Wilkinson: Well, how about your wife and family these days, are they uh, all in good health, and I guess your family is grown up, (LA begins speaking) ___(??)?

Leland Asa: Yes, my wife is now a real-estate broker in California; she gave up teaching after she left. She actually gave up teaching while she was still here at Trinity, and went into the real-estate business, and, personally, she has made I think some significant contributions to the (sound of airplane) college and special funds. She gave out of her earnings in real estate contributions toward a board-room table, toward various and sundry pieces of equipment that were needed which otherwise couldn't be purchased. (LW “um-hm”) She has continued to help make donations to the college out of her broker—real-estate brokerage business. Our daughter, who used to play in the dorms with the students as a child, is now a registered nurse working in Denver, and married. (LW “oh”) Our son, (**40 minutes**) who was born while we were here at the college, is now a first-year student at Westmont College in Santa Barbara. (LW “oh, so”)

Lynn Wilkinson: And is he—what are his aspirations, to be (LA begins speaking) in the ministry at all, or—?

Leland Asa: Well, he's not sure. He's thinking of chemical engineering at the (LW "oh, yes(?)")po—at this point, but at that age their ch—goals and aspirations change, so I want to leave him that room to, to change if (LW "That's right") he decides to.

Lynn Wilkinson: That's a lib—Westmont is a liberal arts college. Is it a two-year program, or a four-year?

Leland Asa: No, it's a four-year degree-granting institution, (LW "oh, it is ___(?)") with majors in areas such as psychology, history, sociology, religious studies, biology, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, the general (LW begins speaking) university-type program.

Lynn Wilkinson: So very similar then to what we have here. Are, (LA "yes") are there as many students as, or more, or—?

Leland Asa: There are just a few more. There are about 935 students at Westmont, and I believe there are just over 800 here.

Lynn Wilkinson: Well this has been a very interesting interview, and I thank you very much for spending this time today.

Leland Asa: All right, well, it was my pleasure.

Lynn Wilkinson: Thank you. **[tape cuts and re-starts]**

Lynn Wilkinson: We're just going to talk for a minute about Dave Twiest, as Dr. Asa actually hired Dave. And what year was that?

Leland Asa: I don't recall the year exactly; it must have been around 1969 or 1970, but we were desperate for a director of the library who had vision, and who had experience, (LW "um-hm") and Dave Twiest's name was given to us, and I had corresponded with him a little bit, and during the summer I was in Colorado. He was at the time at Sterling (sp??) College in Colorado, and so, I found—uh, located where he was. He was directing a Bible camp in the mountains of Colorado, and I found directions on how to get to the camp, and I drove to the camp and met Dave, and discussed the possibilities of coming to Trinity, and he seemed open to the idea; it seemed that he felt he could make a better contribution to the life of young people (LW "um-hm") in this kind of a setting, and so he consented to come, for which we were thankful, and uh, just, uh, Dave may hear this, but it's the truth, (both laugh) and I'm not flattering, but Dave is one of the uh—has made one tremendous contribution to the library. When we—I recall I've had to cut his budget when I was Dean here, because we just couldn't balance, and he did the best he could, and did a marvellous job with what he had. (LW "um-hm") I recall also before he was even on campus, he—we flew him up here to help with the, the expansion to help look at the plans and so on that uh, (LW "um-hm") when Strombeck was adding an addition to the library, and Dave had input at that time. (LW "um-hm")(LW begins speaking) I can—

Lynn Wilkinson: I think Dave is wonderful for being able to, uh, have grants for different projects. He just seems (LA "um-hm") to know how to go about finding out where these grants

are available and then (LA “uh-huh”) getting them. (LA begins speaking) He’s done a lot in that area, and—

Leland Asa: Yeah, I think—I think, uh, one of the key personnel over the years has been Dave Twiest, and yet, off-campus at least, people really don’t hear his name that much or know about the contributions he’s made, but just for my part, (LW “um-hm”) uh, in this oral history, I would certainly recognise those contributions.

Lynn Wilkinson: That’s nice for him. I can say too that he’s the best boss that I’ve ever worked for in many, many years, (laughs) in the library work.

Leland Asa: Very good. (LW “um-hm”) Glad to add that note to the tape. (both laugh)

Lynn Wilkinson: Thank you. (**44 minutes, sixteen seconds**)

Index

- Asa, Alice (wife of Leland), 5:38-7:10; 8:00-9:25; 20:52-22:02
 positions at Trinity, 13:28-13:35
 real-estate work, 38:50-39:47
- Asa, Leland
 boyhood/youth, 0:20-4:35
 contribution to extra-curricular aspects of Trinity, 23:47-24:35; 26:00-26:33
 conversion, 2:23-4:00
 education, 4:20-7:10; 7:55-8:27; 9:15-9:50; 11:00-11:45
 positions at Trinity, 13:35-13:47; 10:14-10:27; 32:36-32:57; 42:48-43:00
 employment
 at Trinity, 11:30-33:05; 34:30-40:10; 41:20-44:16
 pre-Trinity, 8:25-9:40; 10:25-11:45
 post-Trinity, 32:25-32:38; 34:15-34:32
- Brown Morris Company, 16:42-17:16
- Enarson, David, 11:55-12:10
- Friesen, Benno (faculty member), 13:20-13:30, 26:07-26:14; 27:29-27:43
- Garrison, Les, 13:12-13:15; 26:14-26:26; 27:29-27:43; 35:20-36:05
 hands-on skills, 28:05-28:36; 29:13-29:28
- Graham, Billy, 4:33-5:36
- Hanson, Calvin (original president), 13:10-13:20; 10:14-10:27; 14:48-15:03; 16:14-16:25; 18:03-18:15;
 25:41-26:00; 27:29-27:43; 36:58-37:03
- Johnston Heights Evangelical Free Church, 14:12-14:18; 34:48-35:00
- Mattson, Enoch (faculty member), 13:18-13:22
- Reid, Sam (Trinity maintenance employee), 17:16-17:46; 18:29-18:46; 22:21-22:53
- Seaton, Craig (faculty member), 32:38-33:43
- Snider, Neil (2nd president), 32:17-23:25; 32:38-33:18
- Strombeck, Vernon, 14:48-16:14; 43:00-43:20
- Thompson, Robert, 30:45-32:25
- Trinity Western University
 buildings, 12:05-13:06; 15:25-19:45; 20:52-21:17; 22:21-22:35; 38:18-38:46; 43:00-43:20
 early years of, 11:30-32:10; 34:30-38:50
 fund-raising activities, 15:48-16:42; 26:33-27:17; 30:45-32:10
 origin of athletic teams' name and colours, 24:35-25:34
- Twiest, David (librarian), 41:20-44:16
- Walters, Richard (faculty member), 3:05-3:12; 27:29-27:43; 35:20-36:05
- Westmount College, 32:27-32:38; 39:58-40:10
 nature of (in 1983), 40:30-41:05
- Woodland, John (faculty member), 36:22-37:45