

Abstract

The following is the summary notes and transcript of an interview conducted by Aimee Ridley, fourth year history major at Trinity Western University, with Benno and Marge Friesen on the topic of the founding years at what was then Trinity Junior College. The interview was conducted in the University Archives on October 9, 2003 as part of a Directed Studies History 310 course.

The interview begins with a discussion of how the Friesens first heard of the plans for Trinity Junior College and their interest in joining the staff. They provide a brief description of how the campus looked when they first arrived, and then talk about some of the challenges that arose in preparing for the first students in 1962.

The next portion of the interview focuses on the various jobs the Friesens held while at Trinity Junior College. They provide specific job titles and descriptions, as well as some insight into the more unusual activities that they participated in on campus, outside of their job descriptions. Mr. Friesen discusses his transition from English Professor to Dean of Students and Mrs. Friesen describes their involvement with the music program.

The Friesens then discuss their relationships with the students. They explain what it was like living with their family in the men's wing of the dorms and how they interacted with students outside of the classroom.

The last portion of the interview addresses what the Friesens think attracted students to Trinity Junior College and what they hoped students would take from their time at Trinity Junior College. Finally, they discuss how the Trinity Western University of today has lived up to the vision they had for it during its foundation.

The interview concludes with some final comments on why they left Trinity Junior College, how they have been involved since their departure, and how the school impacted their lives. They also provide some final comments on things of importance to them that were not specifically asked in the interview.

AR=Aimee Ridley
BF=Benno Friesen
MF=Marge Friesen

[Summary Notes]

AR: This is Aimee Ridley, fourth year history major at Trinity Western University, and I am interviewing Benno and Marge Friesen on the topic of the founding years at what was then Trinity Junior College. This interview is taking place in the University Archives on the ninth of October, 2003, as part of a Directed Studies History 310 course.

AR: How and when did you first hear about the plans for Trinity Junior College?

BF: We were living in Camanche, Iowa at the time. I think we first read about the plans from the *Evangelical Beacon*—that there was talk about having a school here. And I think at first it was going to be a Bible college. Then as the plans—as the discussions—went on it morphed into a junior college. And that's really where we first heard about it.

MF: What year was that?

BF: That would have been about 1960, 1961.

AR: What people, visions, or events caused you to become interested in joining the staff?

MF: 'Cause we wanted to move back home.

BF: That's right. That's one of the big reasons—well. Secondly, I was teaching in a junior-senior high school. Totally out of place for me. It was not my cup of tea to teach at that level and becoming more frustrated by the day, by the year. And I remember one of the faculty saying you know you don't belong here you should be at some junior college somewhere. And so that gave me the incentive to at least approach the school. And at that time I had only a bachelor's degree so there wasn't much of a hope.

MF: You applied to the school and they wrote back—Dr. Hanson wrote back—and said we are only considering people with master's or doctorate degrees. So we thought, well that's that. Then we suddenly got a panic phone call from him—would you reconsider—because the only people that had applied for any of the teaching positions here were all American and they needed a Canadian. So that's how we came to be.

BF: And actually I had never met him [Dr. Hanson] until we came on to campus here.

MF: No, but I did. It was at a—at that time it was called the Women's Missionary Society—and they had a big meeting around Cedar Rapids, Iowa or something. And I had gone with the church ladies. And he was the speaker that night. And so I went to him afterwards and introduced myself, and talked with him a little bit. And the whole

way home I thought, I really blew it, I really blew it, I really blew it. You know? But it was shortly after that that we got the call.

AR: Are you both from Canada?

BF: We both grew up about 5 or 6 miles from here. I moved here with my parents in 1938. You'd remember that. (laughs) And so by the time the school was built it would have been 22-24 years later. It was all just stumps and bush where we lived—stump ranching. And Marge moved another 9 years later in '47 to BC. So this was home for us. I had gone through university at North Western with the intention of coming back to teach high school here but by the time I graduated we couldn't afford to move home so I had to get a job locally and did that for three years until this opened up.

AR: How did growing up so close to the eventual site for the Trinity campus impact your views of the school?

MF: Never even thought of it. Did it? Did you -- ?

BF: I think probably the area was somewhat irrelevant—the particular location was irrelevant to us. That there would be one here was very important. But we did remember the old farm. We knew the site and knew that in its day it had been kind of the establishment farm, Seal Kap, because they were recognized as the cutting edge of good dairying. And the farm property was seen as pretty elegant at the time we left, which was 1955, so it was still operating quite well. Naturally by the time we came back it was getting a little bit run down, it had been empty for a while. But the fact that it was here and it had a good reputation as a piece of property.

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MF: It had a lot of historical value to it too, which was interesting.

AR: Can you describe how the campus looked when you first saw it and how it has changed in the next few years?

BF: Sure. We drove up the hill here, it was a gravel lane, and did a right at the top of the hill, drove past the barn, and there was a barbed wire fence there running parallel to the driveway—gravel driveway—cows inside the pasture. And drove up to roughly where the carillon is now, where the road takes a bend to the house [Seal Kap] and that is basically where the road ended, but you could see in the distance where they were building the chapel, the roof wasn't on it yet. I think they were starting to put the roof on it. We are talking about July 2nd.

MF: And the grass was waist high. And I remember that was the first time we met the Hansons really. The first time you met the Hansons. They were out there working I think with a scythe or something.

BF: They had just come a day or two before.

MF: That's true. They were looking for a place to live.

BF: So they were camping inside what was the old Seal Kap House. And in the middle of the circle in front of the chapel was a swamp.

MF: Full of frogs.

BF: Full of frogs. Bull rushes. And I remember the first graduation in 1963. The frogs were whooping it up so much you could hardly hear the speaker. It was a great day for the frogs.

MF: And they had moved in all of those—they were up from a logging camp (BF: From a construction site.)—some cabins so those became the classrooms and one of them is where we had to store our furniture then 'cause we had no place to put our furniture when it came. And musty, I think it was almost into winter time and wet. We kept our furniture there.

AR: What were some of the difficulties in getting ready for the first students in 1962?

BF: Since we were a junior college in Canada, particularly in BC -- nobody knew what a junior college was. They had never had one. But we had at that time what was called senior matriculation, which was grade thirteen. All the major high schools had grade thirteen, which would be first year university, under local conditions and that would be the bridge to go into university. They would take senior matric. and they would then get into second year university. But nobody knew about a junior college at that time. So the first real hurdle was to establish some credibility with the universities.

MF: Well, and also with the local church people because they were really Bible school oriented. And suddenly now we are going to have a college. And there was always the feeling among people in our churches in that time that you could lose your faith in a secular university. And so a Bible school would have been great for them. They would have loved a Bible school but here suddenly we were a college. And that was a little frightening for some of them.

BF: Actually there is a fair amount of anti-intellectualism in the churches. As a matter of fact one of the pastors of that time told me a year ago—he is now retired naturally—“Don't know why you need all that stuff. I did it with two years at Prairie.” And he was a reasonably successful pastor for -- under those circumstances. But he didn't do it on sound preaching. He did it on many other gifts that he had, but not that.

MF: And that's where Dr. Hanson's coming was really the catalyst for all of that thinking, because he was a missionary, which was important to those people. But now here he was, and he was going to be president of this college so they accepted it.

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BF: He was a Classics major. Knew Hebrew. Knew Greek. At least he knew Greek very well. Could read Greek fluently.

MF: So that really helped. It would never gotten off the ground, I don't think, without that.

BF: I think that's true. No. Would not have happened. So establishing credibility with universities was tough. And we had as far as I can remember-- aside from President Hanson and Dr. Mattson-- we had only two other people with an M.A. The rest of us were B.A.s and we were supposed to go over to UBC and meet these guys who were teaching courses parallel. We had to pose as accredited profs. at this new school. Secondly, the library was non existent. On the convocation night I think it was the vice president or the dean of UBC came out as a representative of the university. We had the convocation at the chapel. So the chapel in those days was the chapel-library building and the chapel itself would be the chapel and the library was supposed to be stacks on one side and study area on the other, carrels, and what have you. Well you walked into it and the library consisted of a table smaller than this [indicating a table approximately five feet by six feet] with books stacked up on the flat which were really the remnants of some pastor in the mid-west who wanted to help the school; but there were no other books around. And the rep. from UBC was gracious enough not to talk about any of that. He just gave us a very nice, gracious welcome. But establishing credibility was probably the first big hurdle. And again it helped—I don't know how much of this is new or old to you—it helped that the provincial government had recognized the need for more academic institutions and had established what was called the MacDonald Commission. And it was the job—and MacDonald I think was the president of UBC—and the job of the commission was to examine higher education in BC and make recommendations. And he came back about the time we were ready to open and said that we needed a network of community colleges or junior colleges. So here we were at the vanguard of what he was recommending. We were the only one around. Simon Fraser wasn't around yet at that time. So the fact that the MacDonald Report had recommended exactly what we were doing except that we were private, church related. That helped. That helped get our students into UBC. And the UBC registrar or the president said, "Well what about accreditation" — there was no such thing as accreditation in the province at that time, none— but "we will recognize your graduates when they come to us and if they do well that's fine and if they don't that's tough, but we will do it on how well they do." Wonderfully providential, that all that time when we arrived we see the prospective list of students shrinking. We think there is going to be a hundred, then seventy-five, there's fifty, forty, and we ended up with seventeen. Of the seventeen on the first graduation there were four or five graduates and four were very bright. And at least two or three of them went to UBC and did very well at UBC. So that broke the ice for us. It was a wonderful gift of God that it turned out that way. And that helped to establish credibility. Some eight years later—eight or nine years later—one of the senior educators at UBC came out—found out later on that he was a Christian guy, had I think an economics-- he is still here in Vancouver, he is retired, goes to First Baptist. He came out and wanted to

see what this school was all about, “‘Cause you attract the students and not one of them had failed.” This was like 8 or 10 years into our history. Well I think he was being overly generous. ‘Cause if they didn’t fail there were certainly some that went there and dropped out, if they hadn’t failed. But the first job was to get that kind of credibility so that we would be seen as a credible institution. It turned out, as we went along, when the other schools were being built, and students transferred. As I recall it students transferring from the community colleges had to have a B average to get into UBC, but students from Trinity had to have only a C. So it spoke very well of the quality of work done here by the profs.

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MF: That’s the academic part. The practical part of getting ready for a new school—(BF: As though academics aren’t practical) (laughter)—we had all these old buildings that the students were going to stay in and they were cold. They weren’t insulated. They were like plywood floors. They were up off the ground so the wind howled under the floors. So Mrs. Hanson got a hold of a lot of these carpet ends that a lot of people buy now for in front of their door. Got a hold of a lot of those and some carpet needles and we sewed them together for carpeting on the floors. To make it a little bit warmer for the students. Different things like that. One of the funny things I think that have happened—the Seal Kap home became the dining room and the kitchen and the President’s office and all of those things. But they had one beautiful big room with a lovely pool table. Beautiful carved legs and every thing there for playing pool. Well the powers that be in the Board [of Governors] decided that really might not be the Christian thing to have on campus, so they better not have it. The funny thing is one of the board members took it to his home (laughs). Those are some of the funny things that happened.

BF: The first job that the kids had when they came on campus—I think there is a picture of it—was carrying their mattresses into their rooms. They carried their own furniture. That happened more than once.

AR: Could you each tell me the specific job titles you held a Trinity and give me the approximate date ranges?

BF: Well I started out as an instructor in English, or History and English. I started out as a History major and taught History and English. Then year three I went off to graduate school for three summers. And when I finished that I was Assistant Prof., and then later on Associate Prof. of English. After year three I was also Dean of Students. From 1965 to 1972 I think, I was Dean of Students. And Marge was mostly a volunteer in the music department. Most of the time you didn’t get paid [addressing MF].

MF: No. We started out with this choir. And I played piano and Benno directed. And then out of that first year student body there were four young men who had beautiful voices and they blended nice. So we decided we would have a quartet. And we traveled that first summer in our two-door Buick. And we did 10,000 miles from Nebraska to California, I think it was.

BF: From here to Northern Saskatchewan to Winona Lake, Indiana, to California.

MF: And we hit the Conference. That was big time. But we just wanted to get known. Because in the American's eyes, here we were this little two bit school over here. So it was important that we do that. And it was hard. Like I say, six of us in a two-door Buick. No air-conditioning. We left our two girls at home to do that. It wasn't easy.

BF: So later on when it seemed—she was training all of the vocal ensembles to go on tour, and to sing locally. All extension work. [Extension Ministries] So she was I think one year on salary. I think it was around \$750 she got that year, and \$450 for expenses.

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MF: Now you got to tell them though, when we went out in the choir, with the quartet, we had no money. Tell them what happened.

BF: Forty years later it's a hoot. (MF: It wasn't then.) I supplied the car. We got seven cents a mile for expenses. And the treasurer who was not the most competent treasurer the business world has ever seen. Nice guy, just not his cup of tea, gave me something like \$100, \$150, so we could eat until we got on the road and then we were supposed to use the offerings. So we had zilch money of our own. I was still paying off debts from my own education. So we came back after the 10,000 miles and it was time to settle up. So I went in there and showed him mileage and since it was seven cents a mile, so it would be \$700. So he says, "fine now we got to take out the \$100." I said, "what \$100?" "Well the \$100 I gave you when you left." So it was 700 less a hundred. But we had eaten that.

MF: And usually there wasn't a service on a Monday evening. So what do you do? We had no money to put kids in a motel. So they would have booked us with some people for a Sunday night. So we would just hang around Monday, and hang around Monday, until finally the people realized we had no place to go, so they would keep us for Monday nights. And those were embarrassing and hard times. The school really should have made those arrangements, you know? But everybody was a novice at this game.

BF: Nobody had ever done any of this before.

[Verbatim Transcript begins here]

AR: Mr. Friesen, could you describe the transition from English Professor to Dean of Students?

BF: Well um. It wasn't that hard actually. Because uh the whole time I was doing it I was doing both at the same time. My teaching load was reduced a fair amount while I was uh Dean. But I was always teaching English 200 at the same time. So in that sense

it wasn't—. And I have to—uh this, this is a little um delicate, but um this will never be published any way will it? Not to the _____(??) of the local press. (AR laughs)

MF: Well there were a lot of delicate things because you kind of have to put the school in the same picture as you would a little church. And there were a lot of big toes in a little puddle. (sound of coffee cup scraping along table.) Okay? Isn't that kind of—.

BF: But yeah-- the fellow who came as Dean of students had uh—Dr. Asa—nice guy, good guy. Was finishing off his Ph.D. in sociology and psychology. Had all the credentials. But he himself recognized that he didn't have the personality. And it was creating severe health problems for him. So after the three years he said, "This isn't for me." So he sat down with Dr. Hanson and said "What do we do? I can't do it." And he [Calvin Hanson] said, "Who do you recommend?" And uh basically Dr. Asa said, "Benno. Students are coming to him anyway." And I remember that my office had been had next to his and they'd be walking by his office to come and talk to me. Well, it is kind of going where the fish are. And um, so the transition wasn't that difficult. Now. Dean of Students in those days is not a Dean of Students today because—because I had absolutely no background in the technical side, of the administrative side, and today a Dean of Students had better be equipped to talk about vocational planning and all those things that, that go into being a Dean of Students. In those days the job was to keep students happy. (MF: We didn't want to lose any.) (both laugh) Yeah. They all paid tuition. (both laugh) (MF: Yeah, couldn't afford it.) No. If you had 98.6 blood temperature and 120 over 80 blood pressure you were admitted. (laughter) A bit of an exaggeration, but uh, no it was important that we have as many students as possible. But that wasn't—. The fact is that uh—and this is important. Here we are out in—. And now (coffee cup bangs against table) everyone has a car, and if you don't have a car you mooch your buddy's car. There is sometimes even bus service to town. There's ways of getting around. When you have seventeen students, maybe one or two have a car. If any. Maybe friends of the commuters have cars. And they're on this little island, four miles from town. I mean you're asking for trouble because of boredom and what have you. And so uh, in the second year there were fifty students, and third year I think forty-nine, and fourth year about a hundred. And you've gotta keep a wholesome atmosphere on campus, otherwise you're really in trouble. And uh, so being a Dean of Students in those days was—professionally-- quite different than being a Dean of Students. I would never be Dean of Students today. It wouldn't work. I would never qualify. But uh the transition actually was quite easy. And as a matter of fact, teaching English for me was uh—a good bridge itself—because if you really get into the nuts and bolts of good literature you're dealing with uh understanding people. So that was a very useful tool.

[00:26:46]

AR: Mrs. Friesen, you've already told us a little bit about your involvement with the music program; can you tell us a little bit more? I heard that the first piano on campus came from your house, actually.

MF: Um-hmm, it did.

BF: That was my fault.

MF: No it wasn't. No. And then when we finally did get a piano, I happened—Did I hear it or did Muriel hear it? It was over CJOR radio station. They mentioned that they wanted to sell their piano. So we called the powers that be here and said, "Hey they are selling a piano. Maybe we'll get a good deal." And that's how we got our first piano in um the chapel, and after mine _____(?). (BF: It was a grand.) It was a grand, yes. Small grand. So we could bring mine back home. (MF clears throat). (BF: It was awful.) Yeah, we had to have it refinished. (MF laughs) But that's, yeah—mine was the first piano on campus I guess. But um—had great groups after that. I would come, I guess two evenings a week—two or three evenings a week, and we'd practice with these groups. You'd have tryouts and—. I always find it hard to turn down kids that really wanted to be in a group so I'd say "Well I think you would do well in the choir." (MF chuckles) So they'd end up in the choir. What was his name? What was our choir director's name? (BF: Don Jenkins.) Don Jenkins. Wonderful man. And he did great things. And he allowed a lot of freedom in the choir with the kids. You know it was contemporary, it was coming in and things like this. And he was great. Yeah. We cut about three records I guess to help raise money. They must be here, in the archives here someplace. And yeah, It was a good time. Have made life-long friends through it all. Umm-Hmm.

AR: Could you also tell us what it was like living with your family in the men's wing of the dorms?

MF: Hmm. (laughs) Well we moved in there because the couple that were going to come be dorm parents couldn't make it at the very last minute So we sold our home in White Rock and we moved here on campus. We had two little girls and a cat. I guess looking back those were really in many ways the most difficult times for me, because Ben was Dean of Students and I could hear him laughing downstairs and have a great time with students and here I am stuck up in this apartment. Had sisal carpeting. Which is very popular now, people talk about you need to get sisal. But I remember my kids socks would have holes in them in no time running through those—. But Friday nights you could smell the boys' lotion, their shaving lotion, coming through the wall. You really could. Our girls' bedroom was right next to theirs and there was cement block walls. You could smell it Friday evenings. And quite often Benno -- even in the middle of the night -- would get up and go through the dorms just to check everything you know. And it was amazing some of the experiences he had about that. He'll have to tell you about that. (clears throat) And also we were like parents. I would have a knock on the door at three in the morning and there would be a student there standing there that was troubled or say, "Can I just have piece of bread?" He'd gotten his days and nights mixed up. He was having real problems. So you really were parents. And uh, I remember this one boy in particular. Had uh, a drug problem. And another boy—who came from San Francisco who had been in the Haight-Ashbury-- families up there, section—came and told me about this young man. Said, "I think he's had some drugs," or whatever it was that day. So I ran down to his room. And everybody, everybody on campus had gone off

to a-a- basketball game I guess. So I was alone. So I go down to his room and there he is flat out in bed. Well I got him dressed. It was a cold winter night. There was ice out on the roads. Cold winter night. I've got his jacket on, I said, "Now we're gonna walk." And we walked off campus right down to where the railway tracks are up there. He stumbled along. Brought him back. Brought him back to our room and gave—

(End of Side A) [00:31:06]

AR: Okay. As you were saying.

MF: And he had—he was in one of my groups. Had a very nice voice. And there wasn't any trouble with him after that. But I remember the summer came for the groups to go out. And Dr. Hanson called me and he says, "Are you sure you want to send him?" And I said, "Yes I do. He needs the group. He needs to be doing this." And it was the right thing to do. And he has turned out to be just a wonderful young man—very active in his church. And just—It was a good thing to do. And there were a lot of good experiences like that living on campus. Don't regret it. (BF: No.) And it was it was good for our children. You know? They will remember those years. They were the friend of all the students, you know. And the cat—you never knew whose room she was in. It was a good time. It was just a good family.

BF: The floors are cement flooring in that building. With tubes in it. Reinforced concrete kind-of. And they had weights up in the little—it was kind of a rec. room (MF: Um-hmm) on each floor, in each unit. Just small rec. room. And they had weights in there. (MF: Um-hmm) And they would be lifting weights and drop them on the floor (MF: Boom. Boom.) and the echo would come though those tubes (MF: Yeah, Yeah.) right into our apartment. (MF: Yeah.) Downstairs—and the lounge was down stairs—I don't know what it is now, but under—last year at least our apartment was the international student's lounge. And underneath that, on the main floor, was the students' lounge at that time (MF: um-hmm.). They had a fairly nice—(MF: Stereo.) stereo (MF: Yeah.) in there. But it would be booming until (MF: Um-hmm.) all hours of the night. And the speakers would be up by the floor (MF: Yeah.)—or ceiling (MF: Yeah.) and our floor. _____(??).

MF: And downstairs also was a small room. And there was a set of drums in there. And there was a young man that could really play the drums. And he had big emotional problems. And when they would really get to be too much you would see him down—you would hear him down there just beating the life out of those drums. And later he did commit suicide, after he left school. Yeah. But those are things you remember. I should go back to saying why it was a difficult year for me. Because our salary was very, very, small (BF: Minimal.) Yeah. So we couldn't afford vacations. You know. You couldn't afford to go to a movie. Well you didn't go to movies. You couldn't afford to go here or take your children there. You know. And those were hard times. And then here I would be stuck up in that apartment. (BF: She'd be locked up in there.) Yeah, you were locked up in there. But that's alright. (laughs)

AR: What do you think attracted students to Trinity?

MF: Boy wouldn't that be nice to know. (coffee cup bangs against table) They were great students.

BF: Well some of it was price. (MF: Yeah.) It was—I'm sure you noticed that, coming from California. Price made a big difference. Part of it was the fact that you could—and parents liked it and kids liked it—that you could come to a school that really valued Christian teaching—and liberal arts academic training. They, they really valued that. And some of them came because it probably -- for entrance -- was probably easier for them to get into. And there were students who probably shouldn't have been here who came for the experience. (MF: Um-hmm.) But uh, and maybe didn't do too well academically—didn't leave having done well academically—but they are still some of the best friends of the school. And some of our best friends. (MF: Um-hmm.) Because—(MF: Tell them about Meads(??).) Oh yeah. Became my niece. (MF: Yeah.) Met my nephew on the campus here. And—she had come really in it with a rebellious heart. She wanted to get away from home. And she really met the Lord here. Really turned her life around. So I thought to myself—she'd be great to have at evening service in White Rock at the Free Church there, have her give her testimony. Said, Sure she'll do it. So she comes over and she said, "Well I wanted to get away from home and I thought two thousand miles will just about do it." She's from Minneapolis. (MF Laughs.) And yeah there were kids like that. But—I think there is a sense, as one graduate said, one alumnus said, during Homecoming, "There was a lot of grace here." He experienced grace. And that's probably what brought a lot of them.

[00:36:20]

AR: What is the one thing that you hoped students would take from their time at Trinity?

BF: Well certainly—certainly academic excellence. I mean—the nickname for the place was "Camp Trinity." Because they had a good time. It was a little like camp. But I think I can say that I am speaking for practically all the faculty—practically all the faculty—the students had a rough ride. Standards were pretty good. So I always felt—and I told _____(??) "Look -- the Lord gave you a talent. He doesn't want you to give it back to him in the same shape you got it. You gotta improve it." And so there was a demand for excellence and I think we wanted that. Secondly we wanted character. And Cal had some—transported—couple of sayings from Wheaton College here. "If Christ is Lord nothing is secular." There's one of them. (MF: And that was important for this community to hear.) Yeah. And secondly, "Never doubt in the dark what God has told you in the light." We still say it. And those were things that were very important. And I think the students went away with that. They talk about it yet. (MF: Um-hmm.)

AR: Is there any place on campus that holds a special place in your heart?

MF: The chapel. (BF: Yeah.) For me.

BF: Yeah. The chapel. Probably the chapel. I think most people would probably say the chapel. (MF: Um-hmm.) Yeah.

MF: When we came here the cows were in it. Remember we had to chase the cows out? (BF: Yeah. And—oh yeah.) (laughs)

BF: When we came I—we didn't have a job. I didn't have a job. So I spent time working on the campus. Painting the inside of the old construction shacks. Doing stuff like that. (MF: Pouring cement and siding.) Pouring cement. Working on equipment. Doing whatever needed to be done. (MF: Yeah.) We did that all the time.

MF: And then one day Hanson said, "You—Benno, we better quit now; the students are starting to come. We'd better get dressed." (laughs)

BF: Oh yeah. This was my first year as Dean of Students. (MF: Yeah.) The students were arriving—and we were exploding to like a hundred. We had to have extra dorm space. And so they had taken some of the left over material from the campsite and used them for room dividers in the bottom of—what we called the A and S building, the science building, where the labs are—the Neufeld building, or the nursing building, or whatever that building is. The old section of it. And downstairs the rooms are this width and double the length. And so we ran a wall down it lengthways and sectioned it off into four little cubicles. So the theory was this would be their sleeping area and this would be their study area. Yeah right. There was no study area. It was all games and what have you in the whole place. But we had to have that ready for the kids to arrive. So Cal and Marge and I were down there painting and hanging wallpaper like—I don't know—(MF: 'Til midnight.) 'Til midnight one night. And the next day at noon we were still doing it. And afternoon the students were starting to arrive. And that's when Cal said, "I think you better go. The students are starting to arrive." So I had to go up there and kibbitz with them and talk and keep them entertained. Keep them away from their rooms so they didn't see what was going on. The furniture was off in another room. And finally Cal came out and said, "Well I think it's ready now." And I said, "Okay guys, there's the furniture." And they (laughs) carried their own furniture into their rooms.

MF: I think one of the things that is important to remember—when they started tearing down the barn. You'll have to tell them about the lumber in the barn. I think people need to know that. We took some of the siding and we used that for his [Benno's] office. I don't know if it's still there or not. (BF: Yeah it is—it was a year.) Is it still there?

BF: If you go downstairs—in the—Do you know what I'm saying? (AR: The Neufeld Science Center.) Pardon? Science center yeah. You'll go down the main stairs at the first door—the first double door—hang a left downstairs go to the end of that old section and the room on the right in the farthest corner of that old building in the inside of it you will see those boards—these boards. (MF: Um-hmm.) Over—[Pointing to a picture hanging in the archives] We're talking lumber the way these-- These boards are twenty-two feet long with no knots bigger than my thumb. And so—(MF: You don't find

lumber like that anymore.) (MF clears throat.) No, you wouldn't buy lumber like that today. And that became the paneling in my office. Rustic.

[00:41:41]

MF: And I think another important things is—I want to mention Frank Mansfield. He was the psych. (BF: Psych. and soc.[psychology and sociology]) teacher. The kids loved him, loved him. And we needed shrubs and trees on campus. And I heard about a nursery in the Surrey area that was selling out. It was an estate. (Talking at same time.) It was an estate. So Frank brought his truck and he and I went out all day and we dug up shrubs and—trees. And we came back to campus and planted them. And they are still, still around. (BF: They are down by old—) The old library.

BF: Just now-- What was it? The-- (AR: Strombeck.) Strombeck building. (MF: Um-hmm.) All those trees around the Strombeck building.

MF: Yeah. And we planted some that are by the dorms over there. Yep. But he was a wonderful, a wonderful teacher. (BF: Yeah.)

AR: Regarding the Calvin Hanson Chapel, which was the first new building constructed on campus grounds, there is a story about students gathering rocks from the river (MF: No it's not true.) for the stone wall. Okay we—(MF: Not true.) we were just wondering about that.

MF: No, no. (BF: Not true.) Not a word of truth to that.

BF: That's in that book by the way.

MF: Yeah. Yeah. And we had told them beforehand that that wasn't true and they still put it in the book. Which is too bad. But no there's not a word of truth.

BF: Makes for a good story.

MF: Yeah. (laughs)

BF: No. You won't find rocks like that in that creek.

MF: No.

AR: Was there ever a time when you saw the school undertaking a project which you thought was impossible to see fulfilled?

BF: I thought about that. Probably not because we had—we were really quite naive. (MF: Um-hmm.) And our naivete allowed us to think of the Free Church as the institution backing the school and therefore it would go. (MF: Um-hmm.) The Church was behind it. (MF: Um-hmm.) It will go. Actually the leadership of the Church really

was behind it. But the Churches weren't. You've read Hanson's book I'm sure and you see some of the trials and tribulations he went through. And that was really quite sad. (MF: Um-hmm.) Frankly one of the reasons I got the job here was because there were so few in the Free Church who even had a university education. (MF: Um-hmm.) A B.A. So few in Canada. And so we still believed that because the Church was behind it—it would go. And, therefore, we didn't doubt that whatever they wanted to do, it would happen. Not realizing at the time the struggle. (MF: Yeah.) Oh, we knew some of it but—fundraising was the pits.

MF: I remember Dr. Hanson used to say if every Free Church member would just give three dollars that would have covered our expenses. (BF: Three dollars a year.) Three dollars a year. That would have covered our expenses. Didn't happen.

AR: Has the Trinity of today lived up to the vision you had for it during its foundation?

BF: Far in excess.

MF: We never envisioned this. (BF: No.) Never. Never. Never.

BF: When we left we thought of it as a two year school—(MF: Um-hmm.) into the future. Maybe increasing the credentials. Improving the credentials. Making it a kind of a two-year Wheaton College type thing. But never dreamt of it-- as two year school-- (MF: No.) And it is far in excess of what we could ever have dreamt. Thankfully.

MF: And I have to give credit to all the little prayer groups—little women's groups—yeah little women. (laughs) Small groups of women throughout the Churches praying for this school (BF: Yeah. Oh yeah.) all across British Columbia. Um. You know, they did.

BF: And Justine has, my sister-in-law, has a brochure that announces the prayer circle— (MF: That's right.) women's prayer circle. (MF: That's right. Um-hmm. From the Church.) Yeah.

MF: So a lot of prayer went up for this school. You know. It really did.

[00:46:09]

AR: If you could have changed one thing about Trinity what would it have been and why?

BF: I thought about that too and I don't know.

MF: I don't know either. Nothing that a few more bucks wouldn't have helped. (BF: Yeah.) A lot.

BF: That's true. And—it would have been great if every one of us who came from the outside would have had a masters degree. (MF: Yeah.) That would have been superb. What we also have to contribute-- too is the risk that the first students took to come here. I mean their future was on the line by coming here (MF: Um-hmm.) and they did that. And they served us very well. They did a good job. (MF: Um-hmm.) It could have been bad for them had we not delivered—and they studied

MF: If you ever want to get the true feeling of what this campus was like you have to come to the Homecoming—Sunday morning service of those first five years, that they call the Hanson years. There's just no other word to —no other experience would really show you what it meant. We were a family. (BF: Yeah.)

AR: Do you have any regrets about your time spent at Trinity?

BF: No regrets that we did it. No regrets that we did it. Regrets about individual things that we had to go through. (MF: Yeah.) But it was also an incredibly good learning curve. (MF: Um-hmm.) I—from here I went into national politics. And I often said—and thought and said—that I couldn't have done it had I not I first gone to Trinity. Taught here. Because it was an expanding—it expanded my world, it expanded my mind. It allowed me to include a whole lot of other things in my thinking. (MF: Um-hmm.) And it was an enlarging experience. And so it was good. Great.

AR: What made you decide to leave Trinity?

BF: I suppose the easiest word is burnout. (MF: Yeah. I think so. Clears throat.) Burnout. And an opportunity for change at the same time that burnout came. (MF: Um-hmm.) Which you put down, then, to the Lord's leading. It really was. And we struggled over it but it was the right thing to do. It was the right thing for the school to do. (MF: Um-hmm.) Because Cal had the wisdom of seeing that his time—he had done his job—(MF: And he was burned out.) Yeah I think he was too. (MF: He was burned out.) Probably burned out. When it's-- move on, let someone else do it, and carry it to a different plateau. We were so busy doing the things we didn't entertain those kind of considerations. And so burnout did it and opportunity did it for us. We had never thought of leaving but it was important for us to leave. (MF: Um-hmm.) And take it ____ (??) step; and Tennyson ____ (??)— “The old order changes giving place to new.” That had to happen. (MF: Um-hmm.)

AR: Have you been involved with Trinity since your departure?

BF: Only marginally, We—Marge has a scholarship here. That we keep going. I am on the committee for the golf tournament. Things like that. But it is only marginal.

MF: We've been too busy. Yeah we were too busy.

BF: Yeah. And even though what we did is come back home after politics—that nineteen years in politics added a whole pile of new things to our agenda. (MF: Um-

hmm.) So that we—they involve us in a lot of other things that keep us from doing other things here. But it's always good to come back. Always good.

AR: What aspects of Trinity have most impacted your life?

[00:51:06]

MF: Students. Students. Friendships.

BF: Yeah. Students and intellectual growth. Students and intellectual growth. It allowed me and you the venue for academic intellectual interaction that was very important to us 'cause we came from a very narrow background and it allowed us to grow that way.

[Tape paused for outside interruption.]

AR: I see that we've nearly reached the end of our time. Is there any thing else you wanted to talk about before we end?

MF: I think we've about covered it haven't we?

BF: Yeah. I mean—anecdotally (MF: Oh yeah.) there are a lot, a lot, of things we could talk about.

MF: One of the things that we really used to laugh at at the time—you took anybody and anything to help you get off the ground. And so the library books had been stored in the barn for a while until we got the building built. And we had a lovely little lady—she must have weighed about eighty pounds wringing wet—Miss Modig was her name. Where did she come from? (BF: Minnesota.) Minnesota. (BF: She had been a librarian.) Yes. (BF: She was about 65 when she—) Yeah. Yeah. She's the kind that, you see her coming, you kind of snicker you know—she was a librarian. She was a librarian. But she went though all these books. And she would wear a mask because she didn't want to get Pigeon Fever. I remember (laughs) That was so—that was always kind of a laugh. (BF: Yeah.) Then we had another lady who was a nurse from California. Ruth Brown. (BF: She was from—) What? She was from— (BF: She was from the mid-west. But you're thinking of Swanson.) Or, whatever. (BF: Whatever.) She was the campus nurse. (BF: She was a missionary from the Congo.) And then there was another lady who became the mother of campus, and we called her Mrs. T. Mrs. Theriau was her name. She was just like—built like a little bowling ball. And she'd always have this big handful of keys she'd walk around with. But the kids loved her (BF: Oh yeah.) She was the mother you know. Mrs. T. we called her. And in chapel sometimes they'd have a skit. And there was this one boy could just do Mrs. T to a tee. You know? He'd dress up like her and stuff himself. Those are just the fun things. Hootenannies were big. (BF: Do they still talk about hootenannies?) Do they still talk about hootenannies? (AR: Yeah. They still have--) Yeah do they still have them? (AR: It's still carried on about once a semester.) Is that right eh? It that right eh? (BF: Yeah, hootenannies were

great.) And often when kids would get the flu-- I've taken kids into stay at our house for a week 'til they got over it. You know, they were probably lonesome too. Yeah. You did all kinds of things like that.

BF: The other point to keep in focus is that while we were doing this—we were having a good time here on campus. But at UBC they were trying to bring a pig into the faculty lounge and all the campus riots were going on. I went to the University of Washington during this time. And huge riots at the campus—the Kent State riots—you probably don't know about them. But students- students-- the anti-Vietnam thing. And the country was burning. Watts was on fire. Detroit—Black Day in July—in Detroit. And all of this turmoil all over these campuses. And our biggest problems were How do you get kids to Langley? (MF: Um-hmm. Yeah.) Things like that. I mean most universities would have loved—they would have given anything to have our problems. It was great.

AR: Well thank you for your time.

MF: Um-hmm. You're most welcome

(End Interview.) [00:55:14]

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