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George and Rosie Rich Interview

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George Rich 0:00

I think they messed with me when I went to school because sometimes they'd talk about a little bit of a conflict between the town and the gown. And I found myself walking the fence there half the time and found that there's no problem at all, because I would introduce my town friends to the college friends and vice versa, were taught very well (?), I never saw any conflict with that. Some people did

W. Bruce Leslie 0:19

So you, that's interesting that there was not much conflict. Students going in the same bars as townies

George Rich 0:24

Not so I didn't think so no.

W. Bruce Leslie 0:26

That's interesting. Were your parents college graduates?

George Rich 0:28

No, they never even finished high school. And probably I may not have gone to college myself if they hadn't been a college right here in my hometown. We weren't able to afford a college to go away, as was the case with many of the students who came here at that time. That meant for the SUNY system having free tuition. We didn't pay any tuition at all in those days. And if it hadn't been for that and all the people graduate at the same time corroborate this. We never would have made it we never would have come to college if it hadn't been for that. And even the additional expense of room and board. I was able to escape by living at home. Well, I missed out some of the fun that way but

W. Bruce Leslie 1:03

Can you tell me a little bit about your parents where they're from and their religious backgrounds.

George Rich 1:07

Oh yeah, well again they've been around they're both their families have been around here for a while too. So that my ethnically I don't know, kind of lost America I guess my father's side can you trace it back to the Mayflower, but that's a big deal with us and his family is basically Baptist my mother's were Methodist no big difference there. And it was it was kind of small town. His family had a farm in the area here over on Sweden Walker road. My maternal grandfather was a rug weaver. Make a rag of rugs was his application, I mean vocation.

W. Bruce Leslie 1:51

So essentially, then you came to the college largely because you were here.

George Rich 1:55

Yes. Because it was it was convenient for me here. And I could afford Free is my price range.

W. Bruce Leslie 2:05

What kind of reputation did the college have with high school students?

George Rich 2:11

I I thought pretty good. Myself you must realize the time I graduated I don't know what percent there was but there was not a high percentage of students who went on to college at all the very few who went on to the out of town schools, the ivy Leagues or anything like that very few and good large numbers. I think I have a class of 70 something we probably had either nine came here to Brockport, which is a significant number. I'm just guessing the numbers here but this was something like that.

W. Bruce Leslie 2:38

So your high school class is only about

George Rich 2:40

73 I think it was

W. Bruce Leslie 2:43

Did that reflect the population or did large numbers drop out of high school.

George Rich 2:50

I know the population was smaller then too it wasn't as large as it is now. And and there were probably some dropouts. But basically I think people stayed through to complete it or even some postgraduate students around but that I think mostly people stayed around to finish

W. Bruce Leslie 3:06

as someone from town when you went to the college was it old hat or did you find yourself quite surprised and find a different place than you expected?

George Rich 3:13

Actually I think I probably had the advantage being a townie again. One of my good friends in high school was Carl Hansom. Whose father was the director of the education department at one time in the graduate division of education. And his mother just recently died, you know that and so he's a good friend of mine and he used come down all the time to see his father and we knew all the faculty or a lot of them to get through his father, also, the chief custodian at the college moved right in the old Hartwell building down in the basement, and his, his two sons and daughter were pretty close to our family to my sister was a good friend of his daughter and one of his sons was in my class we often ran around what

Rosie Rich 3:57

Campus school

George Rich 3:58

Oh yes that's right I went to campus school too I forgot about that I'm a campus school brat, as they call them in those days. I forget about that. Don't forget.

W. Bruce Leslie 4:07

So you've been on the campus Since when did you start the campus school

George Rich 4:10

Started the campus school in kindergarten. I tell people I remember when they broke ground for Hartwell, right around then. In fact, I remember the old the old building the old normal school building, where I attended kindergarten through third grade. And when they at that time they were building the new Hartwell right next to him and watched all that process going on. And then when I was finally ready, they they put planks on all of the windows of the old Normal School into the new Hartwell building. We walked with our books across those planks adn with a big drop down below. today they would never think of doing such a thing it's just a lawsuit kind of a deal. But that was the way it was done. We all kind of pitched in and did our part No it is kind of a fun memory there too to do that

W. Bruce Leslie 4:13

So your time there goes back to about 39 or so or

George Rich 4:53

about 39 38 39 I think somebody broke no 37 even when they broke ground. I'm not sure when it was. In the early 40s, when we finally moved in, I've got my times here but.

W. Bruce Leslie 5:06

So it must feel strange to walk into Hartwell now and see it dramatically changed.

George Rich 5:11

Yes, I Well, I was in a recently Of course for the honors day, and there was I guess I was more pleasantly surprised I thought I'd be I'd been in for the earlier part, and I was disappointed in some of the renovation because they'd taken down, you know, the alma mater talks about the lofty halls and they had the beautiful high ceilings and beautiful woodwork and architecture. And they, and for the sake of economy, they've lowered the ceilings and cut it up and chopped it up in ways that I don't appreciate aesthetically. For as far as the architectural integrity of the period of the exterior of the building, they've done a good job inside to utilize the space but to me, it's what I'm I pontificating something? Anyway, I just didn't appreciate it as much but these these classes weren't bad that we were in the other day. There's different we said to someone (?) it's easy to go back and say, I remember when this room was such and such like the rooms we were in the other day were in the old library building and I did a lot of work in the library when I was a student here I was a student assistant where I got a job part time working in the library some number of years I worked in the library. And I remember those those rooms in fact I remember packing up when they had to move from the library in Hartwell to the library when I moved over to where Rakov is now which was the next that was library then and before they did that. They had to pack up all their old magazines, books and material they had in storage, and

box them up and that was my job was to box up all those old periodicals and, and label them and store them in the attic of Hartwell well until they moved him into the new library building, which is now Rakov

W. Bruce Leslie 6:45

So the move to Rakov what's now called Rakov Kurgwell Yorston (?).

George Rich 6:50

No, it wasn't built yet. So they just ran out of space as things accumulated. So they had to box them up and then store them away someplace knowing that eventually they were going to be Yes, that was later

Rosie Rich 7:01

I can't remember the year.

George Rich 7:02

Yeah. I don't know that either.

W. Bruce Leslie 7:05

I hadn't realized this was a mixed marriage Cortland and Brockport

Rosie Rich 7:09

Tough It was tough.

George Rich 7:12

Even worse than that, it's a General Ed versus Phys. Ed.

W. Bruce Leslie 7:16

Oh,

George Rich 7:16

when I went to school here, that's all there were were General Ed's and phys eds. And even though we joked about it, sometimes they tended, they had separate curriculum. So they tended to stay together. The PE majors tend to hang around together as I think they did at Cortland. And 'cause these are the common interests and their courses, brought them together more, we had ways of getting together at other times, and it was we still today we still gently commingle with other majors. But it's not bad

W. Bruce Leslie 7:43

Did you So did you have most of your courses than with the general ed people did you I take it you weren't in courses very often with physical education,

George Rich 7:52

not very often. Occasionally, you'll get something an elective maybe. Maybe in some of the sciences, they had a heavy science curriculum. And I like some of the sciences too. I found our old curriculum if you'd be interested in that.

W. Bruce Leslie 8:07

And what was the nickname you had for each other the physies or the

George Rich 8:11

phys eds?

W. Bruce Leslie 8:12

Yeah, you used you had a label as if the gen Ed's, and the phys Eds, or you used some word you just used

George Rich 8:18

Ges and PEs?

Rosie Rich 8:19

We'd call them GEs and PEs when we were in Cortland.

George Rich 8:23

This is a State Teachers College at Brockport, kind of a transcript of the courses that were required at the time I was there, that's a blank one without my grades on it

Rosie Rich 8:35

It's a wonderful one, with his grades

George Rich 8:37

I have a similar one here. But this is more of a transcript in a single form, but with the grades recorded on 'em, which you can look at too if you want to. And I have recorded it another way here. Even found my old my old senior

Rosie Rich 8:49

schedule card as you'd call it

George Rich 8:50

the schedule. Yeah, right here my different classes along on the backside is a place for another one I had my friend's schedule there so we could coordinate our activities. Because what they would (unintelligible) Not really

W. Bruce Leslie 9:04

sounds like a song from the student (unintelligible)

George Rich 9:11

It was a joke.

W. Bruce Leslie 9:11

Ever sang that song about Rose Red lips or something of that sort. We could put together a good song 8 in the morning drinking at eight in the morning. Can't wait to put that in Julianne's book (?)

George Rich 9:23

That's a part that gets deleted. Well of course we didn't it was just a joke we put on there.

Rosie Rich 9:32

You know if you think back drinking was a big thing in college. And as compared to today, where we wouldn't drink as much because we know it's bad for us

Unknown Speaker 9:44

and the 21 year old drinking age was no problem. No problem. No barrier to getting drinks

George Rich 9:50

Oh that's right yeah.

W. Bruce Leslie 9:51

Well, of course you're speaking of Cortland whereas Brockport.

Rosie Rich 9:54

Of course there was No drinking at Brockport.

W. Bruce Leslie 9:56

Alcohol wouldn't pass one's lips.

George Rich 10:02

I was thinking along that same line that Rosie just mentioned, that college life was more than just the clubs you belonged to the sports you participated in. As you look at year books and you see pictures of people that are doing things, that's one kind of a record. And a lot of people were in

those kind of things, but for a lot of people they worked part time so they weren't able to be in clubs even in those days

W. Bruce Leslie 10:21

even in those that interesting

George Rich 10:22

it's happens happens today too so you don't often find it them yearbooks, that kind of a record, but thing that they have in common people at this age at college age, people have that social need to get together and do different things. At the time that I was here, they opened up the new college union, which is with the four dorms along Kingdom street there and I don't think they call it that it's where public safety office is

W. Bruce Leslie 10:46

Leaf it's now called Leaf road again, change the names around.

George Rich 10:50

This is something I didn't realize I had either this is a this is a little document they gave the (unintelligible) when they opened up the college union Dr. tower and the little poo families (?) and the people that they named the original four dormitories after Vannderhook Thompson Morgan and somebody else

W. Bruce Leslie 11:06

Oh, I've not seen

George Rich 11:08

I hadn't seen that myself forgotten I had it. Till I just went through some things to find it

Rosie Rich 11:11

Also don't forget the place downtown that burn that I never saw

George Rich 11:15

The land. Yeah, you see that the Union, the union opened a lot people, that was a place for them to focus for social activities and that was a great boon I thought, but then, as in any year or era, students will find a place to get together and congregate. And one of the favorite places in my time was the place called the landmark. Landmark hotel which no longer exists was right on the edge of the canal where the Brockport post office is, Brockport post office, and the Brockport post newspaper office is located and that burned just after I left in 1955. I think it was And that was a great place for people to get together it wasn't just about drinking, because some people go down to drink so as to but they'd be together and we didn't have the loud blaring music that they have today, they'd have a jukebox and you could dance and sing, but most amount of number of people get around to singing, it's sing songs and drinkin' and have a good time. Maybe they were drinking songs, but often they were not show tunes or whatever. And we'd play games that came out. And we had discussions that carried over from our classes, lots of times you get turned on to something in class, you know, when the class period ended, if you really onto it, you get pad to the class next you talk about it over there, something like that. So it's intellectually kind of stimulating too we had play the game I remember they called Bottocelli, which you had a kind of draw on a lot of different knowledge and different different fields and arts and sciences and histories and literature. To most people, it's kind of a cool thing. Just a fun kind of game that was kind of semi intellectual as well as a as a chance to intermingle with people too We played things did things like that for our own entertainment, and other things like that.

W. Bruce Leslie 12:52

So for you the hotel was more of a center than the Student Union.

Rosie Rich 12:56

Well, because because I lived at home and I didn't have a connection with the dorms. But I went over to the Student Union quite a bit too that was where the Stylus office was I did work on the Stylus, part time there as a proofreader. And that's where the office was at that time. And a lot of other activities happened their social activities, the official organized ones of the college. And maybe a little stiff but but still, and there was a big cafeteria there so a lot of students ate there cafeteria line

W. Bruce Leslie 13:28

right.

George Rich 13:30

No oh, this this is the one in the Student Union. Speaking of cafeterias, you probably heard the ones in the past. I think that's probably documented pretty well in probably Dedman's book. I'm not sure though in Hartwell Hall, and that was the only building on campus right under where the auditorium is, was a cafeteria

Rosie Rich 13:48

Ma green's

George Rich 13:49

and they called it ma green's cafeteria. Mrs. Green, was the woman in charge of it, and she had some other people that worked with her there and she ran a pretty tight ship. And there were tables around and you could smoke in there too. So it's a smoking lounge as well. And but they only took one order at a time. at the time. You had to line up and if you were they had three or four women working back there and somebody was just standing there waiting, while, somebody prepare somebody's french toast, and then she'd yell french toast. And that person order, they had to come up and get it then they'd take care of the next person's order it was not an efficiently run, I shouldn't say though. Because

Rosie Rich 14:25

But we also had a faculty table there two faculty tables at the end and the faculty always sat down there. And the students sat around

George Rich 14:33

And Rosie's got some tales about that too but.

Rosie Rich 14:36

I didn't have that written down George

George Rich 14:39

But it was part of the social life and things that went on at the time so, because you'd meet there between classes that was very convenient. So you had your class at nine o'clock and one at 11 and between you'd go down and study getting a sandwich or a cup of coffee and and meet with your friends it was an interesting place to be.

W. Bruce Leslie 14:54

So you can eat at the cook bar, then there was a cafeteria in Lathrop and was that Lathrop and there was also the eatery in Hartwell. Is that?

George Rich 15:02

Yes. well now wait a minute,

Rosie Rich 15:05

Lathrop

George Rich 15:05

the the one in Hartwell, I think did that continue. I guess it did continue after they opened the union. So they probably ran simultaneously, but that that big cafeteria, I don't know what they did for food before them. This is the time when things were beginning to happen. There used to be a woman's dormitory. Oh boy where is it located probably right in the middle of the parking lot near Seymour Union where Seymour is the parking lot across and next to the tracks. Just about in that vicinity there was an old place they called West Hall. It was a temporary building

W. Bruce Leslie 15:38

I read about that I guess it was a bit of a disaster I heard.

George Rich 15:42

That was in existence when I was there. The first couple of years anyway, and some of my classmates it was all women there. I think there werew eight women in a room were pretty good sized room but but not that big. So they had bunk beds, and poor bunk beds and eight people in a room. So it was just terrible with a house mother on premises. They had hours when I had to get every Night at 1030. Weekends till 12:30 I think was the hours. And it was it was a different time. And People, you know in those times tried to find ways around it and they'd find people, boosting people in through the windows or something to avoid the house mother and there's stories like that. I can give you some names of people that if you want to interview them but then in less than a short time until these dorms opened up.

W. Bruce Leslie 16:22

Right And once this opened the large cafeteria, I would like to here where the large cafeteria was

George Rich 16:27

that was in what's now lathrop

W. Bruce Leslie 16:29

Okay, that was in Lathrop too

George Rich 16:30

ground floor. Apparently their vicinity were it is right in the vicinity of where the

W. Bruce Leslie 16:36

public safety,

George Rich 16:36

public safety is

W. Bruce Leslie 16:37

I see and then the cook bar here. This

George Rich 16:39

That's on the upper level on the second floor. You see that entrance there? Fully came in from the street level you came up and this reception desk would be right in front of that.

W. Bruce Leslie 16:40

Oh, yeah, I guess it's there

George Rich 16:47

there's a reception over there around the corner here and that's cook when I was over there and another big room right where you could sit and we'd play cards. Peeknuckle was big at the time and

W. Bruce Leslie 17:01

I'm gonna have to make make sure the archivist has a copy of that I've not seen so far I'd like to involve that

Rosie Rich 17:06

We have to talk about the Quonset huts either I just remember that Have you heard about the Quonset huts?

W. Bruce Leslie 17:14

Yes. You mean, the ones that GIs lived in, or the ones who the faculty had offices in

George Rich 17:19

Of course, the time I attended here, it was the time of the Korean War in the early fifties there was there was something that that was something that do you want

W. Bruce Leslie 17:30

No,

George Rich 17:32

if you want to I'd make a copy of it

W. Bruce Leslie 17:33

Sure a copy of it I'd give it back to

George Rich 17:34

Yeah, sure sure

W. Bruce Leslie 17:36

It's the best schema of the curriculum I've seen and I also have a student with a paper now this and this will be very helpful for her

Of course it changed from time to time. But for a long period of time for teacher preparation, as I was saying I'm

Rosie Rich 17:48

Quonset huts

W. Bruce Leslie 17:49

Quonset huts.

George Rich 17:50

No. Oh, it's the time to Korean War. And during that time, when I was there, you were constantly threatened with it. over your head If you didn't make it academically, you could be drafted. So what they did was they they ranked every man in the class academically. And then they at the end of the year, they'd send you a little notice. Out of so many odd male members of the class of this class, you ranked number such and such, and this probaby a copy'd also go to the draft board. Just to let 'em know that you were eligible if you didn't make it.

W. Bruce Leslie 18:24

Wow.

George Rich 18:26

So that was just kind of motivation.

W. Bruce Leslie 18:30

Was the key just that you had to stay in school not to be drafted? Or would they draft people at the bottom of the class?

they could I think, I think that was the idea that somebody wasn't just doing it to avoid and escape, but if you were serious about your work, they didn't want to take you out of college. So I remember that because I was

Rosie Rich 18:47

what number were you

George Rich 18:50

In my freshman year went well, I was lucky. My freshman I did end up being number one for that first year. But there wasn't that many guys and it didn't last that I just happened to be lucky that first year I think so. I didn't maintain that. But, but I remember that because

W. Bruce Leslie 19:07

most of us have never been number one in our class Very goo.

George Rich 19:10

Well it was just among the guys, there were a lot of girls a lot smarter than I was. And I'm sure had better averages,

W. Bruce Leslie 19:14

what was the gender ratio like,

George Rich 19:17

oh, boy, I thought it was pretty even myself,

Rosie Rich 19:21

I was going to say when I was there it was pretty even. We always said fifty fifty I had a lot of vets when I was there. When I was teaching, I had the vets, so I had a different situation than he had. So I came in 58. He graduated 54 so it was difference of four years.

W. Bruce Leslie 19:39

Was it fairly rare for I take it it was Brockport and Cortland that had the even gender ratios because the physical education is that correct? Then at Geneseo it was I think like five to one or something.

Rosie Rich 19:53

I don't know if that was the reason.

George Rich 19:54

As I recall, and you probably know much more to this than me, but there's something in a state law, that when they set up the State Teachers colleges when they had the normal schools before the three year colleges and they made them into State Teachers colleges in early forty year it was or no, early forties, whatever it was those early 40 whatever the date was they had a provision because there's a lot of opposition from the land grant colleges and the big universities that they didn't want to take their students away from all these other majors, that there's a need for teachers. They said, okay, the state can open up the state university system in the State Teachers colleges for the preparation of teachers only. And in elementary education. Well, they specified in music education at Fredonia, and general education, different campuses had their specialties like Albany was a higher secondary schools, and the Phys. Ed was in several other locations too, so that but they had like a time limit. So after 10 years or more then they could open it up to more more courses which Brockport's able to do

W. Bruce Leslie 20:59

May I ask you was that common knowledge then? Or when did you learn about that

George Rich 21:03

just recently, I did not know that then. I did not know that. And but to us it was a boon because it made a college education available to us even that we wanted at the time, I didn't know what I wanted to do like a lot of kids, it was a place to go to college and get a college education and prepare you to teach. And it'd be interesting to know how many people actually went on and stayed in teaching, once they had their bachelor's or whatever they did after that for postgraduate work. But it's interesting, I think a lot of people were able to get, bachelor's degree who may not have had it otherwise, because of that.

W. Bruce Leslie 21:38

And the private schools were able to protect their role in secondary education

George Rich 21:42

And then as population burgeoned, they couldn't handle, Anybody, everybody anyway, then then the state university system opened up a more masters.

W. Bruce Leslie 21:49

I believe that just part of what was going on too private schools didn't wanna lose their role in teaching, preparing secondary school teachers. And that was one of the reasons They wanted that 10 year 10 year ban. and then as soon as up, SUNY quite intentionally came in very strongly to try to grab the market for secondary teachers, but it was private schools pretty effective opposition to legislation Rosie. Where did you grow up?

Rosie Rich 22:21

I grew up in Endicott, New York. Both my parents were immigrants from Italy. And I was the youngest of five children. Everyone had a college education.

W. Bruce Leslie 22:35

Oh, all your siblings,

Rosie Rich 22:36

right.

W. Bruce Leslie 22:36

How about your parents,

Rosie Rich 22:37

my parents, my father and mother did not go to school. I maybe my father might have gone to school equivalent to fifth or sixth grade or something of that sort. They came he came over early 1900's was in World War One and fought for the United States. Then he went back to Italy To get a wife, and brought her back. And they lived in Utica, New York. And he was a butcher. And he and his partner had a store his partner owned, or he owned part of the store. And then they

moved to Endicott, New York. And I was born in Endicott at home. But my father was very, very insistent that we all have a college education. His his, his brother in Italy was superintendent of schools in northern Italy. And he wrote elementary books. His sister was a banker his had another sister was a teacher. So his his family was very educated. My mother's family on the other hand was not, but he was very, it was very important. It was just automatically as we were growing up, that we would all be going to school. We would all be going to college. And so we all had an education.

W. Bruce Leslie 23:55

So the reason you went was that you just grew up with the expectation

Rosie Rich 23:59

that I was going to be a teacher. That was that was a thing. My my sister is the oldest of five, she became a teacher and librarian. The next brother became a surgeon. The next brother passed away at age 24. Next brother became a college professor. And then I went into education also

W. Bruce Leslie 24:17

was teaching your idea.

Rosie Rich 24:19

It was, well, there wasn't much to do then birth (?), either teaching or nursing, and I didn't want to do anything with pins. So I decided teaching was it I wanted to become a math teacher and I went to Albany for. that was unintentional.

George Rich 24:38

That was not a reaction to

Rosie Rich 24:40

I went to Albany for an interview it rained that day I did not have a good interview. So my next interview was at Cortland for phys ed and it was a sunny day I stayed overnight had a wonderful time. But the at Cortland in contrast to Brockport Brockport was health and physical education. Cortland was health, physical education and recreation we were the only ones who had a triple certificate. So I got a triple certificate at that time. And then as I said, there's nothing else. If I

had my druthers today I'd probably be in something like a pharmacist, something of that sort in the in the science field.

George Rich 25:14

Archeologist

Rosie Rich 25:15

Archaeologist without having any ability to draw. But like, I was thinking architect. Then, after I finished I got my masters immediately at university University of Buffalo. I got an assistantship there. So I taught and got my masters in a year, graduated from there with a masters of education, concentration in health, education and counseling. No physical education. However, I taught physical education there because I had a degree in it. Then I went to Troy, New York, two years of high school, physical education and health. And then I came to Brockport in 58.

W. Bruce Leslie 25:57

How did you happen to come to Brockport

Rosie Rich 25:59

Well, we At that time, jobs were open anywhere for us anywhere. I could have gone anywhere in the whole world. It was I wanted college, I knew I wanted college and I had never I had heard of Brockport as being a rival of Cortland but I there was an opening. And I interviewed probably about six or seven places and decided that when I came on campus when I came into town, I loved it. When I came on campus, I felt totally at home. Ernest Tuttle was the director of physical education and health at that time. I had a wonderful interview. And they immediately asked me to come on in I was I was young, I was 24. So my students were and I taught Health and Physical Education when I came on board, and my students were the vets they were older than I. It was interesting to teach sex and drugs to veterans. Although drugs was not big thing it was sex education, health education.

George Rich 27:04

Some of those vets were older than she was.

Rosie Rich 27:06

There were a lot of yeah they were about 28, 29. I was 24, 25.

George Rich 27:11

Did you teach you about sex?

Rosie Rich 27:12

Yeah. And I remember one question was Miss Lesure, how do you know all this. I said, Shut up and read your book. And at that first year, I was put into the basement of Hartwell Hall. There's a picture in the 59 yearbook. And also in the video that we saw yesterday. Marian Trank. showed us the video that Van Wettering had have you seen that? It's excellent. Anyway. I was put into a room

I'm glad you said that, we'll show you next week

right. All right. I was put into a room downstairs in Hartwell, the old hartwell, I could show you where it is. But I couldn't tell you now down the stairs and to the right. It was below level below ground level. So the the windows were right at ground level. So there's a huge window sill In the windows, and I had 50 boys in there 50 young 18 year olds and older 28 year olds. And it was unbelievable. They were sitting on the window sills on the floor. In fact, I was looking for the the original that I have of the photograph and I couldn't find it.

George Rich 28:19

It was probably smaller than this room wasn't it

Rosie Rich 28:20

Oh it's not even close to this room. It was it was very tight. And they were sitting, I was sitting at the desk or standing and the people were all around on the floor around me. And there were some chairs but they were on the window sills. And here I was 24 years old. Having my first health class with these boys. And it was rather intimidating but

W. Bruce Leslie 28:43

did Brockport have a different approach to PE than Cortland?

Rosie Rich 28:48

Well, when I came here, of course Cortland was the best school for Health and Physical Education. That those are quotes I just put in and I felt that and I felt that for a long time, I really and I think it still had a better reputation. I had excellent teachers in that area in Cortland,

George Rich 29:12

and so did Brockport

Rosie Rich 29:13

however, I did not have the top. And I've mentioned this to George a number of times a background in the elective courses I took was not as good, but we had very little time for taking electives as mostly activities and sciences.

W. Bruce Leslie 29:30

Bob boozar said that Brockport's program was really built by people from Springfield.

Rosie Rich 29:35

Could be

W. Bruce Leslie 29:35

I don't know whether that suggests any kind of differences.

Rosie Rich 29:38

Well, it was Springfield, Cortland, Brockport, those were the three.

W. Bruce Leslie 29:42

So Brockport only began in 47. So we had to build a reputation pretty quickly then sounds like.

Rosie Rich 29:48

I think so. We I thought we had a pretty good staff when I was here, very dedicated.

W. Bruce Leslie 29:55

Can you tell me about about Tuttle? He seems to have been quite influential.

Rosie Rich 29:59

He was He was laid back. What can I tell you about him he had a terrific sense of humor. Very subtle. In fact, we went out to he took me on a tour of the field out back, which is now where the stadium is in the, in the the football field, that area, that area. We went out there. And it was a it was a regular field and out way out about well it had to be 100 yards, this little hut. He says that's the faculty. That's the faculty Coffee House we would go out there at the end. And I was as naive as could be. I said 'Oh!'. He said, Yes, we go up there. And he says it's really quite nice he said I'd like to show it to you. Of course, we went down there, he opened the door and there were all these balls and hockey sticks and soccer balls and nets and up and he just had a wonderful sense of humor. I thought he was very fair. He was a very fair person. If you had a problem it was the door was always open. He was very easy. Of course we were in the old gymnasium. I don't know if you were familiar with the old gymnasium.

W. Bruce Leslie 30:59

What was what's been a dance studio in modern years?

George Rich 31:02

Yes, Yes.

Okay.

W. Bruce Leslie 31:03

And the old swimming pool I had.

Rosie Rich 31:05

Right and I had synchronized swimming shows in the old swimming pool which had,

George Rich 31:11

In Hartwell?

Rosie Rich 31:12

yes, which had very little room for audience. audience seating. I also taught bowling in the bowling alleys down there, there were two bowling alleys down below

W. Bruce Leslie 31:19

I've heard about that never saw them

George Rich 31:20

two lanes.

Rosie Rich 31:22

So in that in that gymnasium, Jane Ball Anne Mueller and I shared an office in the corner next to us was Ross Drosser in her own office, and then was his (unintelligible) there were. Just wall I'm trying to think then at the opposite corner from us it was Ernie Tuttle's office. And I'm trying to think where Clark Whitehead was no oh he upstairs. There were offices upstairs, Millie Kiefer. Howie and Milly Kefer were on staff. Millie Kiefer was in the physical education department HOWIE kefer was in

George Rich 31:58

education,

Rosie Rich 31:59

education.

George Rich 32:00

He was wonderful,

Rosie Rich 32:00

very very top notch faculty members. They're now in Nevada. But she was like a mentor to me, she was she sort of taught me the ropes, ropes and so forth and, and she took she had the synchronized swimming. And she talked me into going taking it from her. So I did that.

W. Bruce Leslie 32:17

Were there any women's teams that competed in intercollegiate athletics?

Rosie Rich 32:21

We never knew what intercollegiate (unintelligible) we had play days, that type of thing. I don't remember that. But I did have a dolphins team, which was the swimming and we did have meetings, meets with other colleges, but it wasn't the wasn't like it is today. I was never called coach and if somebody called me coach I probably slapped him. My roommate used to call me coach just to make me man.

George Rich 32:45

I did (unintelligible) too.

Rosie Rich 32:48

It's not. I had I was at a big in Cortland. One of the biggest things we had in physical education was what was called pa or professional attitude. That meant that as a physical education major, you were to act like a lady at all times. So when I was here, I guess I don't know who started it, but somebody convinced the bookstore to sell these male sports jackets to the women in women sizes, and I immediately became very upset and went to the bookstore and canceled all the orders. Because the professional attitude was not there that I had been so I was very adamant about this, that people dress properly and, and perform as ladies. In fact, I always joked about my my teams always won because they always looked good and intimidated the other team that probably played better we always we always looked good, we always dressed well, and nothing about dress at that time, even when George was in school. The dress of the students was impeccable. I was looking at the yearbooks today, top notch dress Professors always dressed as you with the tie and jacket, shirt. No jeans, no nothing casual. We were always dressed up. And as physical education teachers, we always dressed heels and, and suits and whatever.

George Rich 34:17

Not on the court though

Rosie Rich 34:18

No not on the court.

W. Bruce Leslie 34:23

Rosie, I forgot to ask your maiden name.

Rosie Rich 34:25

My maiden name was LaSort LA capital SORT.

W. Bruce Leslie 34:29

I should have known that actually. George I was wondering if I could swing back to you and ask you a bit about the backgrounds of your classmates, where they came from geographically, socially, and so on.

George Rich 34:46

Actually we had quite a few students who came from Long Island at that time. More so than in recent years, I think, proportionately that's just beginning to happen again now with the new vice president. Opening up more downstate for a long time, Brockport drew a lot of students from Long Island as well as throughout the rest of the state. And of course the predominate would be from this area in western New York, but there were quite a few from Long Island not enough to kind of melded together you didn't really know. But you could always pick out a Long Island accent

W. Bruce Leslie 35:30

Did they play a different role on campus since they couldn't go home very often.

George Rich 35:35

The calendar was different then I think too. And so that I think I don't remember a lot of holidays when we'd have a lot of people hanging around because of the I still remember what it was but we started maybe later in September, and we went until a little later in December, I think then

there'd be a break which wasn't as long as it is now. Then you'd come back earlier in January. So that there were the big breaks when there were big breaks. Probably everybody would go home. It wouldn't need for more than a couple three weeks, at the most, you know, and it wouldn't be that often. So I don't remember that. And maybe it'd ne better to get that point of view from something like Mels Magnerinsky You know talk to Mell if you haven't, because he came from Brooklyn.

W. Bruce Leslie 36:24

I'm sure would like to talk to him was your sense that a lot of students like you came from families where the parents hadn't gone to college?

George Rich 36:36

I don't know. Because I just don't remember that being a topic of discussion with a lot of people. But I think at that time, it probably would have been true. I'm just guessing, but I don't know. Because we just didn't discuss it that much (unintelligible)

Rosie Rich 36:48

Did you have any sense as to whether women and men came from very similar backgrounds or did you fell as were there differences

George Rich 36:58

I could never tell that kind of distinction I guess, though maybe I don't know. I can't tell that because maybe it was just a cultural thing at the time. But maybe ladies or girls were were trained to do things a little differently than the guys were Because living there again kind of sexual stereotypical roles, which, which wouldn't happen today. So that you might have had that impression that they had a little bit of a different background but I don't know

W. Bruce Leslie 37:32

did many students go to church? conventionally religious?

Rosie Rich 37:38

Don't ask him

George Rich 37:39

You're trying the wrong guy. Let me say. This is probably an interesting topic. I shouldn't avoid it. Because I remember when I started here, I was probably kind of straight myself and came. I remember being in a like a religious club, they had several of them and they grew up like the number of if you look through a yearbook, they had a Canterbury club for Episcopal holes. And then Kinneret Club for the Jewish students, and just a student Christian Fellowship kind of group I don't know what they were called had the different Protestant groups I don't know what they were and Catholic club was another big one too. So, so that they even had those as official college activity groups you know that you had focus groups. And they they flourished, I think, for a while. I remember doing something as a freshman, but soon fell out of that after I became educated. And then we you know, so I don't remember it being that being that of course I can't answer for other people there. Because all those groups did continue on for a while. So for some people that serves a need, and it was probably again, were those social needs where people get together that uncommon, or things they have in common. I don't know.

W. Bruce Leslie 38:56

Was there much consciousness of differences between Jewish Catholic and Protestant students, was that an issue on campus in any way or in dating?

Unknown Speaker 39:04

I don't, I don't think I don't think it was a big issue. I think there's probably an awareness of differences. But the I think there's probably more of acceptance in our day. And sometimes I see today I see more divisions along those lines in contemporary students than I do in our day I think they were more accepting, including ethnic with black students here. And as my first experience of black students coming from a small town that didn't have any and so we just had just great melding, I thought it was wonderful and we got along great. And there were some interracial. Well Mel and Helen Mesrinsky Helen was Italian Catholic, until she met Mel and then she converted

Rosie Rich 39:46

At that time, I was a very strong Catholic. I would never dream of marrying a non Catholic at that time, you know, that was in 58 to 64. Whereas my of course, my ideas changed, but

George Rich 40:00

I wouldn't dream of marrying period.

Rosie Rich 40:03

That's true.

W. Bruce Leslie 40:05

Was there any dating between black students and white students? Do you remember

Rosie Rich 40:10

I don't, I don't think. I think that would have been probably frowned upon.

George Rich 40:15

Where here, or in Cortland?

Rosie Rich 40:18

No I'm thinking when I was in Buffalo, there were some black students and that would have been frowned upon there. That was a big black population.

George Rich 40:27

I can't speak to it because I don't know if there's any but I remember doing things with with black students, both male and female, socially. We'd just get together and did things without thinking that wasn't really dating

Rosie Rich 40:41

Lonny.

George Rich 40:42

Well, not Lonny, Harriet Scott and Barbara Stephens and (unintelligible) on our alumni board. We'd just get together and we still get together give a pretty big hug and kiss. Just because you felt that close together and have a top. I didn't think about dating them. Or I don't think they did with me and then later on and what happened. Thinking of Greg Kenny we should mention names Rosie was here as a teacher when I was here but that was a racial marriage, interracial marriage. Greg Kenny and

Rosie Rich 41:21

Greg Kenny was on my synchronizd swimming team.

W. Bruce Leslie 41:23

Was he?

Rosie Rich 41:25

That's right he's still there now

W. Bruce Leslie 41:26

Yeah, he's the swimming coach.

George Rich 41:27

But

W. Bruce Leslie 41:29

was there much controversy about that marriage? Or their dating.

Rosie Rich 41:32

When When did they get married though?

George Rich 41:34

Well,

Rosie Rich 41:34

do you remember when Greg

George Rich 41:35

one thing in your class that of 63

Rosie Rich 41:35

I'm trying to think of her name

George Rich 41:45

but I think they were both in the same class or one year apart maybe people knew about it. It open it was, I don't it being controversial. Maybe if more people might question do they have problems with it

Rosie Rich 41:58

That's basically, you know that they're going to have problems was mainly the reaction

W. Bruce Leslie 42:03

two minutes on this side. So your impression was of a quite cohesive student body one that was quite accepting.

George Rich 42:09

Oh yeah. As I said, socially we got together and I think that maybe I shouldn't mention this too, but we can delete it. When I did my student teaching assignment. It had we had two of them at the time one of them was off campus one was on campus. Well I had on campus an interview before what happened with the sponsor, teacher and the campus cool. She said you've been assigned to be here with Harriet Scott that was a good friend of mine a black girl have a and, she said was that pose a problem? She was the teacher was asking me if it be a problem for me to teach with a black student I guess there's nothing, (unintelligible) student teacher. Well she knew that we were good friends too. And I was just surprised that she would even ask that I don't, Now for us it was no problem we had a great time. We're delighted to be together. As good friends

W. Bruce Leslie 43:01

Was that the only time that kind of thing ever came up.

Oh,

Rosie Rich 43:08

We had dun Herbed (?) a very who was a great person in our faculty that we hung around with. You know, we didn't think I don't think we thought in terms of dating someone who's of the opposite racial.

W. Bruce Leslie 43:23

So that was the one barrier that most of the time

Rosie Rich 43:25

Yeah, I think probably but as a group we

George Rich 43:27

it says socially they'd be included. Not a hint of villains (?)

Rosie Rich 43:31

and yeah right we

George Rich 43:34

We did lots of things socially a little bit as a group here across (?) bounds that was not even on faculty I'd include of their social things because I'd be dating girls who'd

W. Bruce Leslie 43:45

I think that was the end of side one.

W. Bruce Leslie 0:05

So, I take it Student Life was quite different then

Rosie Rich 0:10

Yes it was between the peanuts. Go ahead George.

George Rich 0:17

Good. Can I just finish up something else?

W. Bruce Leslie 0:20

Sure,

George Rich 0:20

which relates to, we've talked already about when the vets came back and had that, like a student compound in the temporary buildings for the housing. Some of the vets lived in those and the vets with families had another separate one too, so that some of them were married and had kids even. And those were in that area right along the railroad tracks where the parking lot is now perpendicular to Hartwell and that's also right near where those frickin' huge Quonset were, where they had the history department had one of them and the science department had, the other and a lot of our classes had outgrown hartwell because it had grown so fast and that's where a lot of those were out there.

Rosie Rich 0:54

Political Science was out there as well.

George Rich 0:56

That's what I said.

Rosie Rich 0:57

You said history

George Rich 0:57

Well, history political science, sociology. Social Studies they called it all different things at different times. Economics was there too, of course and, when (unintelligible) out there and jack

Crandall, sociology and Dedman I love Dedman I don't know if I should be saying these things now that ending make (?) there's some great, that was a great great department probably still is I'm Sure,

W. Bruce Leslie 1:19

Oh, absolutely.

George Rich 1:20

But I think it has been and I think that's one of the Brockport's strengths is they've had that they've had a great number of departments that had some real strong people in it That English department was strong The sciences

Rosie Rich 1:32

They're all strong

George Rich 1:33

At one time the arts were very strong. And sadly, they had a good music department one time. I want to say too if this is useful at all to you, I've always been proud to be an alum of Brockport. And this is never more noticeable to me this when I first left here, the first time away from the campus and getting out and was in the service, met people from all over and these were other students from other colleges. Then even Ivy League places or big name schools, and then people who had specialized in something and they knew their subject, but they didn't know anything outside that. I always felt that I had such a broad education, in a lot of different fields, they had these introductory courses or whatever. But I was always able to relate to everybody, because I knew a little bit about their subject. Whereas they could only talk to other people who know their subject. And I knew a little bit about all of them, and some things in depth too. And I was thought that that was a good, good preparation. And I always talk about to Brockport.

W. Bruce Leslie 2:29

how did you feel you were prepared for teaching?

George Rich 2:32

That's another story. I think that was pretty good. And I hesitate to say out loud, but a lot of it was very, very good. The practical parts of it were good the work in the in the campus school and the participation program that we had to go through. And the student teaching or cadetting, or whatever they called it at different times, was pretty good. Some of the philosophical courses were a little bit not as practical and useful

W. Bruce Leslie 3:02

who taught those?

George Rich 3:04

I don't really want to say do you mind?

W. Bruce Leslie 3:09

I taught those kind of courses later on so I am curious.

George Rich 3:13

Well I can say I shouldn't say it but people used to call about used to talk about the three deadly D's you know,

W. Bruce Leslie 3:21

that still lived in my day I didn't. When I came in the 70s I had

George Rich 3:25

I think some of these people had gone though

W. Bruce Leslie 3:26

like

George Rich 3:27

Drumheller Decrot, I'm not sure

Rosie Rich 3:32

Who was the third?

George Rich 3:34

And I can't remember who some of them were but they were just monotonous kind of well

Rosie Rich 3:39

Boring

George Rich 3:39

so that and that was kind of a required course but the more practical ones were useful. And I felt when when we got out a lot of it was good. Of course I think with any preparation course like that, your best preparation is when you first get in the field and the kind of support you get then. On the first year on the job. Always some pretty good experiences out of it. And different people get different things out of it. I'm sorry, I sidetracked much originally, about student just want to get that thing out about those barracks. Because that was an important part of my part of the as the vets came the vets had significant influence. They were a little more mature, they had been out in the world seen something, and they brought something back that influenced college life for the rest of people too and made things a little more real tio you weren't quite as esoteric and idealistic when you talk to somebody who had seen some seedier sides of life in the rest of the world too so. But it made it more real and then more, more of an idea. Do you want to go and help people to do things too so it worked both ways?

W. Bruce Leslie 4:42

Did the regular 18 to 22 year olds and the vets tend to go separate ways or interact much?

George Rich 4:48

I thought there was great interaction. I don't know if it started right away, but later on, had a vets club and they were very social. They had different things. And again, this was the days before we had an 18 year old drinking law you could still drink it at 18 then. And there was allowed to be some parties that would go on and it was all right, and I think, I don't think it was ever abused. But they were at the center of all that kind of stuff. And they'd been at it a few years longer.

W. Bruce Leslie 5:13

So

George Rich 5:13

and they brought other people

Rosie Rich 5:14

they also had a float at the homecoming parade, that's with with the golden throne.

W. Bruce Leslie 5:21

And so the whole time you were growing up going to college drinking age was 18 in New York. Okay, so when drinking age was raised to 21 oh a decade or so ago, for many most states like my home state of New Jersey, it was a return. But New York that was the first time in your lifetime. That it had been 21

George Rich 5:39

i thought it was kind of ironic, too. By this time I had been out teaching and I was a member of the NEA and the nice Clifton nice that hall (?) and then and went to the National Convention, where Prince Mondale was a speaker. And that was at the time when they were passing the amendment, about voting age for 18 year olds at That time came on the was it the whatever the requisite number of states were to ratify the amendment it happened at that convention and the word came through and just erupted into a spontaneous demonstration. Because we had student groups there too, and everyone was so excited about it that, all of a sudden, these students were now going to be able to vote at 18 and shortly after that, they can't drink you're 21 to drink but you can still serve your country. And you can vote and you can do these other things that are responsible adulthood. So that was kind of a twist sort of a kind of ironic that happened. Yes. in similar times

W. Bruce Leslie 6:34

And having come from New Jersey, it never occurred to me that when you talked about drinking at the landmark hotel that it was legal. I was bringing my own baggage to it. Rosie, you were saying that there was some very different kinds of events. Back then social events, floats and hidden horns.

Rosie Rich 6:51

Oh, the homecoming, homecoming was a big thing. Every class had two advisors and with those advisors, the students and advisors would find a barn or a place to have their float. For the following year, it was that far ahead. And everybody was sworn to secrecy. And we'd go out to those branches, always freezing cold with our little kleenexes and making flowers and so forth and making these these floats. And then

George Rich 7:18

Elaborate floats

Rosie Rich 7:19

and and it was really interesting because certain members of each class would go around trying to find the barn that these people, right and so you would not Park, your car would not be parked near the barn, because that would give away where you were. So it was it was really strange to be left off and somebody else would take the car. And so there's no indication that you were in this barn. It was very interesting. It was it was fun. And it was a big day. I think all of Brockport came out for it

W. Bruce Leslie 7:46

what was the parade route?

Rosie Rich 7:47

What was the

W. Bruce Leslie 7:48

the parade route?

Rosie Rich 7:49

parade route went from I'm trying to think George you'll have to help me was it Adam Street on?

George Rich 7:55

Probably similar to what it is today I don't know where it started.

Rosie Rich 7:59

I remember main street. I know where it started where canal side would be started on that street, came around Clinton came to Main, then down Monroe, then passed the college. And the viewing stand was right near the catholic church there. Right, right up in front of the house right across from the Catholic Church, not Morgan Manning. not Morgan Manning, the other side

W. Bruce Leslie 8:22

Nativity

George Rich 8:24

(unintelligible)

Rosie Rich 8:25

No right across Monroe. It was on Monroe

George Rich 8:27

It was Monroe?

Rosie Rich 8:29

(Unintelligible) And then they go up Monroe and then pass the college and think end up at the athletic fields.

W. Bruce Leslie 8:36

What were the other big social events of the year,

Rosie Rich 8:38

we always had a, we had the homecoming queen and we had a dance that evening. And at the dance, and I remember these instances, because often I had an active part in them. There was a survey, there is a receiving line, that each of them composed of the president and administrative people and different faculty members, and we've had to go Everybody had to go through the receiving line. This is in the old gymnasium, usually students and faculty alike. And the first person was responsible for introducing the first person coming through and that name would follow through. And I remember that I was in charge of introducing the people at the beginning of the line. And I just have to tell you this story I won't tell you who it was, but I made an error instead of saying Dr. Smith, I said Mr. Smith, and so it went to the next person and I said, This is Mr. Smith. And person'll say, Well, how do you do Mr. Smith you should say Dr. Smith this went all the way down there and went Mr. The person corrected him all the way down to Dr. I'll never forget that. I think that was the last time I was asked to be head of the anyway. They also had the winter carnival. So you had a king and queen at the homecoming dance. You had king and queen at the Winter Carnival. Then there was a spring fling there in the class balls too

George Rich 9:58

Those changed from time to time. There was a freshman dance and there was a sophomore dance and each of them had their own

W. Bruce Leslie 10:04

did these all occur in the gym in the south end of Hartwell

Rosie Rich 10:06

usually in that gymnasium and it was decorated and stuff like that

W. Bruce Leslie 10:10

do you remember Burt Mahan?

Rosie Rich 10:12

Yes, I do. yes I do

George Rich 10:13

His name's come up several times. And I noticed that he was king at one for one I know it was homecoming or winter carnival and I guess to double back to our earlier topic. Was there any controversy to have a Black King and White Queen?

Rosie Rich 10:28

He was very popular. He was an athlete I believe.

W. Bruce Leslie 10:31

Yes. I believe he was

Rosie Rich 10:32

that that's that you see eliminates any prejudice. Once you get well, you think about it today too somebody who's of a different race, you know, color. If they're involved in something that's important. They're popular and it doesn't matter.

W. Bruce Leslie 10:46

Gary Scoop just spoke to him.

Rosie Rich 10:49

Really. I haven't seen him in a long time

George Rich 10:50

Well oh no Warren Wareen Foster was the black, first black president of the Student Government too,

Rosie Rich 10:58

but he was involved in other things though he was popular.

George Rich 11:00

Yeah he was really popular.

Rosie Rich 11:01

Yeah, that's what I'm saying if the person had certain attributes, it was okay. There was no problem.

W. Bruce Leslie 11:06

In fact I have two students studying that right now. What struck them was that a lot of the few black students they found they seem to be involved in so many organizations,

Rosie Rich 11:15

right.

W. Bruce Leslie 11:15

And they were trying to figure out why that was.

Rosie Rich 11:18

Maybe they're back when that's one thing they could probably research is where they came from and what they did.

W. Bruce Leslie 11:26

It seemed beyond the present and in the organizations. And I take it was commencement more connected to the village than it is now did they walk down College Street or what

Rosie Rich 11:38

they did not Oh, wait a minute. Wait a minute. When you when you graduated, you did I watched from Jeannette's apartment.

George Rich 11:45

I did? I can't remember.

Rosie Rich 11:47

Yeah. As he graduated as in his master's degree. Yes, they did walk down Monroe. I do remember that.

George Rich 11:54

I don't know.

Rosie Rich 11:54

I remember that watching you

George Rich 11:56

Of course I remember in the old days they used to have what they called the daisy chain. In one, there was like a moving up day they came from the Roxbury up to college street led by the underclass girls dressed in white gowns with a daisy chain over their shoulder and

Rosie Rich 12:09

handmade

George Rich 12:11

and under came with an escorting,

Unknown Speaker 12:13

I believe that was May first May Day didn't they call it May Day, daisy chain?.

George Rich 12:18

I'm not sure. I think they're two different things and I think that was moving up day because they were in cap and gown.

Rosie Rich 12:22

Okay, well that would've been close to graduation day,

George Rich 12:26

I don't know.

W. Bruce Leslie 12:27

As a faculty member, Rosie, were you expected to participate in these kinds of activities or guide them

Rosie Rich 12:33

as as far as I can remember I was asked to be advisor of certain clubs and certain classes, but as far as I can remember, it was sort of expected for us to be at the balls and the dances. Even with or without dates

W. Bruce Leslie 12:51

Was there did faculty resent that or they assumed this is the way it ought to be? What was faculty reaction,

Rosie Rich 12:57

my reaction was it's the way it is I accepted it I'm not sure. Everybody seemed to go. And most people seem to go along with it. I'm not sure about the older faculty, there were about 40 or 50 of us who hung around together single and married the ages of let's say, 25 to 50. We had a, we had a big, we had big group that were people who were sort of active and in different organizations, there's always the the person who didn't I remember always, and this is in other places, too, that as a single person, we felt we always heard the thing while you're single, therefore you have time to do this. Therefore, you can be advisor of such and such a group and this was a little bit of resentment going on. And you probably hear that yourself and I think it still goes on. But if you're married with a family, you might not have time for these activities.

W. Bruce Leslie 13:51

Were were there are many Catholics on the faculty? Or did you ever feel out of place being?

Rosie Rich 13:58

No, not at all. They were quite well, the people I I went around with seemed to be Catholic. But not necessarily. I didn't run around with them because they were Catholic, but there would seem to be a lot of Catholics. I think there were quite a few Catholics on campus student wise too. I think the Newman club was quite an active group, as I recall

W. Bruce Leslie 14:14

Yeah I believe it was, so there were a number of other Catholic faculty then.

Rosie Rich 14:18

Oh, yes.

W. Bruce Leslie 14:19

And that was never an issue.

Rosie Rich 14:21

Not that I felt, and I never felt that someone was against me because I was Italian, however, probably they were, but I never felt it. I think it depends on the person whether they feel it or not, but I never felt any prejudice.

W. Bruce Leslie 14:35

I noticed that many of the names from the sort of post war period are Italian. Jerry D'Agostino,

Rosie Rich 14:41

D'Agostino D'la Quila, Delrisio Dalraso Lasort,

George Rich 14:47

People we know?

Rosie Rich 14:49

people we know.

W. Bruce Leslie 14:51

I don't know if you can give me any help on this. I'm assuming that before World War Two was probably a very Protestant college. I'm just guessing. We don't have any records and that After World War Two, it became a more and more Catholic institution. I don't know if that rings any bells.

George Rich 15:08

Of course, historically, its roots were a Baptist seminary.

W. Bruce Leslie 15:10

Yeah.

George Rich 15:11

And then from that came the Collegiate Institute. But that was way back in the 1800s. So basically, it probably reflected, reflected the area around here and as the makeup around was probably more basically Protestant. Probably historically hid them, you know, I would guess I have no basis for that either.

W. Bruce Leslie 15:30

You mentioned the Canterbury society was that

Rosie Rich 15:36

they had a club they had a lot of different religious clubs as I recall, everybody had a group. What was the prtotestant group called? The basic other than Canterbury

George Rich 15:46

put me on the spot, huh? (unintelligible) yearbook. You don't need to know that.

Rosie Rich 15:50

No, just wondering

W. Bruce Leslie 15:53

Was there much evidence, George, when you were here of the McCarthy era. Did you have any sense of a Red Scare was there

George Rich 15:59

Oh, yeah. Yeah, I remember being involved in of like a campus forum or with the other group of (?) it had like a campus Roundtable, I guess they called it where they'd take up some of the issues. And that was one of the things they talked about at that time then shortly after that. The ACLU attack on that and a number (unintelligible) very active in that and little meetings that were held all around the community as well as on the campus about that and the scare's academically, I don't know how much that was probably viewed as could be a possible restriction on freedom, academic freedom and freedom of speech. And something to be I don't remember all the details, but I do remember McCarthy as I came across him most recently on the McCarthyism too but even then I could play them but I am here. (?)

W. Bruce Leslie 16:00

Yeah. Did you have any sense of religious attitudes among your classmates, I guess talk a little bit about that before but were many churchgoers were any of them churchgoers?

George Rich 17:13

As I said in my earlier days I might have been associated with someone I remember taking a group of us went from here by cars down to Syracuse for a group with some other found some other student groups from around other colleges. And it was a kind of a Protestant group that did that. And it was just done like a weekend kind of thing. And then you came back. But that was just when I was a freshman after that I kind of got out of that. And I don't remember other kinds of religious activities that many people were involved in if they were involved in it then because I wasn't I didn't know about it, I guess

Rosie Rich 17:45

I think you know, I think that might be more than anything,

George Rich 17:48

What's that

Rosie Rich 17:48

That you weren't involved. Really, because there was a big Catholic group. I remember going to church and then meeting afterwards for coffee and going to the charcoal pit for coffee and doughnuts.

George Rich 17:59

Those later time (?)

Rosie Rich 18:01

later than the

W. Bruce Leslie 18:03

And are you referring to nativity? Or to Newman?

Rosie Rich 18:06

No, Nativity. Did Newman have the oratory? during that time? When was the oratory built?

W. Bruce Leslie 18:14

I wouldn't have thought when you were teaching here.

Rosie Rich 18:15

That's what I was saying. It was Nativity

W. Bruce Leslie 18:18

I think they

Rosie Rich 18:18

I don't remember it

W. Bruce Leslie 18:19

on

George Rich 18:20

Holley street too. Oh yeah

Rosie Rich 18:21

Okay.

George Rich 18:23

That's right,

Rosie Rich 18:23

because I don't remember the Newman oratory there.

W. Bruce Leslie 18:25

I believe the story is that when the state took that land, and they used that money I believe at the start

Rosie Rich 18:33

Nativity, there was a large group of Catholics I know who went.

W. Bruce Leslie 18:36

So before they had the oratory, did they not have Sunday services?

Rosie Rich 18:40

Mean at the

W. Bruce Leslie 18:41

At Newman center?

Rosie Rich 18:42

I don't know. I wasn't involved in it. I was within Nativity.

W. Bruce Leslie 18:48

And was that a particular Do you remember that as a choice of a particular kind of Catholicism or you just happened to come to Nativity

Rosie Rich 18:55

It was the only Catholic Church in town

W. Bruce Leslie 18:57

Okay, and you wouldn't have thought of Newman as a church to go to then as you were never

Rosie Rich 19:03

No, because I think I thought it more as a student group rather than faculty. It was more of a student club.

W. Bruce Leslie 19:10

Yeah.

Rosie Rich 19:11

So I was not involved. I was not an advisor or anything. So I went to the church.

W. Bruce Leslie 19:17

Yes, it was, in fact, I believe there was a priest around that time, who felt only students should attend it.

Rosie Rich 19:24

Okay. I don't know. But it just seems that it was not a choice of mine to go there.

W. Bruce Leslie 19:30

Ironically, today, it's almost entirely faculty,

Rosie Rich 19:32

right.

W. Bruce Leslie 19:34

But that's very interesting. George, what do you remember your relationship with faculty? Would you see them in the Union? Would you ever go to their houses?

George Rich 19:46

I used to go to I used to babysit for Doctor Smirnoff. So I'd go to his house. Doctor Mr. Rockcastle Bern Rockcastle was a great one we were related to (?) he taught sciences and I remember going he would take field trips with us to the Tung Hill Plateau in the Adirondacks, a group of students group called nature club or something like that got involved in another nature centered course that I took from him and people would go there and he had good close relationship with him and good Joker. Nice guy to know and. Other again because I was a town kid, I knew the kids of some of these profs. I might have known some of them that were like (unintelligible) I might have been in their homes or something. But that was more because of knowing their kids as a townie rather than as a college student. But I heard stories about other students being invited to different profs home for one reason or another. I was a college babysitter two times. Rockcastle once had a group up there, I don't know what it was his social. I can't remember who else caught me off guard with that 'un. The relationship was always good I always felt that they're accessible. You can stop them on campus. You can talk to them in the coffee shop and then it was always collegial like they wanted to talk to you and give you the time of day. If you had I don't remember going to offices a lot, but if you had to do that, you could do that. And get additional help or consultation if you needed it I always felt that they were always very accessible, but it was

Rosie Rich 21:28

And now you're going to ask the faculty member

W. Bruce Leslie 21:31

exactly

Rosie Rich 21:31

I had a different view of it

W. Bruce Leslie 21:32

You're a step ahead of me.

Rosie Rich 21:33

No we had a student who was one of our we used to have our house cleaned, and one of our students was cleaned our house. I lived with three other faculty members. One of the faculty members was very student oriented. In other words she wanted to she was probably had more friends in the student line than she had in the faculty line related much better with the students. She used to have Students over now here's where we have four women living together. Others Well, I was more of the type that I felt there was a distance between a student and faculty, to me as a faculty member, and there was a student and I didn't think they should be too close. I've changed my mind since but at that time, that was my feeling. And I sort of resented the fact that the students would come in and see us in different stages of our everyday living, which I thought was our business and not there's often dates coming over and here's as these students, you know, so it bothered me a little bit that way. However, on the other hand, I went to a senior prom with a student you remember that

George Rich 22:43

Oh yeah!

Rosie Rich 22:45

Because just to get back at George because his girlfriend didn't have a date. And she was a student, senior and she needed a date. So she asked George so I figured, well, she's going with him then I'll ask her boyfriend to go with me. So I wasn't

George Rich 22:59

No, that was no that was not

Rosie Rich 23:03

Something of that sort. Well how'd that go?

I can't remember how it went, but anyway.

George Rich 23:11

His girl was student teaching away so she couldn't be here. But he wanted to go because I was a senior. And so he arranged to go with you and I went with Jeanette, who was the class advisor,

Rosie Rich 23:22

Oh you went with Jeanette

George Rich 23:23

but he couldn't make it that night. So I said, good. I'll go with you. That's how it happened.

Rosie Rich 23:28

Okay. So I went with

George Rich 23:29

I get blamed again for something that

Rosie Rich 23:31

You're fault George.

George Rich 23:32

So we all knew each other. We all knew each other. It was it was good.

Rosie Rich 23:35

So there was it there was a good relationship between students and faculty. But there was a for me, I because I was so young there. I felt I had to be more strict in order to have control of my classes. So I was a I was a no not, no fun, but I was all business and I taught my classes that way. However, I thought they had respect for me for my teaching, which they tell me today anyway. But that was the way it was too because there wasn't. As today, I think there's a closer relationship between the faculty and students. And wasn't as much then

W. Bruce Leslie 24:16

And you described faculty getting together over coffee in a way that, I guess is probably rarer today. You said those were good times.

Rosie Rich 24:23

Oh, those were very good times. We used to be going down to the coffee shop in Hartwell downstairs. There were two tables. And those were faculty so you could walk in go to that table and there's always people to talk to. It was it was I can't remember the holiday. Doesn't matter. \

George Rich 24:41

St. Patrick's Day.

Rosie Rich 24:42

St. Patrick's Day. A friend of mine who was also a faculty member who was an excellent artist, and I decided that it would be a good idea. If we went into the faculty room late at night, and painted the tables with all sorts of creatures of St. Patrick's Day leprechauns. I had no artistic ability, but I could paint background very well. But in order to do this, we thought that Ma Green would get very upset. So we went to the president of the college and proposed this and he said, I'm not gonna say yes or no, but I haven't heard what you said, but have a good time. And we got the key from the custodian, we went in at midnight, painted the tables. Went in the next morning, as if we were, oh, my heavens, look at this table of course they all pointed at us. We had that type of fun. We had a lot of fun, good, very good group of people. And we had social gatherings and business gatherings and talked shop we talked everything

W. Bruce Leslie 25:44

am I correct? It sounds from what you're saying as though the biggest gulf among faculty's between married and single would that

Rosie Rich 25:51

biggest what

W. Bruce Leslie 25:52

biggest social divides? It was with married and single faculty?

Rosie Rich 25:55

No we had a group of about 40 to 50 people. I would say they were married and single But they were within, let's say 25 to about 50 years old. But they were married and single you know

W. Bruce Leslie 26:06

Not too many married

Rosie Rich 26:07

well, there weren't that many married that were young, who were able to go out with us didn't have kids and so forth. But (unintelligible)

W. Bruce Leslie 26:14

what you remember your impressions of Brockport students at the time?

Rosie Rich 26:19

I always thought, they were top, I always like my students very much. And I and I, still, when they come back, I still see them and it's nice to have a relationship.

W. Bruce Leslie 26:33

And I take it dress dress was moderately formal or

Rosie Rich 26:39

very neat. We didn't allow, I don't think the college in general would allow dress that wasn't appropriate. When I was in college, when I was in college, we could not wear slacks during the week. We can wear them on Saturdays and I can't remember whether you had that rule here or not. I don't remember it but there for Women, I'm not sure. I can't remember that here.

W. Bruce Leslie 27:04

Could you tell me a little bit more about what you taught?

Rosie Rich 27:06

That I taught?

W. Bruce Leslie 27:07

Yeah

Rosie Rich 27:08

I taught Health and Physical Education. I taught health to physical education majors, they had to have a health course and I was the one to teach it. There. There was another health teacher Pearl Britain also taught health. She was the one who talked to me to talked me into teaching health. When I came she said we need another health teacher, you're the only one who has a health background. Would you like to teach that a fan (?)? I don't know why I got all the males but I got all the males. Instead, I'd had one or two women in the class and I don't know why that worked out. But then I taught the I taught physical education majors in field hockey, in soccer and basketball and golf. Tennis was Ann Mueller's gymnastics, dance, I taught social dance, not modern dance, just social dance. Swimming, I was in swimming. I was the swimming person I taught life saving, synchronized swimming, I taught bowling, trampoline gymnastics. So generally generally, a whole gamut of things I was I was qualified to teach anything. Not necessarily be good at anything but I was qualified to teach anything.

W. Bruce Leslie 28:23

Now would you ever see the general education students? Or

Rosie Rich 28:25

Yes, I had the general education students also. In the summertime, I taught summer school. Also in the summertime, I would have the general education students and some major physical education classes, but I would have maybe one general education class through the year but I also supervised student teachers. So I went on the road and went to the schools where they were teaching and I had to go out I think was two times during the quarter because they went out for a quarter for 10 weeks. So twice for each student at the beginning and the end. I supervised them

W. Bruce Leslie 28:59

What was your sense of how well prepared they were?

Rosie Rich 29:02

I thought they were very well prepared. Something I just thought of too I was on the all college English committee Do you have it now? Have you heard of that one?

W. Bruce Leslie 29:12

Describe it.

Rosie Rich 29:12

All College English Committee, every student who came into Brockport had to write a paper. I can't remember if they were given a topic or not. And there were, I think, 10 faculty members, and we were, we had to read all of these papers, but I didn't have all of them. They were divided. So I would have three, three faculty members would read each paper, and I can't remember how many I had, they divided them up, and we wouldn't see what the we would write the corrections on a separate sheet of paper so we wouldn't see what you had, how you had evaluated someone's writing. If somebody didn't pass two out of three faculty didn't pass the student then they went to the then they took a remedial writing course and reading course where possible (?) slash reading course. And that was a that was a big part of my responsibilities. And a lot of that today

W. Bruce Leslie 30:06

did you just at the beginning of the year or did that go on

Rosie Rich 30:10

Let's just say

George Rich 30:11

I remember it a little bit differently at different times I think it took a different form. I think it originally if you didn't meet certain standards in your written work in any of your classes, the instructor could refer you to the all college

Rosie Rich 30:24

It could also be done that way. But the way I had it was they all remember all freshmen had to take had to write

W. Bruce Leslie 30:31

you have any idea what proportion wound up having remedial work

Rosie Rich 30:35

none whatsoever. I never got. I was not on that end of it. I was only on the evaluation.

W. Bruce Leslie 30:42

And in some ways that still exists.

Rosie Rich 30:45

Does it yeah I didn't know that.

W. Bruce Leslie 30:47

Students are evaluated at the beginning and they're

Rosie Rich 30:50

by committee or the English teachers.

W. Bruce Leslie 30:54

I think this is a committee it's but it's within the English department. Now,

Rosie Rich 30:58

but I'm surprised that it wasn't Just in the English department, I'm surprised that I had anything to do with it.

W. Bruce Leslie 31:05

We had a turn in the 80s to teach writing to show the composition and from outside the department, Paul Curran coordinated. In a way it was seen as an onerous duty. But on the other hand, it brought faculty from across departments together in a way that often doesn't happen

Rosie Rich 31:22

Well, the thing is I never knew who was evaluating the other students see I, I only I got these, let's say 10 papers. I didn't know who the other evaluators were. And that's the way they wanted it to be. So that it was totally objective.

W. Bruce Leslie 31:25

Right So (unintelligible), why did you leave Brockport?

Rosie Rich 31:42

I left Brockport I Oh, interesting. I just remembered this. I was supposed to have a sabbatical. However, the I was here six years. And so I applied for sabbatical. And after I applied for sabbatical, and it was accepted the state said the sabbatical happens after the seventh year so you're that allowed to have it. So I I fought it in one sabbatical and then I got a call in August asked me to take a job in Beirut. And so I went for an interview in New York City and took a job in Beirut. So my sabbatical accept was accepted to go around the world and check out visit phys ed departments around the world and write up on them it was a very simple thing. But so I got this job to go to Beirut so I went to Beirut.

W. Bruce Leslie 32:44

So you were initially planning to come back to Brockport?

Rosie Rich 32:47

Yes. Because after the sabbatical, we were to come back at least for one year.

W. Bruce Leslie 32:51

What year was this?

Rosie Rich 32:52

This was in 1964.

W. Bruce Leslie 32:56

Instead, you

Rosie Rich 32:57

I went to Beirut for four years and then I and then I devised a program for a I think we talked about this a a student teacher to come from from Brockport to come over to Beirut, I taught them their activity classes. They received 1400 dollars as a stipend. They got free room and room and, free room and board. And they taught classes for me. And so they were able to come back in their senior year and finish their their electives or their academic classes. I believe that was the first overseas program for students,

W. Bruce Leslie 33:31

that's interesting. And then you had planned you planned the whole time to come back to Brockport?

Rosie Rich 33:37

No, no, no, once I left Brockport, I had left to go to Beirut. I had not planned to come back until this gentleman over here asked me to marry him and then I came back.

W. Bruce Leslie 33:48

And you said you came back and you did look into working at Brockport?

Rosie Rich 33:51

Yes, I did. And it was not the type of program I wanted to be involved in

W. Bruce Leslie 33:57

So was it was the changes in physical education that

Rosie Rich 34:00

changes in physical education curriculum. Mhm, definitely.

W. Bruce Leslie 34:04

Could you describe them a little more fully?

Rosie Rich 34:06

Well, to me it was the aesthetics of movement. That was basically what they were teaching, rather than basic skill courses with practical application of those skill courses to teaching a class. And I've had too much experience to know that once you get into a classroom, we have to be very practical and know what to do with that class. You can't just say, okay, we're going to think of movement as a beautiful thing. It doesn't work that way. So I couldn't agree with philosophy. Therefore, I didn't even consider applying for a job at Brockport. They wanted me to take the courses over again in a whole year so that I could be prepared to teach here and after. So yeah, I was 38 years old. After that much teaching experience. I felt that I didn't need to go back to school for that.

W. Bruce Leslie 34:54

You remember when that was?

Rosie Rich 34:56

I came back and in 1968 I believe it was in 68 then I believe it was 68. I don't Oh, wait a minute. I'm sorry. It was not 68 it was when we got married it was 73. because then I decided to look elsewhere and I put my applications and we got married and I came back to live here. That's why I reapplied right, sorry. And I put in applications for career planning and placement, physical education, health, counseling. Trying to think a travel business. I had an offer to take it for travel and went for Batavia Middle School health. That's where I got my gray hair.

W. Bruce Leslie 35:43

So you went back into secondary teaching. And George, there was a break in your time at Brockport. You graduated in 1954. And then I take it you came back for graduate work later on.

George Rich 35:55

I went in the service for a couple years and then I came back out and took a job teaching in Rochester. And then as I did that, I started taking graduate courses in summers and Saturdays. It takes a while to do it that way. And sometime well it took me I don't know what time was 61, 62 I got my master's degree, it took me a little long that way. And so that was a little bit of a break there.

W. Bruce Leslie 36:23

Did you notice had the college changed much or was it pretty much the same when you came back?

George Rich 36:29

I don't know, I think essentially the same a little bit about why I went away for the service and I came back here. Then I still know some people here I had been just away two years, but a lot of people I knew (unintelligible), but people had come back. And I was able to kind of maintain that kind of connection with some of the students. And I didn't see that great a difference, as time went on you (unintelligible) a little difference. And I think that's the time when the vets probably became even stronger under some events at that time. But uh

W. Bruce Leslie 37:00

And were these primary Korean War vets or peacetime (?) vets?

George Rich 37:04

Yeah

W. Bruce Leslie 37:07

Could you talk at all about what you think the expectations your classmates had had about life and career?

George Rich 37:17

No, that's right because they said I want to be able to really get in there. But you could kind of sense I guess, that most of you know people most people thought, I think when they left, most of them thought they'd go into teaching somewhere, while all of the guys were like myself facing military service, because they'd been deferred for a number of years while they were in school. So it was pretty given that most of us would have to face some military service as we did. So then after that, who knows what, you know? But I think a lot of the women particularly expected to go into teaching if they didn't have plans for marriage and family or other other academic pursuits, and I never heard much of those at that time. Teach me hear somebody say when or when something or I don't intend to teach, I got to get my degree, but most people were really thinking about teaching, I think.

W. Bruce Leslie 38:10

And in the end, did most of your classmates go into teaching you think?

George Rich 38:14

I think probably most of them did for a while, at least and then, whether they stayed with it or not I don't know. I just don't know. I just tend to think most of them still stayed in the field of education somehow.

W. Bruce Leslie 38:29

Right. And did you remain in elementary education throughout your career?

George Rich 38:34

Yes, I did.

Even the time when I considered doing masters work, thinking, people said Well do you want to go into administration? And my feeling was, I really liked teaching, and I wanted to be on that end of it in the classroom, rather than in an office. So I said I don't want to do administration work. So (unintelligible) my master's work was done in education in the classroom, as opposed to administration

W. Bruce Leslie 39:01

Are you? Will there be a major reunion for your class this summer?

George Rich 39:05

Yes,

W. Bruce Leslie 39:05

45th.

George Rich 39:06

Yes yes we had a good turnout for our 40th. I don't know how many will be there this year, traditionally would be at this time, but we had a good turnout. We're pleased with what we had five years ago. And I think we'll probably have another good turnout in five years hence.

W. Bruce Leslie 39:21

Do many of your or could you characterize your classmates feelings of Brockport?

George Rich 39:27

Oh, boy, that's hard to put the words in other peoples' mouths if you haven't talked to them about it, but I think generally, there's always a variety of feeling too, so you can't really, I don't think I really characterize it one way or another. But generally, I thought it was a positive experience for most people, for most people. And occasionally you hear of one person who hadn't because of one bad experience or another has left a sour taste for the whole experience for them. But I think basically, they come back and their relationships their memories are of there relationships with other people. And the positive things they may occasionally talk about, oh, that professors so and so, was such a hard time or something. But I don't think it can that much or more more like this, how good somebody was and how much they prepared and how much they admired and respected the faculty and what they had done for them and I think that's been true as as you see them, communicate with them throughout the years. I don't know.

W. Bruce Leslie 40:27

We have about three minutes left. I wonder if there's anything that you'd like to talk about questions I should have asked.

Rosie Rich 40:40

one, one thing we had then was the faculty variety show, which was a year year activity, and it brought the faculty very close together and they were usually mobbed mobbed. In fact, it was standing room only type of thing. And that was good because also, I think it cemented also faculty student relationships a little bit there too

George Rich 41:02

Rosie had a a great act in one of those.

Rosie Rich 41:04

I was a emcee at one and then I did a medley of tunes with a very short teacher, and I led him round and he ended up in my arms at the end.

W. Bruce Leslie 41:17

Who was (unintelligible)?

George Rich 41:19

Gene Calacky

Rosie Rich 41:19

Gene Calacky, he's still alive and well. Dr. tower used to have annual parties at his, his abode there for faculty in his home. And there was a student Faculty Association. Do they still have the student faculty association

W. Bruce Leslie 41:32

Uh not as I know the old FSA?

Rosie Rich 41:34

Yes, FSA

W. Bruce Leslie 41:35

It's evolved

Rosie Rich 41:35

Which was combined. The okay one of the things I used to do was choreography. I did the choreography of guys and gals one year Lou Hitler was the director. It won an award to go overseas. They took the the whole cast over, not the whole cast, a minimum number of cast members overseas to perform this. I could have gone if I could have just played the piano part and I couldn't play the piano. Ended that one. And there was TV on campus for the first time when I was here. What did they call that the Inter? It was within the campus

George Rich 42:07

Instructional television.

Rosie Rich 42:08

Yeah, instructional television. Liz Quick, who was the music teacher at the Campus school was one of the first teachers to teach a class on their. Mels Magnus

George Rich 42:18

They have a picture on my kaleidoscope because I was behind the camera posing as I was taking a course in it show one sport (?) out at the time as far as. (?)

Rosie Rich 42:26

Okay. Well that's about, I think we covered most of stuff I remember.

W. Bruce Leslie 42:30

Well, thank you very much.

Rosie Rich 42:32

You're welcome.

W. Bruce Leslie 42:32

Most most appreciative.

Rosie Rich 42:34

I think it was fun.

W. Bruce Leslie 42:35

Thank you. Well, thank you for doing it. And I hope

Rosie Rich 42:38

I hope you got what you wanted.

W. Bruce Leslie 42:39

I did and I hope we have a chance to talk again about your later contacts with Brockport