



MACALESTER COLLEGE
Macalester College Archives, DeWitt Wallace Library
Oral History Project

Interview with: **Stewart Nelson**
Class of 1943

Date: **Monday, June 25, 2007**

Place: Macalester College DeWitt Wallace Library, Harmon Room
Interviewer: Laura Zeccardi, Class of 2007

Interview run time: 57:15

Accession: 2007-12-21-23

Agreement: Signed, on file, no restrictions

Subjects

0:00 Brief synopsis of connection with Macalester
Enlisting in the service, CA and University of Indiana
Primrose the gym teacher
Parties and the ice rink
Miss Doty and Professor Harrison
Stewart's wife Beverly—meeting and getting married
Tuition costs
Life after Macalester—Stewart's children

10:10 Macalester Alumni Office
Credits from Macalester and the University of Minnesota
Pro-Catholic newspapers' representation of Macalester
President Rosenberg
Admissions process to Macalester
First impression of Macalester

16:17 Dorm buildings at Macalester

16:47 Dorm life

17:54 Campus events and Homecoming

18:14 Sports games
Religious life at Macalester
Student organizations

	Political Emphasis Week
	Courses and professors
	Course requirements
	Size of the student body
	Requirements to enlist
	Other (international) students at Macalester
30:30	President Turck
	Nursing program
	Female students and professors
	Mary Gwen Owen: Dramatics and Theater
35:16	Winter breaks/J-Term
	Summer jobs: chauffeuring, butlering, and gardening
	Getting a car, driving the children
	Former classmate/Indian Chief at the Chicago fair
	Enlisting in the Service
	Becoming a G.I.
	Memorial for the World War II vets
	How the war affected Macalester
	Attending the University of Minnesota
	Macalester Alumni Office
	Golden Scots Reunion
52:48	Differences between 1940 and today
	Favorite memory of Macalester
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Interview with Stewart Nelson

Laura Zeccardi, Interviewer

**June 25, 2007
Macalester College
DeWitt Wallace Library
Harmon Room**

LZ: My name is Laura Zeccardi and I'm a new graduate of Macalester College conducting interviews for the Macalester Oral History Project. Today is Monday, June 25, 2007 and I am interviewing Stewart Nelson, Class of 1943, in the Harmon Room in the DeWitt Wallace Library.

SN: Did you want me to talk?

LZ: Yeah, if you would like to talk, and then I can...

SN: Well, I just want to give a background. I graduated from Central High in Saint Paul in 1940. And I decided to go to Macalester. One reason is because it was within walking distance. And we lived on Jefferson Avenue at that time. And, uh, so I came here, and signed in, and they accepted me to start in September. But, uh, let's see now. I...majored in Business. And...we had—so that was in '40. I was just trying to remember. December 7, 1940. Yeah, that's right. And so, we had a good time. We had a very good time at Macalester. I didn't go out too much with the dormitory kids, but I went around with the kids from Minneapolis and Saint Paul. And...but then we intermingled, you know, and we had a very good time. The thing was, that as

time went on, they announced to us that any student could stay out of the service—and I was eligible—if you take scientific classes. Which I thought, “Gee whiz, any kind of a stall would be good.” I mean, I’m not supposed to say that, but, you know, I wanted to get a little bit of education if I could. So I signed up for Spanish and for...Physics, and for...I don’t remember all the other classes. But Spanish and Physics were the two— My advisor was Professor...let’s see, Professor...should have that name. Anyway, I can’t remember. He was a very, very nice person.

[02:07]

So, in six months, they told us, “Finish your class and we’re going to take you in March to go into the Service.” So, there were six of us, and I remember four of their names: John Conrad; Dick Dierenfield, who later came back here and was a professor; Jerry Timberlake; and Bob Anderson, and me. And I can’t remember one or two of the other guys’ names. And so, then we left there and we went into Fort Snelling. And then they announced that we were a special group because they figured it was going to be a long war, and so they wanted to have people to go into physics, and into the sciences. So, we had to go, and we went in—oh, beautiful. We were given special treatment. We were given, La Hoya, California, right on the ocean. And we didn’t have a rugged, dusty road to do our practicing for the guns and everything. We were right on the ocean. And it was blacktopped, and so we were really treated quite nicely. And when we got done, they announced that we would go to Camp...Bloomington. Bloomington out of Indiana, Indiana University. So, I’ll skip back to Macalester. I just wanted to say this. So, when we got on, there were six carloads of us kids from the East Coast—from the West Coast—going over to the East Coast. And on the way, one person got...polio. And so, that consigned us. And they consigned us at Indiana University for six months—for six weeks. For six months it was. And

then we were put into troop training because by that time, Patton was coming along and he was going right through Europe. And so they decided that it was not going to be a long war, it was going to be a short war, and might as well make use of us somewhere else. So, I—and so that was what we did. And now, when we, now I'll just, I mean that ends that.

[04:48]

But, in the meantime, at Macalester, when the war was on, I had to take Physical Exercise. And one was Primrose. I don't know if any of you know Primrose, but Primrose was the gym teacher. And very rough guy, but a heart of gold. I mean, I really enjoyed him. And we had to do—we couldn't do ordinary calisthenics, we had to do calisthenics that the Army wanted us to do. And one was to swing from a bar and then jump down. And so I swang from the bar and I fell, and I turned my right knee in, and I just hobbled it. Hubcut [unclear]...now what was his name? Anyway—oh Primrose—he said, “Nelson, what are you doing there, get over there.” And he pushed me to the edge, and I was in complete pain, but I got out of a lot of the stuff because of my knee for a while, so that was kind of nice. But Primrose, everybody who has ever known Primrose, he was just a marvelous person. And so, we did that. And we were ten blocks from school, and so I walked back and forth to school. And then there were parties, and there were quite a few parties. And most of them were in Minneapolis, and had good times at them. And then they had the ice rink at that time, and so we'd go skating on the ice rink. And let's see now, how can I say, oh well it was right basically at Macalester and St. Clair [Avenue]. And then they had a warming house there. I don't know, maybe you, I know it's been gone for several years. But anyway, that's where a lot of people would go, and it was marvelous ice skating.

[06:22]

Well then, Miss Doty was another lady who we thoroughly enjoyed. All the ladies had to sit up when they were sitting on the campus and everything like that. But she was just a charmer.

Although I never had her for anything. And Professor Harrison was my Spanish teacher, and he was very understanding and very good. Also, it was where I met my wife Beverly, but I didn't meet her until after the end of the war. So Beverly Oyen I met on a blind date to a wedding.

And so then we met in...let's see...well, we got married in 1950. I should remember that. We got married in 1950, and we'd gone for three years, so that was '47 that we met. And then we settled down in St. Paul. She had a job as a med tech and I had a job in insurance with a bank. Professor Harrison, he was my advisor, one of my advisors, and he was very good. And...Old Main. There was no library at that time. And it was made into a...let's see, it was made into a library and now it's made into...for the alumni. And there were about seven hundred students that time. And at that time—you'll be interested in this—at that time, we paid eighty dollars a semester. And we thought that was terrible at that time. But later, when I see the figures right now... Incidentally, I have three children. And two of them live in the Greater Twin Cities and one lives in Richmond, Virginia. The oldest one lives in Richmond, Virginia, and they have two daughters, and one is Erin Nelson. And I'm not going to brag, but her mother—my son married an art professor at the University of Virginia. And they offered her, when she graduated, three years full-tuition if she'd go to Richmond, Virginia. And they were quite thrilled with that, but she hesitated, and they saw some more of her background. We went to her graduation just this last, just a weekend ago. And she was then offered four years free scholarship to the University of Virginia. And I took her the first time she went here to Macalester, to look it over. She was quite impressed, but she was going to Carleton also. Then, she thought a little bit more about it, and she thought, you know, "I really kind of like Macalester." And so then at Christmas time,

the first time they—that side of my son and his family came here for Christmas for eighteen years, so it was a big time. And one of the things that she wanted to do is visit Macalester again and Carleton again. So, she did, and I didn't go with her that time. But her parents went with her and her other sister went with her. But she was really quite impressed, but she hadn't seen Carleton. And so, she then went to Carleton. But she always was kind of set upon Macalester. And so we just took it for granted, after a four-year scholarship, she decides on Macalester. And so, she's starting now, and her name is Erin, Erin Nelson.

[10:10]

[Pause] Seven hundred students, and then Old Main was where we did an awful lot of work. And then since I've come back—since I've retired, I have served eight years as a Macalester Alumni office, working under...Carol Polk. She's marvelous, she's a marvelous person. Well we donated every year, not much, but we donated. I graduated from the U. And I wanted, when I got done, I wanted to go to the U, and so my last year was spent at the University. And I got college credits at Macalester, and got college credits at Indiana University. And you have to go—is it three semesters or is it two semesters—I can't remember. When I was there, I think it was, it must've been three semesters. Because I mean, I graduated from business at the University of Minnesota. We attend all the class reunions in June, for the Golden Scots. And Beverly and I both have received our fifty year medallion for attending, as the reunions. And we've always thought very highly of Macalester. And Macalester has received bad publicity in the papers. Our papers are very pro-Catholic. And, I shouldn't say that, but I mean, they're showing everything Catholic lately and they've got a new owner right now, and everything is Catholic. So it's just a pleasure to see some good things on that paper right here at Macalester, because everything matured. Incidentally, I am very impressed with the present president. I've

heard him talk about four or five times. It's always ad-lib. His sentence structure is perfect. His thoughts are right in line, right cohesive. I don't know how much longer Macalester is going to hold on to this president, but we've had some presidents that have not been... And in fact, when we were at this last Golden, Golden Scots thing, I sat with a good friend, well, Dick Dierenfield. And we were talking, and I said, "What do you think of the new president?" Or not new, but I said, "What do you think of our present president?" And he said, "I am totally impressed with him." He says, "I don't know how long we're going to be able to keep him." I said, "That's exactly my thought." So it isn't just me that is sold on the new president. And I don't know about all this—had to drum all around to find a place to park and parked in the parking lot down there—because this physical plant over here is going to be enormous! Just enormous. I can't figure out what it's all about, but anyway. That's what it is. So that is my background.

LZ: Okay, well now that I've kind of heard your, kind of summary of your time, if we want to go back to maybe, at your very beginning and work our way...

SN: Yeah, that's alright.

[13:36]

LZ: And so, you were from the area, and so I'm interested in kind of what was the admissions process like? And seeing your granddaughter coming up to apply for colleges, how does that compare?

SN: Oh heavens! Well, oh! I tell you, when we were there, I couldn't believe the book that she got from Macalester. Of course, I was very interested in it. And I looked it over in detail. And I thought, "My gosh!" I mean, that is just a work of art. In detail. Of course, when we did, there was nothing like that. I mean Macalester was struggling. And they had not as many buildings. They never had that building where you have your lunches, you know. The Dayton building. There are several other buildings that are new, you know. And, well, I...

LZ: Did you just come to Macalester, was there an application, or did you interview...

SN: Oh! Well, oh yes. There was an application. And...I think it was just one or two pages. It didn't seem to be too difficult. I mean I graduated in the upper third of my class. I was never very high but... And because I graduated in the upper third, I was just sort of automatically accepted.

LZ: Did you have an interview with someone at Macalester, do you remember?

SN: Did I have, you mean an individual interview?

LZ: Yeah I guess. Or did you talk to any professors, or kind of other students before you decided to come to Mac?

SN: Well, I sort of went to Mac on my own because my two best friends went to the U. And, no, I don't remember anybody in particular. Although Harrison gave me more attention than

most, because I was using Beginning Spanish for an extra credit of my language. Oh, and then my econ professor, Professor...oh, what was it. Oh, I can't remember, anybody remember the name of the Professor of Economics? I can't remember. I can see what he looks like and everything, but I just can't remember his name. As I get older—I'm eighty-five—as I get a little bit older, I'm not too very memory-able. Oh, what was it...econ, econ. It'll maybe come to me.

[16:01]

LZ: Do you remember what your first impression of the Macalester campus was at that time, in terms of the physical layout.

SN: Well, I compared it to the U, and I really wasn't too impressed. I mean, it was nice. Let me just say that it was nice, you know. I wasn't too impressed.

[16:17]

LZ: Were there much of the same dorm buildings? Have you really seen...

SN: Oh yeah, Kirk Hall was there. And across Grand Avenue there, all the building were there. Not all of the buildings, but I mean some of the buildings were there. And my wife would be better to talk to about that because she was right on campus, and she really had a good time in Wally Hall.

[16:37]

LZ: Okay, so now you didn't live in a dorm, is that correct? Did you have much experience with kind of your friends who lived in the dorms?

SN: Oh yeah, I had friends in both places. Oh yeah. There wasn't any problem there.

[16:47]

LZ: Do you remember anything kind of about dorm life or I guess this might...

SN: I heard that, what did I hear. Well, there was a lot of late night talking. I don't think there was too much drinking. I really don't. Macalester was pretty strict at that time with liquor. Although I'm sure that a couple of times people had a flask or two, you know, in there. I'm sure of that. But, I really, in dorm life, I really didn't... Oh, I had a lot—John Conrad, and several [friends] like that I had. And Rodney Schmidt was a very good friend of mine. He went to the U after about one year. And...so that was... But then, we had a very, rather an active off-campus, Minneapolis and Saint Paul people. And we partied mostly in Minneapolis. And that was hilarious.

[17:54]

LZ: Are there kind of some campus-wide events. I know, I think at that time there was still Homecoming , and...

SN: Homecoming was very big

LZ: ...a lot of all campus type dances.

SN: Yeah. I went to just about all of them. And the dances—Bev and I like to dance—and so... Though I didn't dance with Beverly, I didn't know her. But I'd go to just about all the dances. And I'd go to the sports games once in a while. I was never too hot—I mean I like sports and everything, but I'm not gung-ho on sports like so many people are. Because I figure that sports, everybody works just as hard, and it's the breaks at the very end that help. And it really doesn't help, but that determines the game. And so, I figure that it's sort of a done deal. With the breaks at the end of the game. Of course, Macalester had a terrible football team. And Bob Carter was in there. And let's see, who were some of the...oh gosh. Bill Gilliland, Bill Gilliland is still a very good friend of mine. He was on there. He was on hockey and football. And...oh gosh. The names just aren't coming to me. But there were several of the guys on there.

[19:07]

LZ: Were sports in general pretty popular on the campus?

SN: Um...well yes, but we lost just about most of the things, you know, so did not encourage anybody to win. But football was particularly bad. Basketball—oh gee there were some really great basketball... Schwartz, Howie Schwartz. Or Schultz. About a six feet-two basketball player who everybody admired. I really should remember more of their names, but maybe they'll come back to me. But they were mostly very, very nice guys.

[19:42]

LZ: I think it was you—you were involved with the Student Christian Fellowship, I noticed when looking through a yearbook. And so...

SN: I wasn't too involved. I mean, I had to put something down, so I did.

[20:00]

LZ: What was religious life kind of like at that time?

SN: Wait a minute, what did you say just before this student life, because that reminded me of something.

LZ: Um...

SN: Oh, religion. Oh, now was that in Central, or was that at the U, or at Macalester. I didn't join too many clubs. And, I know that I did at Central. I joined a religious club at Central. Did I do that here, too? I don't think so. I did at Central because I wanted to have a few more things after my name. And so I did that at Central. I don't think I bothered to do that, well no. I didn't bother to do that at Macalester.

LZ: Oh, okay. What was religious life—I know there was chapel...

SN: Well, we had to go to Macalester on Tuesday, and we had to go to the gymnasium on Thursday. And that was compulsory. And I thought they were a bore. I kind of enjoyed

Tuesdays because they were non-religious. But the Thursday ones, they just got out of sight once in a while. They got pretty way out there.

[21:07]

LZ: Were most students at that time from the local area, and were of kind of Presbyterian background?

SN: I...I think most of the people, well, a lot of them came from Minneapolis. And some came from Saint Paul. I think Macalester had, uh, over fifty percent. Now, that may not be right. I'd say over fifty percent came from either out-state or from other areas.

LZ: So there were...

SN: They didn't push for foreigners like they do now. Like that they did then. If they had somebody from California, that was really great.

[21:49]

LZ: Can you um, talk maybe a little bit about some other student organizations. Maybe not ones that you were necessarily involved...

SN: Well, sports was very good. The guys—with the M Club and everything. And Bill Gilliland was a very good friend of mine. And he always kept me up with the latest happenings in sports. And if you can get him, I know he'd come. He's kind of mad at Macalester right now,

but he gets mad, and he doesn't get so mad. You could get him in an interview. There would be a good interview with sports. Because he has been on the Alumni. In fact, just say that Stewart Nelson recommended him. That'd be a case. But I think he's cooling off. He was very mad, very mad at somebody here. And so, he stopped all...in fact, I think—and he can give money. Not me particularly, but he can give money. Get as much as you can out of him [laughter].

[22:48]

LZ: There was something called the Cosmo, or the Cosmopolitan Club. Do you have any thoughts on that?

SN: This was from '40 to '43.

LZ: ...to '43 you were here. I know, and this might be after you, there was kind of a Political Emphasis Week, and there was a Religion in Life Week...

SN: Oh yeah the Political Emphasis Week. Yeah. I don't think there were too many communists. It was very strong Democrat. And at that time, and I still think it's true, the faculty is very strong Democrat. Not all. I'm basically a Republican.

[23:25]

LZ: You said you started...you started as a business major at Macalester right? So then were most of your classes while you were here business classes?

SN: Well no, I had to take Spanish. And I had to take English. And...oh who was that—Ward. Professor Ward in English. He was marvelous, he was just a marvelous person. There were a lot of marvelous faculty. And so, I had to take—and I don't remember what they called it. They didn't call it English. It was sort of like Writing or something like that. And, so I had him. And Harrison for Spanish. And then I had to take gym under Primrose. One time, when the War was on and everything, he gave special emphasis to the gym first. And I went by the pole you know, and I fell down and hit my knee in such a way, it really hurt my knee and I just suffered. And he pushed me aside and, "You're holding up the group, Nelson." And I had to go to the clinic and they wrapped me up. So I got out of gym for awhile. So that was kind of nice.

LZ: Was that kind of a dreaded thing, was everybody...

SN: No, not really dreaded. Oh, yeah everybody had to take it, but it used to be not too ... You know you could do tennis, or you could other stuff. And...but there we had calisthenics we had to really do.

[24:52]

LZ: Were there other requirements that you had to fulfill? Other than certain classes that everyone absolutely had to take.

SN: I was trying to think. English was required. Oh, I don't know. And language was required. And I think a science was required. And for science... After we became—I took physics, but I was just horrible at physics. Um, let's see. That would be, was that four classes? I think maybe

we had to do four or five classes, I think. That was compulsory. The first year was rather compulsory. Which was fine, you know.

[25:37]

LZ: And were most of your classes then in Old Main, you had said?

SN: Oh yeah. Old Main and then the present—oh not the present library—but the alumni building was the library. And then they had, well Kirk Hall was there, and the gals' dorms over there, across the street. A lot of them were there. And you know, we only had about... Well I don't know what your population—what's your population right now, have any idea?

LZ: I think Macalester sits around like 1800 students.

SN: Oh, is it 1800? Oh it's that big? See, when we went it was between five and seven hundred. Probably about six hundred. So it was considerably smaller. But I enjoyed it. But I... If I compared Macalester to my time in Indy—well, that would never be fair, because one, it was war time—with Indiana University. Or the University of Minnesota. At the University of Minnesota, I had joined a fraternity. And I was there for just, well, enough to graduate. That would be...let's see what that would be. Four, must have been four quarters. Four or five quarters. And I was much more active there. And at Indiana University, we did nothing but our GI stuff all the time. And then we had different classes we had to go to. So it was pretty stressful there. For one, I was entirely out of my sphere when I was doing chemistry and stuff like that, you know. But fortunately, they closed the thing down. And so, I hate to say this, but I

worked—I told my mother, “Never worry about me.” Because in the Service, because at Fort Snelling, because...I’m not the type to go to the front. And I’m not the type to be an MP.

Because physically, I’m not you know, broad enough. At that time I only weighed—well to get into the Reserve you had to weigh 120 pounds, and I weighed only 119. So my doctor told me I had to take all the malted milks and ice cream you can get to get...so that was a nice, really a nice... And what was I going to say? Um, but I...I lost my train of thought. What was that. With... Oh yeah, the pop—I can’t believe that it’s—is it 1800 right now?

LZ: Yeah, a typical class sits around 500, perhaps a little more or a little less.

SN: A class is 500?

LZ: Yeah, I think...

SN: Oh my god. Well I tell you, when I read that dossier on college at Mac, I couldn’t believe how sophisticated that is. I mean, as an outside, you know. I was really impressed. But then I had to think, I suppose all the colleges are doing that. I don’t know, I suppose they are. And my granddaughter was not really...not... Well, I think that the University of Virginia pushed her a little bit. But did she get some other offers? I think she got one other offer out on the East Coast. Wesleyan or something like that. I’m not sure. Because, but then, when she expressed extra interest, well then, Macalester really poured down on her. You know, and gave her... And she’s all excited about going. And she’s coming down—they’re going to stay at our house when

she goes through the first few days. Her whole family is coming down too, so that'll be interesting.

[29:14]

LZ: Given that Macalester was much smaller when you were here, did you find that you knew most of, at least the people that...

SN: Oh yeah, I had a nodding acquaintance with a lot of people. Because we were in class, you know. You'd meet them and everything. And they were nice kids. There were very few blacks at that time. Token blacks, probably. And Japanese. Well, there was Gail, a marvelous woman who was Japanese. And she was, was she on the Board here? Maybe not, but she was a marvelous woman. My wife knew her better than I did, but she was a marvelous person. And, um, she was quite active in politics. She was pretty well known, and then she died suddenly. And that was several years ago. If my wife was here she would remember her name. And I can't remember her name. But she was a very, very fine person. And most—Dr. Turck was a marvelous person. And you know, he would talk to everybody you know. In fact, most of the presidents, well I think that Dr. Turck was the only president that we had the whole time that I was here. And he...he was a gem. Very much so.

[30:30]

LZ: Was he pretty visible on campus, or accessible?

SN: Oh yes.

[30:34]

LZ: One thing I seemed to notice, that Macalester had a lot of kind of vocational courses during the '40s and even the '50s and the nursing...

SN: Oh nursing. Oh yeah, my wife graduated as a med tech.

LZ: About how big was that program?

SN: That was small. I mean, I really shouldn't say because I don't know too much about it. It seems like, well a lot of them know each other and a lot of them still play bridge together.

Beverly has still a club that she plays bridge with. I think almost all of them were med techs.

You know, Audrey Allen, I think that she... We knew Audrey Allen very well. And, oh gosh.

And Dick Dierenfield and his wife, we go out socially with. And, poor Dick though, he's in bad shape. And she's in really bad shape. So that's [unclear] aging. None of us are in very good shape.

[31:30]

LZ: How did you...I don't know if you remember, at least maybe not the exact date, but around the time when Macalester stopped the nursing programs and kind of started to focus more on being a liberal arts college and kind of what...

SN: Oh, I have no—I was never particularly conscious of that. Well, they still have—don't they still have med tech?

LZ: No, I think they have pre-med.

SN: Pre-med or something like that. Well, that type of stuff is gone. So sophisticated nowadays, I can't believe it. And we never heard of such a thing as a computer when we were in school, you know. If anybody did anything like that, it was shorthand, you know, or something on that order. But the computer, this constantly amazes me. And I have a computer. And I keep mine simple, because all these friends of mine that decided to be more sophisticated and get a better and more sophisticated—not one of the darn computers are working. And [unclear] and so Beverly says, "Well we should really update it." Well, ours isn't old. Ours is a '04 I think, or '05. So ours isn't really old, you know. I say, "Listen, for what I want, I can get, and I don't have any trouble with it. So I don't want to..." But she wants a new one. That's a difference of opinion.

[32:51]

LZ: Before we talk a little bit more about World War II and how that kind of played out at Macalester, I was just curious—were there a lot of women students, and I guess even professors at that time, too?

SN: Oh gosh. Well, no, there weren't too many women. Oh, there was Miss Palmer. And then that marvelous one who did—I'm sure all of you remember her name—the one that did

dramatics. In fact, I did *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Yeah, I forgot about that. Yeah, I was the last bachelor to be poisoned. And that was exciting for me, because I—Miss...oh, not Darnburg, but Miss...oh, what's her name. She has—oh come on. She retired not too long ago. And she was so well known. Oh she was funny. She was marvelous. She was quite fat. And she was speech professor.

LZ: Was it Mary Gwen Owen?

SN: Mary Gwen Owen. Yes. She was marvelous. And I can still remember—it was a hot night when we were rehearsing, and she laid down on her belly on the floor, and directed us from the floor. She was a total delight.

LZ: And this was in a speech class, you were...

SN: How did I get into... Yeah, I probably was taking speech. I don't know how else I got. No, I don't think I ever. I was too busy with some of those darn physics and chemistry stuff. And we all had to take English. And, I think I just applied and for some reason or other, I got it.

[34:30]

LZ: Were plays and theater big at that time...

SN: Well, they do what you do now. That was pretty similar. Except it's on a much larger scale now. I think she did just one major play a year. Or one major play per semester, I think. And I happened to get into the one that she did *Arsenic and Old Lace*. So that was a hoot.

[34:52]

LZ: Do you remember about how many classes you were taking during the semester?

SN: Well, I took...what was the minimum? Fifteen credits? Was that the minimum, or twelve credits, I think. Well, I would take between twelve and fifteen.

[35:05]

LZ: And then, was there at that time a January program? I know it's been Interim in the past, and J-term...did you—were you around...

SN: Oh, ah, no. No, no, no, no. We just had two semesters. We didn't have that interim, no. It was just two semesters. And I liked that. At the U, I had the quarterly, and I...because you were constantly having a final. You know, it was awful.

[35:31]

LZ: What types of things did Macalester students generally do during the summer? Did a lot...

SN: Well, I worked on the railroad. Oh gosh. I tell you, lawns was very big. And...gardening things. Well, not gardening so much. But a lot of kids would get a job just like they do now.

You know, at Target—well not Target. Target wasn't there. But I mean, you know. Well there was Bannon's Department Store and Golden Rule Department Store and Emporium. Those were the three major department stores. And a lot of, a lot of...they'd get jobs there. The kids... And then some kids that were mechanical, they'd go to garages. You know, stuff like that. I didn't do that.

[36:15]

LZ: Did most kids work during the school-year in addition to going to class?

SN: Did I do that? Did I? Oh, yes! I had the prime job of everybody. Everybody envied me for my job. I went to Macalester and where they...the employment, and said, "Gee, do you have a job for me for the summer?" And they said—and they looked around and they said, "Well yes we do. Do you live here?" And I said, "Well yes, I do." They said, "There's a person on Woodlawn, they [unclear]"—and I'm not going to identify the person beyond that—"who needs a chauffeur, butler, and gardener." And, so she says, "Go and see them." Well, it was a Jewish outfit. A Jewish family, I should say. A very fine family, but had horrible kids. Horrible kids. And so I started there and I did gardening. And I had to do—mow the lawn, and then I had to go and do—paint a fence. And once in a while, I'd do a little chauffeuring. But she had her car, and he had his car, and so it was fine. And I got along fine. Especially the Mister and Missus. Well, the Mister not so much. They owned a company. And...but the Missus was extremely fine. But the kids were bratty. And so I didn't have too much to do with them. But then when it came time in September, and I was going back to Macalester...they said, "Stewart, I have my car, and my husband has his car," but she says, "We're going to give you a car, so that you can

haul the children around.” But she says, “I want you to be strict with the children. I don’t want you to give them favors. But just take them to their private schools, and take them home again.” I says, “Oh!” You know, I could hardly believe it. I mean, at Macalester at that time, anybody who had a car had special status. Well, I tell you, when the guys heard that, you know, they all were my best friends. Because they wanted to loan the car, and I said no. No. And so...but then when it happened a little bit further in line—this is good. I mean I don’t know if you want to listen to this or not, but this is good. I...let’s see now. So when it came time for going back to school, I picked one up—her up at Summit School and picked him up at Saint Paul’s Academy, and everything fine. And the guys said, “Oh Stu, will you take me here and you take me there.” And I said, “No, this car can only... And she says we don’t want this old car. This is a 1940, and mine was a 1937 Chevy. So in most...it was not old at all. And I had to park it at my house ‘cause she did not want the car around her house. And so, one day, when I came back, and I stopped and picked up that darn girl, I was just driving, you know. And she came along, and she threw her knitting stuff around my neck and started to pull. And I...my god, I’m choking. And I said, “Cut that out!” She says, “I’m mad at you, you won’t do this, you won’t do that.” I said, “You get that darn thing away from me.” And I pushed the darn thing away. I said, “I’m going to tell your mother.” And she said, “Don’t you dare.” I said, “I’m telling your mother.” Well, I was really mad, because my life—I had to stop right in front of St. Thomas College and wrestle to get the darn knitting yarn off my neck. And so I told her, and so...boy, she really got it. She really—and she deserved it, she deserved every bit of it. Well, the story got around to everybody around, you know. And so then, when I...when I was working, this one guy came up to me. He said, “Stewart, if you ever need a substitute, I’d be glad.” And his name—oh, he was a nice kid. He was going into chemistry. Then I had this one kid—he was kind of loud and kind of wild,

and he was part-Indian. Oh, what was his name. Well, anyway, so I didn't want him. So I took the other guy to be my assistant. The other guy didn't like it very well. But then—I think his name is Goldwin [unclear?] and he says, "I'm just getting too busy, I can't do it anymore." I got desperate, so one day, I asked this Indian. And so...he really was very nice to the girl. And she really liked him. And I thought, "My gosh." She says, "I don't want you anymore." She says, "I want..." And I said, "Well I am the boss and I'm going to [unclear]." So I told her, I told the mother, because I didn't like that at all. So she says, "Get rid of him right away." So I did. And by that time I was working it so that I could handle the job of chauffeur, butler, and gardener. You know, I did butler-ing too. It was kind of fun. But anyway—so...then I'm going to just end this. But I want to say one more thing. When we had three children, and we were going down to Chicago, and I said, "My gosh, we're going to stop..."—oh, that big, big...place in Chicago on [Interstate] 94. Oh, I mean, oh god, it's huge. A place where they have roller coasters and drives, and all that kind of...you know, these trucks that go in water and everything else. So, as we drove to Wisconsin Dells, I said, "My gosh, I know an Indian." And I said, "Would you kids like to see an Indian?" Oh, did they ever like the job. And I knew the kid by that time, I mean the guy that was kicked off of my job. And so, I went to ask for so-and-so, and I gave his regular English name. And they go, "Oh, he's over in the tent over there." So I went over there, and there he was. And he was—I says, "My gosh," and he's all, "Stu...". We were so glad to see each other, you know, that was a lot of fun. And my kids, oh! Grandpa, no my dad, knows an Indian chief. Oh, I'm telling you, I was just on top of the world. So we had a real nice time with him. And he was sitting there in his teepee. Oh! I mean, oyi-yi-yi, I mean, that was so ridiculous. And so we had such a good time. Oh, my kids, oh. "Daddy knows an Indian chief." Well, I tell you, I just... Out in the neighborhood, I had special recognition because of that.

That was just so hilarious, I just enjoyed that so much. But anyway, so then I had to leave that job in the Fall. Now did I go back a second year? I wonder if I didn't go back a second year. No, because I had to go into the Service.

[43:25]

LZ: Did you find that a lot of Macalester men went to World War II or served in some capacity?

SN: Oh yeah. I have the names here if you want to have them. When we had the six guys that went in to Fort Snelling, I had—did you get them all? John Conrad, he ended up out West. I never saw him, but Dick Dierenfield I think saw him. So he knows him. And then Dick Dierenfield we see every once in a while. In fact we saw him, well at the Golden [Scots]—in fact we had lunch with him, and his wife. And then Jerry—oh, Jerry Timberlake and Bob Andersen. Jerry Timberlake was going to be a minister. An extremely fine person. He was a leader and everything. When he went to our place, I just stayed as a buck private. He became an acting corporal right away. I knew he would, because he was just so...such a good person. He was going to be a minister. And, so...but he went overseas when we had the six months that we were in quarantine. He went overseas and was killed. And when Bob Andersen was overseas, and... So when I went—Bev and I travel a lot—and when we were in France we went to the World War II memorial in France. And when I was there, I went and asked the party there, the lady who was conducting it. I says, “You know, I know two guys that came over here.” I says, “If they are buried here, I really want to see their graves.” And she says, “Well, what are their names?” I gave their names, and then they wanted to know what state they were from, and they were both from Minnesota. She found their, both their names. And they both were killed in the

war, and they both were buried in Belgium. So I couldn't see either one. But I thought, "Isn't that something, that you could do that, you know?" If you have a minute, I'm going to tell you a little bit about being at that place. I mean, I was in World War II. Of course, I kid everybody, because I tried to stall as much as I could—not to go to the front. And I ended up as a G.I. with counterintelligence. In the front. But just the last six days of the war, hooray. So anyway that worked out good. But anyway...oh yeah. This—I give talks to old people. And I have four talks I give. I give: our favorite places in the world; number two, favorite places in the world; number three, my life in the service; and number four, my life, as—when I got right out of the service, right out of, graduated right from Macalester, before I went into the service—I worked at a radio station, and I did radio work. So I have those four talks. And...but this is, I think really outstanding. When we were at the Memorial for the World War II vets, we were a big group. We went with a tour group of about forty, or forty-eight people, I think. And we stopped at different places. But one place we stopped was there. And so we took the tour of the—and of course there were all white crosses all around. And the place is this great big monument. If you ever get to that, just on your own, go there. It's marvelous. But anyway, they said, "Is there anybody here who...who has any relatives or friends who are buried here?" And this one couple said, "Well we do." And she says, "Would you like to see your cross? The cross at the burial?" And he says, "Oh yes, we would." So she says, "You wait a minute." So she went back. And no, at this time it was a man that did it. So he went back and got a Jeep, all colored white. And he came up and drove, and says, "Would you like please ride [with] me?" And it's just, it's just a millennium of crosses. And so he...he did the... He parked in front, and when he got out, he went away from any, and he came back with two little pails. And he put them in the Jeep. And so he asked this couple if they'd come with him. Well luckily, he didn't have to go too far,

because we could see them. So they drove up to—it was just sort of a slanting hill up—and he went right up to about the top of the hill. And so the three of them got out, and they did something there and everything and I didn't know. When they came back, I had to ask them—I said, “What in the world did they do? What do they do with the pail? The pails?” And they said, “Well, when we got there, it was cut out in white.” I mean, it was cut out, you know, the name—and I don't remember the name. And they said, “Here's this name.” And they were very thrilled to see that. I think it was an uncle or somebody not too close. And he says, “Would you like to have your picture taken?” Because he had brought a Polaroid camera with him. He says, “Well yes, I would.” So he took one pail and put water all over it. And the next pail had sand. He put sand in the name and then brushed it off and you could see the name. Isn't that marvelous? And so, anyway... They went and took a picture of it. And they had it. And I thought that was marvelous.

[48:55]

LZ: Did you see—I guess you would've been gone—but do you know if the War, how that changed Macalester campus in any way?

SN: Well, it was very sparse. Very spartan, you know. Everybody was worried about the War, and they came and they went. I didn't have too much to do with that. The War was December 7th, and then I went April. Well no, I went, I went March 25th. And I came back February 12th, in '46. And I say that's the day they freed the slaves. That's Lincoln's birthday. But anyway.

LZ: So when you came back from the War, you, you were no longer at Macalester, you just went right to the U of M?

SN: Yeah, that's right.

LZ: And then, what year did you graduate from the University of Minnesota, do you know?

SN: '47. I was there for about nine months. I was there from '46 to '47. I joined a fraternity.

LZ: Have you found that you've been able to keep in touch with a lot of either faculty or at least students that you...

SN: None faculty. My wife maybe had a couple from faculty, but I didn't. Although Harrison, I... Harris or Harrison? But anyway. Well, yeah, Dick Dierenfield, we socialize with him. And, that's [unclear]. If you know, Audrey Allen, she's pretty active in alumni stuff. Beverly associates with her. And, so...she has more friends from Macalester than I do. Of course, she was there for four years, and I was here two years.

LZ: You said that you worked, or you have worked in the Alumni Office for a few years.

SN: With Carol Polk.

LZ: Okay, and what kind of work were you doing there?

SN: Well, I just did alumni stuff—folding envelopes. You know, nothing exciting. And I could work the computer, but the girl—you know they have a lot of foreigners. Which I kind of enjoy, because I'm sitting here you know, just folding papers and putting them in envelopes or something like that, and they come in and do this sophisticated stuff on the—and they're almost all foreigners. And I love that, because I can talk to them and most of them talk pretty good English. And so I always ask what country they're from, and then how they like the United States. And most of them like it. And most are so smart. I don't think I could get into Macalester now—they're too smart.

[51:25]

LZ: What is it like for you when you've gone back to alumni that are...

SN: Well, we enjoy it because we come back in May for the Golden...for the Golden Scots honorary. There we see a lot of people we know. I quit one year ago working here at Macalester, so I haven't been there now for over a year. But then I saw Carol Polk last reunion. She said we should maybe be getting together, so, I don't know if she wants me to come back there. I'd be glad to because I'm not that busy anymore. But...I— Well, we're constantly in touch. And we like to get the stuff, the things from Macalester, because if they do plays—and your plays are marvelous. And, if we can go before, or the final dress rehearsal or whatever it is where you get in for nothing.

LZ: So you do try and come back and go to kind of campus-wide plays or things like that.

SN: Oh yes. Oh yes. Well see, she graduated from here. And I have [unclear] mutual friends from there, you know.

[52:40]

LZ: When you come back to campus, you kind of look back at it, what are some of the very huge differences before—between 1940 and now?

SN: Oh well, before, well before it was much more strict. And much more conservative. And now it's almost too liberal, I think. And so that's—I mean, from strict conservatism to not ultra-liberal, but middle liberal. I think most colleges are that way. We have friends from St. Thomas, and we know some people from Hamline, and so, you know. We have a large group of friends.

LZ: Were you around the area in the '60s and '70s, when Macalester was kind of involved with not only Vietnam War protests, but—

SN: '60s and '70s, yeah, I just read about it, you know. And I didn't approve of a lot of the things, but I...you know. It's college kids.

LZ: Do you still feel like Macalester is a college that you can relate to as you...

SN: Well now I will, because I have a granddaughter who is going here. Well yeah, we've always liked it. And Beverly has been more, more...faithful than I have. Although we both love the plays. Once in a great while we'll go to a sports event. But, now that—well they had given up hockey many years ago—we haven't been too active in that.

[54:14]

LZ: Well, on a kind of closing note, do you have a favorite memory, or kind of something that really stands out in your mind concerning Macalester?

SN: Well, I always thought that the people at Macalester were very fine people. And...I really um, I enjoyed Macalester. I was never—I enjoyed the U more. Although I was at Macalester for two and a half years, and at the U for just over a year. But then I joined a fraternity, you know, so that would be an influence. And I still have friends from the fraternity. But the University of Minnesota is very fine. We had to go back and forth on the streetcar to go there, and I could walk here. But it was free, because it was on the G.I. Bill. So that was a big factor.

LZ: That definitely would help...

[55:10]

LZ: Well, those are all my questions. Is there anything that you would like to add that we haven't covered already?

SN: Well, we had some rather wild parties that I'm not going to talk about. [laughter] And they were always in... Maybe I will tell you this one thing. I had this one girl who I really didn't care for, but she asked me to a party. And everything about her, I disliked. She had bulging eyes and was not good looking, and that's mild... But anyway, she really liked me. And so I didn't get very drunk that one night. I don't know if I should tell you this. I mean it's not dirty, but I just... But anyway, she got quite drunk and...it was a [unclear] party. Elizabeth Perry, I think she gave it, I don't know. She only went one year. But anyway, on the way home—we had friends that drove—and she and I were sitting in the backseat. And there was a boy and a girl in the front seat, and in the back it was me, and her, and I can't remember if it was a boy or a girl sitting on the other side of me. But I was not—I wasn't too drunk, but she was quite drunk. And she says, “You know Stewart, I have to go to the bathroom.” I says, “Well you know, I do too. I have to go to the bathroom.” And she says, “I have to go to the bathroom really bad.” And I says, “I have to go to the bathroom really bad.” So we're going along Minnehaha Parkway about two o'clock in the morning. So I says, “Stop the car, we got to go to the bathroom!” So we're at Minnehaha Parkway, right in the heart of Minneapolis. She went behind one bush—and we had two bushes—I went behind the other bush. I still think that was so funny. Then I dumped her! Oh, she was an obnoxious girl. She made me...no, I dumped her. She was so homely. Oh dear. Well, we have a big deal going at twelve.

LZ: Alright, well thank you very much. This was fun to hear about Macalester.

SN: Well, I don't know if I did any good or not.

[End of interview 57:15]