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Donn L. Smith oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, July 24, 1985

Donn L. Smith (Interviewee)

Nancy A. Hewitt (Interviewer)

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DR. DONN SMITH

Hewitt: I am speaking this afternoon with Dr. Donn Smith, Professor of Medicine at the University of South Florida, as part of the Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. Could you tell me first of all Dr. Smith, what was your first contact with the University of South Florida and what made you decide to come here?

Smith: My first contact was with the Search Committee looking for a founding dean for the medical school and the medical center. I was interviewed by a group of people from the University, from the local medical community, and the Chancellor of the University System. Although I was scheduled to go and start a new medical school in Houston, I hadn't signed up yet, and I was so impressed with both the Chancellor and the President of the University, that I thought this is where I would rather go. I found Chancellor Mautz and President Allen to be extremely fine people, very impressive, and that was really the reason I decided to come. Well, first they asked me to come, of course. Having been asked and having spent some time with President Allen and Chancellor Mautz I found that this would be a very good place to be.

Hewitt: Now, what year did you actually arrive at USF?

Smith: I arrived on the scene in 1969 and opened my office the first of January, 1970.

Hewitt: And were there plans for the medical school already in the works, or were you part of that planning stage?

Smith: There had been some planning done but it had been turned down by the NIH Facilities Committee of which I was a member. The curriculum that someone

had designed had not been approved for provisional accreditation by the crediting committee so not only was everything at zero position, but we were at the bottom of a pretty big hill because once you've been turned down, you know, it creates an unfortunate image around the countryside. However, having just built a medical center in Louisville, I guess they thought maybe I could get around that. I also liked Tampa very much when I came here. It looked like a great place to live compared to Houston. But between the people and the opportunity, that was my first contact. It didn't take long for things to get under way.

Hewitt: Now were you working with legislatures and political groups?

Smith: We worked with the federal granting agencies, facilities construction, and other agencies to get enough money to build the place. This requires a substantial amount of time and effort in Washington at the NIH, who were running their manpower, considerable amount of time and effort at the legislative level in Tallahassee, and a good deal of time with the local people who ran Tampa General Hospital, who at that time were county commissioners, the City Council and practically everybody who had some interest in the University. We spent a lot of time with all adversaries.

Hewitt: How did you get those groups to sort of turn around in terms of their willingness to get a medical school here.

Smith: In the first place, I had come from a very successful operation in Louisville, and we had gotten a new medical center funded with federal funds. I had served on the facilities construction studies section so these people knew me and I had some credibility in those areas. I was a major part and of course the Congressman, Mr. Gibbons, was extremely helpful. The

Assistant Secretary of Health Education and Welfare was a personal friend of mine. We had known each other and been deans together from times gone by. So I had a substantial number of connections. I think the University and the Chancellor took a big flying gamble because they didn't know me. All they knew is what people said about me. I think they took a substantial gamble. I probably took a substantial gamble in coming, too, because I had a very solid position at Louisville. But I suppose the main thing was only about 35 or 40 people have had a chance to start a new medical school in this century. So it was a great opportunity not to be taken lightly. Because I've had substantial experience with good people, I had a certain amount of credibility here and there and the other place. Then we had to create legislative credibility in Florida because they already had a medical school which was felt by many to be enough for the state. They were not terribly interested in it. In any case, thanks to Mr. Doe, who was a speaker, and Mr. Sessums, who was the speaker of the House of Representatives, Senator Childs, who at that time was the Chairman of one of the Appropriating Committees, I believe in the Senate, and Governor Graham was in Senate at that time also. So what I did was make up a ten year projection of what it was going to cost to do this year by year. I just took it up there and showed it to them, and said this is what I think it is going to cost, and if you don't think you can afford this, now is the time to say because once we get underway you've committed yourself. They studied that projection and found it to be alright, and we lived with it every year, never exceeded it, occasionally gave them some money back, and developed a substantial amount of credibility at the legislative level which was important for the funding of the operations. It was a very interesting time.

Hewitt: Were there faculty and staff over here when you arrived? How did you go about recruiting faculty to a college that didn't exist yet?

Smith: Among my other duties I served on accreditation committees, and I chaired a great number of them, so I knew many people all over the country. Since I knew all these people I started putting out the word, and things just sort of fell in place.

Hewitt: That's great.

Smith: Oh, it was fine. But of course all these people took a big chance coming here. Now I didn't take much of a chance because I've been a dean for 13 years, and I didn't care if I was a dean much longer. The professors I brought here all came from tenured, very stable positions at well known universities like Indiana, Nebraska, Cornell, John Hopkins, all over the country. These were very brave people who came here as senior type-faculty. They took a tremendous chance. And they recruited a bunch of young guys who just started out and who took no chance at all because there was a lot of unemployment in the junior ranks of Ph.D.s and so forth. So the recruitment was not that difficult. A lot of people thought it was a very fascinating thing in the way we were setting it up. A young University, probably the youngest University ever to undertake a medical center. In 1970 the University was 10 years old. It was a very young University to start. That was my major concern because the medical school, I don't care how you do it and how you fix it, is never going to be better than the parent university. I don't know many exceptions to this. So here is a young University, really a baby among universities, being undertaken and it was a real task. The new medical school is almost always a political exercise. The university rarely

has much to do with it. It is generally the local medical community who feel we ought to have a medical school. Tampa was one of the last major metropolitan areas without a medical school incidentally. One of the very few.

Hewitt: How involved were local physicians in trying to get the medical school off the ground or providing . . . ?

Smith: Well apparently they had been very active in it before I ever got here. When I was interviewed I think there were two or three local physicians on that committee. There were no doctors in the medical school, of course. There were a couple of people from the University, but there were three physicians from the local medical community.

Hewitt: So they met you right at the beginning?

Smith: They did indeed. Very nice people.

Hewitt: Do you know if there was any concern on what is now called the other side of campus, over at the Social Sciences and Arts and Letters, about putting funding into a medical school?

Smith: Tremendous amount of concern and alot of intellectual impairments you might say because the poor old faculty members, not knowing how these things worked, simply thought we were going to get part of the University appropriations which was not true. This was set up as a special unit, and we went and presented our budget separately. I would go present my budget to the Chancellor directly and then to the Legislative Appropriations Committee, directly, separately, and independently. But initially they thought we would be their ruination. And there was alot of difficulty.

Fortunately I was the only one around, and they didn't bother me much. The initial faculty felt it pretty badly because we were spaced over in the graduate building over there, and there was some resentment about taking up that space. But it all sort of smoothed out over a period of time. Then the next phase they found out for sure that we weren't using their budget, but they also discovered the asset value of this place and then the rush was to get a piece of the asset. Everybody wanted to teach in the medical school. In retrospect it wasn't that bad. It just seemed like it at the time.

Hewitt: A little change in direction I guess.

Smith: Well, that's not unusual. Most university medical schools are not greatly beloved. There are a variety of reasons. In Colorado we were 40 miles to the University and practically had no contact at all. We were in Denver and the University was in Boulder. In Louisville the medical school was downtown, and the University was out on the edge of town, and the medical school was some 50 years older than the University. An entirely different situation. Here you have a new university and a bunch of faculty people who I'm sure took some risk to come here. With a real gentleman and a scholar for a president, but gentlemen and scholars sometimes have tough times with these things because they are nice people. But it was not a big tragedy. It was a little uncomfortable at first.

Hewitt: What are the advantages to having the medical school right on the University campus?

Smith: Tremendous advantage. In all fairness, there was a lot of pressure to have this medical school down on Davis Island.

Hewitt: Oh really?

Smith: Oh indeed! And various people were giving us property. For example, we were offered a big white building on Bayshore which is now a condominium. These were all representative of substantial tax benefits. We were offered that funny little narrow building down on Davis Island. But I felt very strongly, and fortunately the President and the Chancellor agreed with me that the only place for a medical school was on the campus. Now it takes a while for the benefits there to become apparent, but they are now becoming apparent. We're now getting good cross fertilization with other people in the University setting. We've benefited by being at the University, I don't doubt about it. When you're away from the campus you develop a sort of a separatism which is not healthy. I've been in that situation twice, and so I was firmly determined to have it on the campus. Fortunately the Chancellor and the President felt the same way. At least they weren't going to argue about it. So they put it on the campus, and I think that is the place for it.

Hewitt: Now there have been a lot of new additions. I've only been at USF for four years, and in that four years there have been a lot of additions to the medical complex. When you developed this medical school originally, what kind of programs did you foresee, initially? Were there special programs that you wanted to institute?

Smith: No. This was the last classically formed medical school to come into existence. Everyone since has been a so called community medical school with strange structures and different objectives; but our objectives, as you see here, were just classical in terms of medical education. We designed no

special program of any significance because you have to be very careful when you're starting something not to over extend it. You will get a bunch of real weak programs out of it, you know you get laughed off and you can't compete. So this was a tightly-held, highly-centralized, classically-formatted medical school with clinical departments, basic science departments, and so forth. And a classical mode of medical education as it was at that time. So we didn't plan anything that you wouldn't have at a good classical medical school.

Hewitt: And did you see that as a way of reassuring the legislature, the president . . . ?

Smith: No, the legislature didn't know a good medical school from a bad one. No reason why they should. They never went to a medical school. This was probably the product of my substantial number of years in medical education, working at good places for good people and, of course, I inherited certain biases and so forth. For beginners, for openers, I thought the first ten years ought to be in a very classical mode. And after ten years when the roots are down a little bit, you can start branching out as we are doing now. We are about to have a hospital you see. The first ten years the objectives were pretty closely held.

Hewitt: Now after you actually got off the ground under President Allen, fairly soon after that he would retire and there would be an interim president and then Cecil Mackey, the second permanent President. Did those kind of administrative changes have an effect on the development of the medical school?

Smith: We just went ahead our own way. The only badge you have is that nobody around understands the problem. So if they impede you, they do so deliberately and with malice a forethought. I was very fortunate. Both presidents and our own President Mackey, in essence, said go ahead and if you hang yourself it's been nice knowing you. Well, I had free hand, I really did, in both cases. I had a very, excellent personal relationship with both people. Both were very supportive of the medical school. I think both of them could foresee that it was going to be a useful, valuable part of the University eventually. In any case, I never had a cross word with either one of them.

Hewitt: That must be delightful to remember back on. I don't know how many other people at the University could say that.

Smith: I never bothered either one of the them, unless I had something that . . . Number one, I thought they had an oath for their own safety and, number two, I was doing something. Either they should say "ok" or tell me not to do it. Other than that I never bothered them. I think they appreciated it. They had people in their office all the time complaining, crying, and having problems. It was on the basis that if I needed help or I thought they would be vulnerable if they didn't know something, then they would contact. But I reported directly to the President in both cases. Very pleasant relationship.

Hewitt: Now when did the actual medical school open and the first class arrive?

Smith: September 1971.

Hewitt: Was there any kind of ground breaking ceremony or opening ceremonies, or did you just start classes?

Smith: Just started. I got something else I'll give you if you promise to give it back. Just to give you some more background on the charter class in the very early days. But you have to swear on a stack of bibles that you are going to give it back to me. Because there are not very many of these around.

Hewitt: I've never seen one of these. I've been trying to look at various parts of the early catalogue.

Smith: As a historian you'll find that interesting. It has all the charter classes in there. We had a nice little paper by one of our women students who was among the first students and a nice little statement by several students and so on. That's our tenth anniversary.

Hewitt: How did you go about recruiting students?

Smith: Well, we just put the word out quietly that we were going to take students, and we sent out applications the first of July. Now in the state of Florida at that time, Gainesville had taken about 85 people, Miami were taking about 100, and so 185 people got to go this year. Do you know how many people wanted to go at that time? -- 1,100. That was the basic reason for starting this medical school. It was an effort to expand the opportunities for the youngsters of this state. A few fortunate 30 or 40 wealthy, affluent, fortunate, bright kids got to go out of the state to private schools and 100 and some odd got to go in the state out of 1,100. So you know we had maybe 900 pretty able students of whom 600 were competitive. No place to go and no chance. I think people in the legislature understood this and realized the state was growing like crazy. They simply had to expand that particular

opportunity. They had law schools all over the place and so forth. So that was the basis for it. So we let it be known that we were in business. We got 440 applicants for 24 spaces. That's one out of every twenty. It would have been 1100 if people had known about it. I don't think anybody felt we could get off the ground that quickly. But the fact was, because of the delay, this school was chartered in 1965. So five years went by with no productive activity and the word was to get it off the ground and forget it. We took a class of 24 and it was pretty clear if we didn't do good, those 24 would simply be transferred elsewhere. So we were on thin wire for the first couple years, but we had lovely, able students. We had their tenth reunion last month.

Hewitt: That must have been exciting.

Smith: We had a lovely time. The kids looked so good. They came from coast to coast. Most of them showed up, most of the 24. So we had 24 very able, nice, bright people. As a matter of fact the first person admitted was Carolyn Setcher, a young lady who was a native of Florida. She got her application in first. I think she was standing at the door waiting when we opened the office. So there really wasn't very much trouble finding 24 able students because there was 900 not getting to go anyway.

Hewitt: Were there any unexpected problems or issues that arose after the students actually got here and started?

Smith: No. I always ran a student-oriented school. I carried a full teaching load all the time while I was Dean. So I knew all the students. I did the same in Louisville. I had 500 of them over there and knew them all, so 24 was no big problem. All the time I met with the class presidents frequently. If

we had two classes, I met with both of them. So I kept pretty close contact with the students. My door was always open. They knew they could walk in anytime. The girl (the secretary/receptionist) had instructions to let them in no matter what. So we had absolutely no difficulty with students. They designed an honor code which President Mackey, as an attorney, thought it was unconstitutional, restrictive, and otherwise. It was a severe honor code. They took it seriously as they should. So they had an honor code, and they came around. As soon as we got this building open it was nice and everything, and then we had three classes by then. They came around, and they got all the secretaries and everyone to sign a petition not to sell cigarettes in the medical center anymore. That was the first confrontation I really had with them after three years. So we said fine, we understand, that's smart. We won't sell cigarettes and never have since. They were part of the school. It was a unique experience for most of us. I had never been in situation where I had less than 85 in a class. Here we are with 24, and I knew each and every one of them. All sitting in each others lap. It is sort of interesting. I am going to show you something. You'll get a big kick out of this. Here is the charter class. First day of school and here is the charter faculty who were there to meet them. It was about one to one.

Hewitt: And some of them don't look that much different in age, either.

Smith: Oh no. We came to the reunion and they looked just almost like they always did.

Hewitt: That's great. What did you have, three or four women in the charter class?

Smith: Oh yes. We are running almost 30% women now. By 1990 it will be half women.

Hewitt: Now how many students in a class now?

Smith: 96.

Hewitt: 96. So you tripled? Quadrupled?

Smith: That was our target. That was what the school was built for, exactly 96 students. No more, no less. And we were criticized for this because Miami went to 135 and Gainseville went to 125. We hung in there pretty tough, and now we have an excess of physicians and everybody is going to have to cut back. We are not! Plus the fact if you pick the numbers over a period of time and collect the experiences budget wise and so forth, 96 is a very cost effective number for a class of medical students. Most cost effective way of doing it with the appropriate educational experience. Now you go to medical school with 250 kids in a freshmen class and I don't know what kind of educational experience those kids are getting. But 96 you can have it, both cost wise and educational.

Hewitt: And you planned on it and now . . .

Smith: Well we programmed this whole place. We projected the faculty at 175 after ten years. Student body at 96 per class. So many secretaries. We even programmed the parking spaces. That is the only place we can say there is no problem about parking.

Hewitt: I even found one out here. It was illegal.

- Smith: Now we are building this hospital. We programmed parking spaces for that too. Great big lot out here. We programmed everything.
- Hewitt: Now once this school was actually functioning and there were students here, what kind of contacts did the medical center have with hospitals and clinics in the community?
- Smith: Well we were entirely and substantially affiliated with Tampa General. We built our own clinic.
- Hewitt: Yes, I have been there actually.
- Smith: We had a cross working relationship with Tampa General. They built this VA hospital for us. They even put the skin on it to match the medical school. Talk about a major victory. Most of them are red brick you know. With Mr. Gibbons help we got the skin on this one.
- Hewitt: Mrs. Allen who I interviewed yesterday, was actually telling me that they had to battle the legislature to get this color brick to the main campus. They said they wanted it to be red brick.
- Smith: Yes, I know. Everybody is in favor of red brick, but it's such a beautiful campus, and we would have done anything. The cancer hospital we decided not to be buff brick, but we would harmonize it cast stone, and it harmonizes very nicely along with the Shriners and the rest of it. The VA hospital was built for our benefit. 720 beds and we do major teaching in the VA hospital.
- Hewitt: Now are there any other hospitals or clinics in the community that are part of the teaching program?

Smith: Yes. We do some work over at the University Community, and we have students involved in this Judeo-Christian Clinic for the Elderly. We have people in St. Petersburg at All Childrens and Bayfront.

Hewitt: So it is pretty extensive?

Smith: It's pretty extensive considering we have only 96 students.

Hewitt: How were the decisions made as to what kind of new buildings and new programs to add on, like the Cancer Center?

Smith: I don't know. The Cancer Center is a specific case. It is an unusual thing. This is applied to one person, Mr. Lee Moffit. For a long time there were only two people who ever thought that it would happen, myself and Mr. Moffit. So I went ahead and planned it. No money, no nothing. So when we did get funded, bang, we're in business out there, and it's about to be finished. We are two years . . . Mr. Moffit and I thought that would never happen.

Hewitt: And was that something you and Lee Moffit wanted to build out of a feeling that there was a need for it in this community or a need for research in this area?

Smith: No, I think Mr. Moffit had some experience with cancer and was deeply involved and interested in it. I was only interested in expanding the medical center. I didn't care what kind of hospital it was. But they had some problems, and my successor had tried to build a hospital and the governor vetoed it. The reason he vetoed it was because it wasn't purported to be, it purported to be a cancer hospital, and you could tell by looking at the design it was something else. I had nothing to do with that of

course. So Mr. Moffit somehow got them to tell me to ask if I would do this. I said yes. So I went to M.D. Anderson in Houston and became acquainted with Dr. Clark who founded and built that place. He started with nothing. And I sought his advice and counsel, and I brought him up and he and I had a meeting with the governor. The governor took my word that this would indeed be a cancer hospital. Having made that commitment, the next thing was to design it as a world class cancer center. And we won two really significant design awards for progressive architecture and the American Institute of Architect's Design Award. It was the only time in the thirty year history in progressive architecture that a hospital ever won an award and only the third or fourth time anyone in the south ever won it. So we felt very good. We went to the Plaza Hotel in New York, and they put on a big thing. There were 5400 entries and 14 winners. So that was the best national exposure that this University ever got. Everybody who was anybody in architecture attended that thing. There were 1800 or 1900 of the countries most prominent architects all whom entered. We have designed it as a world class cancer center, and it will be the only world class cancer center between Miami and New York and Indiana and Houston. It's really a beauty.

Hewitt: When is that projected to open?

Smith: We'll be out there in November. They have given a managerial contract to HCA to run it, and I'm not involved in that. It has to have an inspection by HRS which can take anywhere from one month to a year depending on how much they find wrong with it. Shands they held up for one year.

Hewitt: Now is Shands the . . .

Smith: Shands is the University Hospital in Gainesville.

Hewitt: Oh, I see.

Smith: They are building a new university hospital. My function will end the day the contractors leave because all I did was help them to design and supervise the construction.

Hewitt: Will that be part of the teaching program at USF?

Smith: Oh sure. The College of Nursing and Medicine will both have educational exercises in there, there is no doubt about it.

Hewitt: Now I know that you have already been asked some of these questions this morning, but you could you tell me a little bit about the founding of the Nursing College?

Smith: I don't know much about it. They had a dean here, but she was not well. Shortly after I arrived she resigned, and I had the great, ungodly good fortune to recruit Dr. MacDonald.

Hewitt: She is the present dean?

Smith: Yes. So the day she arrived I quit worrying about the Nursing College. She had done everything. Everything was done properly for the nursing school. All I ever did was support her, budget wise and so forth. Whatever she asked for I gave her. She is absolutely superb. I had known her before at Michigan State. She was from Miami so I got my tentacles out. I was very fortunate to have talked her into coming.

Hewitt: Now did the College of Nursing open at the same time as did the College of Medicine?

Smith: No, I think they opened a year later. They graduated their first class in 1975. They had no place to put them. We had to buy a bunch of trailers to set them up outside the Science Building.

Hewitt: Now how much of the actual medical center was built when the medical school opened?

Smith: None.

Hewitt: None?

Smith: Unique. A standard procedure is to build the facility, hire a faculty, and tell students to come here. Here we had the fun of doing it all at once. We got the students admitted, we recruited the faculty, and we built the facility all simultaneously. It was pretty exciting. But it was the only way to go, we were in a hurry. It had been delayed long enough, so we elected to go ahead; we were temporary and what not.

Hewitt: How long did it take to actually get the buildings completed that are now part of the medical center?

Smith: The Governor came down and dedicated this whole thing in 1976, which was about six months after it was finished. So he came in January of '76. He could have come in July of '75.

Hewitt: So you were already moved in by that time?

Smith: We also did that simultaneously. We built this phase, and long before it was finished we funded and started the next phase and tied it in. So we

were living, and this was my original office, in this place before the other half was done.

Hewitt: Now were there other buildings besides the Cancer Center that had been added on since that time? Are there plans for other centers?

Smith: They are going to build a psychiatric hospital on the corner of Fletcher. The Shriners, of course, is the . . . now that psychiatric hospital is going to be owned by HCA. That is a private enterprise. It won't belong to the University. This one does. Shriners is a separate, private operation. And they are struggling very hard to raise funds for an eye institute, and they would like to build a children's hospital.

Hewitt: It's a good thing that there is a lot of land here.

Smith: Yes, well, they are going to learn like everybody is learning around the country that it is easy to run out of land, and we should be a little careful on how to use it. That is not my problem although I did have the good fortune to tell the President that he should be building the parking garage right now. If he started tomorrow morning, he might escape the net, otherwise he'll be in a hell of a fix. In any case those are the projections: an eye research center, a children's hospital and that just about rounds it out for the moment.

Hewitt: Now was the Psychiatry Department part of the hospital planning or the medical center planning originally?

Smith: Oh yes. It was one of the original departments. We have always had the Department of Psychiatry from day one.

Hewitt: Now has there been much connection between that department and the Department of Psychology over on the other side of campus or are those . . .

Smith: Yes, they operated back and forth. They operated with Psychology, and they have contacts with Sociology. About half the faculty up there are Ph.D sociologists or whatever, psychologists of one kind or another.

Hewitt: Are there any other linkages between the medical center and other colleges on campus?

Smith: Yes, we have substantial linkage with College of Natural Sciences, Chemistry, and various things like that. We've had some contact with the College of Engineering, but that's minimal. Some contact with Physics, also minimal. Of course, we have been using the computer center like everybody else.

Hewitt: Is the new College of Public Health connected at all to the Medical Center?

Smith: No.

Hewitt: So that was a separate entity.

Smith: A separate college, just like Education and Engineering and so forth. There will have to be some changes there eventually, but it's new too. It has a very small program and a very small faculty, but as it grows, there will be some kind of hook up, I'm sure.

Hewitt: Now let me ask you, I know its hard since you've been involved in alot of different things here, but when you look back over your years at USF, what would you say have been the most important developments, either positive or

negative ones, the things you've see as most important in terms of the medical center?

Smith: You know the times have gone by so fast, and everything connected with survival was so important, it's very hard to pick out one certain thing. I really can't answer that. It has all been a very fast lane, sort of level proposition. The other problem, with doing that type of work, the peaks of real visible, recognizable progress are so far apart that your down in a semi-depression about half the time, wondering how in the world you got it together. Once every year something nice happens. Then you go back down. But it is hard to pick out any one significant thing. I can't do that.

Hewitt: This school is much newer . . .

Smith: It's a baby. It has got no tradition, no history, no nothing.

Hewitt: Let's hope 25 years from now, when they do the next oral history project, that there will be . . .

Smith: It will be . . . Of course the medical school I came from is almost 200 years old now. When they wrote the history of that thing, that was a major undertaking. Fortunately, they saved everything. I had the faculty notes from 1835. School started in 1832. I had all the faculty notes during the Civil War. Of course, Louisville was a border of half-union/half-southern, so we were able to make a nice history for that place. So all these old records that somebody had the God given good sense to save.

Hewitt: Are there archives for this medical school?

Smith: I don't know. I think they have been careless about that. I always kept them up. I have my own personal collection which I will give to the library

when I leave. A lot of stuff. For example, here is the charter class commencement invitation. I don't suppose there are two or three of those books anywhere, besides the ones the kids have. They don't do that anymore around here, I don't know why. I took commencement very seriously. In any case, I have my own collection which is substantial. If they will convince me that they have a good place to put it, for sure I will give it to them.

Hewitt: Was the medical library built at the same time as the . . . ?

Smith: I designed that myself personally. I have a great interest in medical libraries, and I was on the review committee for the National Library of Medicine for a number of years. Again, as accreditation surveyor, I see all the medical libraries around the country. I always have been very interested. Here again, I had another enormous piece of good fortune as I was able to recruit Fred Bryant as our Medical Librarian. He started the library at Gainesville, and he went with George Harrell and started the library at Penn State and he came down here. He was the only guy in history to start three medical libraries. Superb medical librarian. This one I designed myself. I designed the one at Louisville too. But here I had a little bit of opportunity because the aesthetic of this place was quite a bit different from what they were. You build a medical center downtown, that's one thing. To build it out in this nice, big, green campus is quite another subject. I personally designed the library. I took some papers, designed it and I made them build it that way.

Hewitt: Well, we better get a copy of this tape to put in that library as well as in addition to the Special Collections in the Main Library.

Smith: Well, it's a heavily used library. Now there is another connection. A whole bunch of students from the University use this library today. Kids from Natural Science and a great number of psychology students have need for this literature. I wouldn't be surprised if there are about as many university and graduate students using that library as there are medical students.

Hewitt: Probably the clinics and the library are what draw the most people from the other side of campus.

Smith: I wouldn't be surprised. Well, that's what they are there for. Mr. Bryant and I are in total agreement. The library is to be used, not to be saved, not to be squirreled away, not to be locked up, and not to put everything behind grills, but to use it. And we have. We have used it, used it extensively.

Hewitt: Well I really appreciate your taking your time out today to participate in this oral history project, thank you very much.