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Paula Trafton

Ray Buckberry

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Western Kentucky University
UA1B University Wide Committees / Events
Series 2/1 Anniversaries Western Kentucky University
Item 4 Ray Buckberry Interview

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Biographical/Historical Note:

Records regarding anniversaries celebrated by the university includes founders day, 75th and centennial celebrations.

Description: Interview conducted by Paula Trafton with Ray Buckberry, WKU alum.

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Oral History Recording List

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08/26/2013

Media ID	Side	Start time	Subject
Tape 1	1	00:00:10	<p><i>PT: Today is Monday July 11, 2005. This is Paula Trafton, instructor in the History Department at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Today I will be interviewing Ray Buckberry as part of an oral history project for Western's centennial celebration in 2006. This project focuses on those persons who have a special knowledge of the growth and changes Western Kentucky has experienced since the 1930s. Mr. Buckberry and I are sitting in the Seminar Room on the second floor of Cherry Hall on the campus of Western Kentucky University.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:00:56	<p><i>PT: This is Ray Buckberry and we are sitting in the Seminar Room in Cherry Hall and our first question is going to be: Tell us a little bit about your background. Where you were born and why you came to Kentucky.</i></p> <p><i>RB: I was born in Welch, West Virginia, January 11, 1934. My father had gone to West Virginia and was operating a coal mine up there so we wound up being West Virginians at that time until the Depression took the coal mine and everything else I think we had. And then we came back to Bowling Green. I came back in about second grade and went to public school in Bowling Green and graduated from Bowling Green High in 1951. And then went into the Air Force and had a tour of duty in the Air Force, came back. Was casualty underwriter for Travelers Insurance Company in Nashville, Tennessee while my wife finished her nursing degree at Vanderbilt. Then she went to work and I went to law school at Vanderbilt and graduated from there and practiced a short time in East Tennessee. Came back to Bowling Green in 1964 and practiced the rest of my life here in Bowling Green.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:02:17	<p><i>PT: Okay. So you didn't go to Western?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Oh yes, I'm sorry. I went to Western and then when I graduated from Western I went into the Air Force. So I graduated in January of 1956 and went into the military service.</i></p> <p><i>PT: Okay what was your degree in?</i></p> <p><i>RB: In the Geography Department.</i></p> <p><i>PT: Geography.</i></p> <p><i>RB: Yes.</i></p> <p><i>PT: And then decided to go into law.</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well that's true. A good, my neighbor Finley C. Grise for whom Grise Hall is named lived down the street and he's the kind of neighbor when he went on vacation I got his mail, picked up his papers, picked his tomatoes and all of that sort of thing so I knew him forever and he called me into Cherry Hall one day and he said, "Ray you've been up here so long you've got to declare a major." I said, "Well, Dean Grise you know, my preference is to be in the Navy, I don't even want to be here." I said, "You just pick anything you want and I'll do it." So that's how I picked my major. He said, "Well, let's do this." I said, "Well that's fine, whatever."</i></p> <p><i>PT: And you haven't regretted that decision?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Oh, no. No. Reflecting upon that there are certain feelings, history has been an interest of mine. Local history as just as a buff and I wish I maybe had done more of that.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:03:47	<p><i>PT: Okay, but you've done quite a lot in the history field here.</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well, I enjoy local history and enjoy getting out in the county and enjoy the Kentucky Library a good bit and enjoy the people. So there are a world of stories and there are a world of personalities out of the one county who have really never been covered much and it's fun particularly with the internet access. It's fun now to dig into those folks and sort of see what you find out about them. Some black musicians I've done work on here and one early, early aviator, soldier of fortune from here and there are others but that's, that's an interest of mine.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:04:47	<p><i>PT: So have you published anything or . . . ?</i></p> <p><i>RB: No, no, I've got a lot of things on the Martin murders and this and that that I've fooled with and I've done oh I guess I don't know how many programs over the years but for the city clubs, Rotary, Rotarians and the Lions and the Kiwanians and the men's groups and the ladies' groups. So those are fun to put together and do some slides and so forth. The other thing collected postcards for many, many years primarily Bowling Green and have I guess probably 900 to 1000 postcards of Bowling Green now different cards. Of course to a collector one printed in green as opposed to printed in sepia it's another card so that's probably not that many really different ones, but. That and Daniel Boone I've collected Daniel Boone for many</i></p>

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			<p>years and I have a Boone Room as the family calls it at home with every kind of picture and chocolate mold and recording and toys and watches and currency and all sorts of things that I've collected on Boone. Well as a matter of fact, the last time they did a major exhibit on Boone at the Kentucky Historical Society they took forty-three items of mine for display up there so I'm now looking for a home for all that. My kids don't want it and I need to move it on while I can.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:06:36	<p>PT: Why did you come to Western?</p> <p>RB: Local. As I say I really wasn't interested in college. Several of my friends had gone into the Navy and it sounded like what I wanted to do. But I grew up most of my life within two blocks of Western so Western was my playground. I was here all my life, went to all the games. And it was just a natural. I as I say, I wasn't particularly interested in going anywhere but my parents convinced me that I needed to go on and go to Western or get started somewhere so that was just, and I was certainly I had all my friends here that I had grown up with and my jobs I worked here in different men's stores and service station and all of that and I just, I was just happy at home.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:07:34	<p>PT: Right. Let's just talk a little bit about your stint in the service and we weren't obviously at war at that time, but where did you go?</p> <p>RB: No, I wound up after your initial training, I wound up going to communications school at Scott Air Force Base and had an MOS military occupation specialty as a communications officer. So I went overseas to Hokkaido, Japan on a radar site and spent a tour of duty there. I came back to the United States to, let's see, I went on down to Hunter Air Force Base which was a strategic air command base down in Savannah, Georgia. And I finished out my tour of duty as a base telephone officer down there. So those were my two duty stations really were AC& W outfit in Japan and a SAC base here in the United States.</p> <p>PT: So how many years then, did you . . . ?</p> <p>RB: Let's see a little less than three because I happened to be walking across the field one day and somebody said, "Hey, you know you can get out?" And I said, "Get out?" and they said, "Well they're letting early outs, if you want to do that." Then I walked by the personnel office and I said, "Do you know what this fellow told me?" And they said, "Yes." So I said, "Yes, put my name in, I'll get out." And that's when I went back to Nashville, Tennessee and we were married in Bowling Green. I married a Bowling Green girl and so then I went to work in Nashville as she finished school. And then later I decided I wanted to go to law school.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:09:28	<p>PT: And then you wanted to return back to Bowling Green . . . ?</p> <p>RB: That wasn't primary. I, I was thirty years old and had a child when I got out of law school. And you get to at least I felt the pressure I needed to get on with things. I turned down a clerkship with the Tennessee Supreme Court. I thought, "No, I need to get in a practice. I need to get going." So a judge over in East Tennessee in Lenoir City, a fine man, had a slot in his office so I went with Joe Stall (?). And I happened to be home one weekend in Bowling Green and a friend of mine, a classmate of mine in law school and lifelong friend with a firm here he said, "You know one of the fellows is leaving." He said, "Why don't you look into that." And, ahh, okay. So I did and wound up coming back home.</p> <p>PT: So are you still a lawyer in town then? Are you still active?</p> <p>RB: Well no, as a matter of fact, about a month ago I finally turned, I said "I'm not active in the practice so please relieve me of the responsibility of continuing legal education." I'm still listed as a counsel for the firm here, but I don't practice. Don't do that at all.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:10:56	<p>PT: So you have time now for your interest in history.</p> <p>RB: Oh that's, that's really, that's really, that's my golf, that's my hobby. And we're into a new project here on the Aviation Heritage Park. So like yesterday I spent a good bit of time on the internet with the National Museum of the Air Force, the National Museum of the Navy trying to get some information in on some Western fellows who had a connection with aviation. Johnny Magda who was the fourth commander of the Blue Angels and then some other Western fellows Ken Fleenor, Dan Cherry, Victor Strahm who was a World War I aviator, professor Strahm's son, the Music Department Strahm. But anyway, yes, that's plenty of time, that and being on the Western Centennial Committee. We're spending some time on that and so those various little projects. I've got a condo in Gatlinburg I try to get to when I can.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:12:16	<p>PT: But you're good and busy then.</p> <p>RB: Yes, a good bit. There's no, I like to fool with photography so there's no end of things that are you know out there and are fun to do and get involved with. You begin to realize perhaps as age advances that most of the game is from the neck up.</p> <p>PT: So you're involved with the Centennial celebration.</p> <p>RB: Yes.</p>

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			<p><i>PT: How?</i></p> <p><i>RB: I, well I looked and Patsy Sloan and I are the only two members who only two committee members who not either faculty or administrative staff. So I, and of course she's awfully close with Jay Song/Jason(?) having been on the faculty here. I think sort of a town gown kind of a thing. If I sense that something's going on they haven't involved or haven't notified the local officials, the local whatever, I try to look out for that. And so, that I think is, is the real connection, is that I can perhaps help some on getting things worked out locally when they need an involvement locally.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:13:43	<p><i>PT: Okay. Let's see. As far as being a student here at Western do you have much involvement with students today so that you can make some kind of comparison between what it was like for you as a student and when you were an undergraduate here at Western and what students are like today?</i></p> <p><i>RB: I think probably I do. I don't have as much contact with them as I would prefer. I enjoy young people and I taught real estate law in the evening at Western for many, many years. So I did, I had those folks, of course we had a night class, you had an age range and you had mortgage bankers, surveyors, real estate people. You had a lot of adults in those classes and some of the students were genuinely interested. Some just needed a few hours and that was the easiest place to pick it up. So you always understand that.</i></p> <p><i>But it would appear to me that there's so many other things available to students now from the technology that's out there, from the computers, from the television which we really had no television. It seems to me and I'm not close enough to probably know that's there's not as much emphasis on activities among the students. Maybe that's not a fair assessment because there were not fraternities when I was at Western. There were a couple of off campus, the Barons and the Thirteeners were off campus. But my oldest son went to Western and I had some insight there with the fraternity that he was involved with. But it was a little more laid back to me, a little casual.</i></p> <p><i>Here in Cherry Hall and no air conditioning it got really hot, there were a series of benches out in front of the library [Gordon Wilson Hall] which is not the library now so we would adjourn class, go out and have class outside on the really warm days. I don't know, it's a more hectic pace it seems to me now and it's hard to compare it.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:16:43	<p><i>PT: You said that you'd been to the library the Kentucky Library. How large was it when you, when you were here? Does it look like is, was when you were here pretty much?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well the new facilities of course, are a big difference a lot more space. The library basically, the collections I'm sure have grown but I think the base collections as far as Kentucky materials was there. And of course the people were most helpful then as now. And their library is a funny sort of place to me. I can go in there on numerous occasions and no one else there. Students rotate through on an orientation basis I think, but it seems to be off their path and you don't see many students in there involved in research to my observation. Most people in there are into genealogy or they're looking for a certain matter or they're using Sanborn maps to look for architectural features, things that the Landmark Society and others who are into conservation and restoration get involved with. But it's really sort of the same it's just a more extensive collection.</i></p> <p><i>PT: But when you were a student was there more active participation by students in the Kentucky Library? Or has it pretty much been . . . ?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well, I wasn't into as a student so I really have, I really didn't go there myself.</i></p> <p><i>PT: Okay. How about the other library? Which building . . . ?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Drinking beer and girls were a lot more important at that time than Kentucky history.</i></p> <p><i>PT: Well, how about the library? Where was, which building was that in when you were here?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Next door in [Gordon] Wilson [Hall]. It was so much smaller, but again, very accessible. And I guess there's always a segment of sure enough serious students who really do work at their task. That was not me. So I didn't frequent the library very much. I was wishing I was in the Navy.</i></p> <p><i>PT: The whole time you were doing your geography degree.</i></p> <p><i>RB: I, just yes. Just, I yes, just musing along aimlessly at that time.</i></p> <p><i>PT: Okay.</i></p> <p><i>RB: So that was just, that's the way it was.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:19:47	<p><i>PT: Well how about the basketball games? Where were they played when you were here?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well they were over where the present [Helm] library is of course. And that was a local</i></p>

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attraction. Never missed a game I don't guess. High school kids we all went to the games got there early and hung off the rafters. And, so that was, that was a great part of our entertainment in the team and the coaching staff and everyone was very well thought of in town and . . .

PT: Who was the coach when you were here?

RB: Mr. [E.A.] Diddle. Yes, because while I was a student the year, I guess my senior year Tom Marshall, Art Spoelstra and Jack Turner and all of those fellows I worked with the team every day. Officiated scrimmages every day so I traveled with the team most often, well, there was an occasion or two I wouldn't go, but Mr. Diddle or Mr. [Ted] Hornback would give me the instructions what to do with the freshmen so I'd stay home and work them out. But that was a lot of fun to be with the basketball team and go to New York and different places. That was fun.

PT: So did you get paid for that or . . . ?

RB: Oh no, no that was just, just . . .

PT: That was volunteer.

RB: . . . fun, yes. Just fun, something to do every afternoon, go to practice and travel with the team. And just a great bunch of guys and of course they lived in the back of Mr. Diddle's house [Diddle Dorm] where the little park [Diddle Park] is now. And the basketball players lived in the back so that was always just a good place to hang out you know, all the guys were living there together. And we all had a good time and we just enjoyed what was going on then.

Tape 1	1	00:21:46	<p>PT: How about the changes you've seen on campus with just the physical appearance of the buildings?</p> <p>RB: It, it really has been tremendous when you look back and see that of course where Cherry Hall is now it was two structures here initially. This was Recitation Hall out of Potter College. And then there I guess about where Van Meter is was the home and that was it initially. And of course growing up here I've seen the structures come up as they've been built. So it filled the hill and it's fallen off the hill of course in different directions it continues to do that probably I think the long range plan now is to, to focus on across Normal and maybe over to Chestnut. Maybe not that far, but anyway there've been a lot of changes and President [Gary] Ransdell has just had a fantastic building program. And much more so it would appear to me than Don Zacharias or Tom Meredith or Kern Alexander. Everybody, of course did what they could as the legislature made funds available. But there've been some great, great improvements made, just tremendous.</p>
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Tape 1	1	00:23:32	<p>PT: And who was president when you came? Do you remember that?</p> <p>RB: Let's see that was before Dero [Downing]. Paul Garrett would have still been president. He would've, he would've been and I forget how many years Garrett was president but he was president before that series of folks I mentioned of course.</p> <p>PT: Did you have any contact with the administration?</p> <p>RB: Yes. Dero Downing is still one of my very best friends. Of course we correspond, we talk occasionally. Of course Dr. [John] Minton was not in office very long but another good friend. Saw him at the farmers market the other day and we had a long. Don Zacharias I knew well. He lived across the street from my mother-in-law. The President's Home is across the street from where my mother-in-law lives so consequently Kern Alexander and Don Zacharias and Tom Meredith and all those folks were across the street neighbors as I was over there with my wife a whole lot. So we had some interests together. Oh Zacharias I remember he collected fountain pens. We'd go to the Tennessee flea market and I'd look for what I was looking for and Don would look for fountain pens so I got to know them over the years. And then down Normal Drive and around Sumpter and back up Russellville Road was my early morning Courier Journal paper route so I knew a lot of Western faculty because I delivered their papers and knew them all through the years. Gordon Wilson and Susie Howard and well just as you know a lot of faculty members lived out in that area. So I knew, knew quite a few of them, Carl Barnes and whatever.</p>
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Tape 1	1	00:25:42	<p>PT: So when you were a student you pretty much knew a lot of people then here. How much contact did you have with faculty just in classroom or was there more of an emphasis on faculty and students . . . ?</p> <p>RB: Well my age, at my age at that time the involvement of the faculty off campus I really would not have experienced. Only seeing that my mother was in a literary club or this, that and there would be faculty members in that. And others I would run into in Athletics maybe around town. And at that time in Bowling Green High an arrangement was made with Western for the city schools to erect lights for Western to have night football. And the arrangement was that the high school would get to play its games on Friday night. So that was the partnership arrangement and those were the lights that still stand above the seating over there. The city school board put the lights in for Western and Western let, let us play there on Friday nights. So I was accustomed during high school after my first year of playing, we played all our games</p>
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			<p>at Western so you get to know a lot of students. And we had some students who roomed with us, so you know you got to know them. And I didn't get to know the faculty that much except, as small as the town was working as I say in a couple men's stores and working at the service station night shifts and so forth you get to know them as customers when they come in and you know who they are. Just like it used to be there would absolutely be no Cadillac in town that you didn't know who owned that. There were just not that many. Of course today you wouldn't have a chance. But it was small and you knew who people were.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:28:01	<p>PT: The style of dress. What did you wear when you were here as a student?</p> <p>RB: Very casual, maybe not as much so as today. Women wear more revealing garments today than ever I remember. I do know back at, back at that time, well at Vanderbilt I do recall if my wife was going to play, take a tennis course or go play tennis she had to wear a raincoat across campus. She could not walk across campus in tennis shorts. And I don't know that it was that conservative at Western, but maybe pretty much the same. Blue jeans, t-shirts, collared shirts and the girls did not wear slacks as much more dresses than you see today. Because today it's mostly shorts and jeans and slacks it seems like, but not that much then.</p> <p>PT: How about the faculty?</p> <p>RB: The faculty always as far as I recall always had ties, ties and coats and the ladies were very nicely dressed and dresses of course, very nice appearances.</p>
Tape 1	1	00:29:30	<p>PT: Were there any organized activities on campus?</p> <p>RB: Quite a few. There were. There were the various clubs and certain oh there were Home Economics Department they had all their clubs and the various departments and English and every one and the Geography and of course Western sports the W Club at that time and still of course do. And there were other activities on campus. There was a community concert series that came each year and there would be several major events always in Van Meter. And von Trapp Family Singers just people that you were very familiar with or could become familiar with would come. So those were on campus activities. I would say quite a bit. I think there were local photo societies I didn't have anything to do with that or wasn't involved, but I think it was more maybe than I can recall. I think probably so.</p> <p>PT: How about people coming in from, like entertainers? Do you, can you remember . . . ?</p> <p>RB: I don't recall much of that except community concert series.</p> <p>PT: Okay.</p> <p>RB: I don't recall anybody bringing in a particular band or whatever. That's the kind of thing I suppose that you really wanted to do Nashville was so close even without interstate highways. Nashville if you wanted a [unclear] after you were driving, if you wanted a really nice date something to do very nice you'd drive to Nashville on Sunday afternoon and eat dinner at the Cross Keys which was a restaurant up near Legislative Square and nothing really, really fancy but to us in Bowling Green it was. And then you'd go upstairs . . .</p> <p>[end of side 1]</p>
Tape 1	2	00:32:05	<p>RB: I was in the spelunking group here, the Speleological Society, my son and my daughter, we all caved. All three of us caved with them some. So I was involved a little bit when they would be doing something out at Lost River, but during my college days it was just really nice to go down to the dances in the cave. And we always did that and of course that was before air conditioning. And when people learned that the cave temperature is constant year round then they could get down there and cool off. Then the walk up and try to survive coming up into the heat. Drinking in a cool environment and coming up to a hot evening sometimes was a surprise.</p> <p>PT: So who did you see there? What performers did you see?</p> <p>RB: I don't recall. Don't recall any. Some from Nashville and I, again I think maybe [Will] Bradley's Orchestra maybe Dottie Dillard, you know. I may be wrong about that. I can't recall any others. I don't think Greg Colson was performing in any of those, but I don't recall.</p>
Tape 1	2	00:33:37	<p>33:37</p> <p>PT: Is that something that students liked to do? To go to the dances at Lost River or was that . . . ?</p> <p>RB: Oh that was very popular.</p> <p>PT: Okay, very popular . . .</p> <p>RB: It really was. And it was a trouble free atmosphere and you could dance and sit at your table in the cave. Well the surface of the floor is still there and then, it was well maintained at that time, a little path along the side of Lost River going back to where it begins back there. But it was very popular to students. It was popular and Beech Ben was popular. Beech Bend</p>

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			<i>didn't have as many activities as certainly not the facilities today. It was more of you paid ten cents and you get in the gate and you could, you could picnic or swim in the [Barren] river and there was one, one structure at that time. And they had bowling downstairs and they had dancing upstairs. And they would have, they would have bands out there. So Beech Bend was another attraction by the students get together and go out there as was Mammoth Cave. Mammoth Cave close by again a free place to go picnic grounds, campgrounds, go up there and camp or picnic.</i>
Tape 1	2	00:35:09	<p><i>PT: Okay. How do you think Western's relationship with the city of Bowling Green is?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Well I think I've never sensed this town/gown problem that some people think. I think Western always had a, the Western faculty and naturally the administrative people to a great extent were local, from the region at least. I think they always got along fine. The only sometimes some people in town felt like Western was very much like a military base in that it's sort of self-contained. You have your own social group. You have your own professional group. You have your own leisure time activities of sports and performances by the Music Department and everything. It's a pretty concentrated thing and then you come up town to buy groceries and gas. But I think that's overstated to a great extent. Western is no different than anybody else in the percentage of odd people and eccentric people that they attract. As I said to a department head who was a friend of mine one time, I said, "God, you get some weird people up here." And he said "Weird? Let me show you my list of instructors in my department and I'll show you some of the weirdest people you've ever seen."</i></p> <p><i>So it, it was sort of a joke around town that somebody came into your store or was dealing with you on a professional level or something and they were really sort of different sort of eccentric would be you would say, "And what do you teach at Western?" And most of them you'd be right. But as a friend of mine who's in the tire business said one time I was in his store and a Western professor came in and he had this chart he laid out. And he was explaining to my friend, he said, "I can get a tire like this with this much more thread count and this much more such and such out at so and so's for such and such a price." And my friend was saying, "I can't beat that price. That's a good buy. You ought to go over there." In other words, "Get out of here." And when he got out of there he said, "You know," he said, "when a Western professor gets ready to buy something or engage you for a service," he said, "he doesn't do background research." He said, "He launches an investigation." So those kinds of things of course people would laugh about.</i></p> <p><i>I think it was always good. You always have a number of faculty members who get involved locally in civic clubs, civic activities and naturally they do so in the churches. And naturally they do so when their children are attending public school. They get involved very much so you see them on lots of different things. I think one of the more interesting things that I recall was when Don Zacharias came here. He had a young son, I forget, I forget which one. But anyway, he hadn't been here very long and went to the high school football game one night and there was Don with no tie and a white shirt and his sleeves rolled up with his son. And I remember people saying, "Good night that's the president of Western. Isn't that neat? You know, he's out here going to our game." So those were very strategic moves I think by a lot of people to get out in the community and say "Hey, we're all in this together."</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:39:16	<p><i>PT: How about Western in the state? Do you think Western has contributed to the state of Kentucky?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Certainly they have. They've produced numerous politicians and they've produced numerous professional people. And I think Western is admired by other universities in the state. There's always the competition that we've had with Eastern and Murray much more so than Morehead or any of the others. But I think Western is well thought of. And I think if you go through Western's Hall of Fame or whatever they call it these days Distinguished Alumni thing you'll find a lot of Western people have done a lot in Kentucky and for Kentucky. And I think it's remarkable. I guess on sheer numbers alone the University of Kentucky probably has more people in more levels of that and Louisville as well, but I think Western has done very well.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:40:29	<p><i>PT: How about the nation? Do you think . . . ?</i></p> <p><i>RB: I don't know. You look around and you see some of the impressive things in the distinguished folks who've been involved in business, who've been involved in science, [Spero] Kereiakes. And certainly in military circles we've had some very prominent, General [Russell] Dougherty, General [Dan] Cherry, General [Kenneth] Fleenor, others out there who have certainly made a contribution on a national scale. And there are others that I just can't recall. And in some banking circles I think we've had Western people very prominent in corporate finance and banking.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:41:27	<p><i>PT: So we've made an impression.</i></p> <p><i>RB: I think so. People generally I think will know when they ask you where you're from if you say Bowling Green most of them will follow that up with, "Oh, that's where Western is." So I think Western is pretty well known. It's, it's not as confused with Bowling Green in Ohio as some would think, I don't believe which happened to get its' name incidentally from Bowling Green, Kentucky.</i></p>

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			<p><i>PT: Oh, does it?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Oh its' chamber publication acknowledges it. When they first got postal service in the community up there the postal authority said, "Well you've got to have a name for your community if we're going to provide postal service," and everything. And they didn't have it. So they said "Well, we don't have a name." "Well you'll have to have something." And somebody in the group said, "Well the prettiest place I've ever been is Bowling Green, Kentucky." And they said, "Well that's fine." So they named it. I got into that at one time going into all the seven states that have a Bowling Green, Virginia, Missouri, Florida, Ohio, to see how'd you get your name? So that's another file at home in a closet. But that was the story from Bowling Green, Ohio.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:42:53	<p><i>PT: Okay, wow. What challenges do you think that Western faces today?</i></p> <p><i>RB: I would think not being an educator and not being really well versed of course in the administrative jobs that they have. I would say the challenge that it would appear to me just as a local lay person would be to keep their politics right for one thing so that they can continue to succeed in Frankfort. And it does take that. It's not based in my mind as much on need and service for an area or service for a region and there's so much of it that's just plain politics. And I think that's an important thing that the administrative officials have to address.</i></p> <p><i>The other thing to me would be the human resources end of it. I think research, education and the technology that is coming into those areas they will do they have professional people at Western who will certainly be well tuned to that. But I think it's going to be a real challenge to keep your people fairly compensated and to provide them the necessary benefits for them to raise their families on a good basis. And I think that's just going to be a real challenge for any university to try to keep up a measure of progress while taking care of what you've already got.</i></p> <p><i>We'll soon see the same sort of thing on the city manager's search for the city. So that's I'm chairing that citizens committee so we will begin our organizational efforts tomorrow morning and we're looking of course at some research around the country and communities of comparable size and so what are the problems they're facing. Are they facing problems we have and don't realize or do we have different problems those kinds of things. And I think it's the same for universities. I just think the human aspect of it is going to be really a challenge.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:45:30	<p><i>PT: You're a jack of all trades. Is there anything that you can't do?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Oh, no. And master of none as they say. No just</i></p> <p><i>PT: But when you do work on something to do with city hall or Bowling Green government does Western pop in there? I mean are we a major focus of the growth of Bowling Green?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Yes, I think so. There is such a tremendous resource in professional people at Western that, that's something you always think about. You need some kind of whether you're in the planning or technical aspect of something the first thing you really should do is to look to Western and see if it's here, it's available. And Western has always been most generous I think from an official standpoint and just the individuals at Western in participating and helping. So it certainly is a resource communities this size without a university just don't have and it's just a tremendous resource. Sure is. And when you look at the boards, the agencies and those types of things they will rely very much on Western. And when you look at the number of people in those agencies and those political entities who are Western people it's absolutely amazing. I asked Don Smith who is alumni director not long ago, I said "Can you get me a list of Western alumni who belong to Warren county alumni society association?" And he said, "Yes, I can do that." He said "It's probably about 2,200, I think," he said. I said, "Well don't, don't go to that trouble. I'm just looking for some key people." But now that's just an amazing number of Western people. Because we were looking at it Karen Foley in city hall and I and Kim down there, we were looking at it from the centennial view point of trying to see what Western people have done out in the community coming out of the university community out into the community at large. And is there some way we can recognize those people and at the same time look to the local community and say, "How many of the local community went to Western?" Didn't go away from home, but stayed home and went to Western and what has their contribution been. So who on top of the hill fell off out in the town and who in the town went up to Western and is there some way we can look at those two groups and recognize people who had meritorious service or long term service or something. We're still struggling with how we can possibly do that. I don't know if we'll be able to or not. But that's very much a big part of the city operation not to mention business and professions that are Western people.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:49:08	<p><i>PT: Assess your contribution to Western. What do you think you've done for Western?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Not much. Very nominal, just tried to help out along the way where I can. But really, not much.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:49:27	<p><i>49:27</i></p> <p><i>PT: How about Western's [contribution] to you?</i></p> <p><i>RB: Oh Western's been tremendous to me. That's been closer to a one way street because</i></p>

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			<p><i>just as I say grew up down on Kentucky Street and was there until I actually moved and was already going to Western. But this was my playground and you know you got to know Mr. Diddle run me out of the gym more than one time as a kid. We just all the neighborhood kids you know we went to all the athletic events and we just spent our spare time up here. There were two big magnolia trees right behind the Kentucky Building which were just a great source of hand grenades kids playing war. So we'd come do that and when things were slow Western had one police officer Aubrey Hoofnel from over in Forest Park. And Aubrey, he'd be on campus at night and we'd look, look until we found Aubrey at night. And we'd say, "Mr. Hoofnel we saw a light in the bottom of the Kentucky Building." "What, what?" "We saw a light." "Well come on boys let's go." And of course he was humoring us. We didn't know it. We thought we got old man Hoofnel off on another wild goose chase. Well he was just playing with us we later realized. But just day and night we were on Western's campus. I was so Western's just been always great to me.</i></p>
Tape 1	2	00:51:21	<p><i>51:21</i></p> <p><i>PT: Any one change that you see that we can just kind of sum up between when you were a student here and now? One major change you've seen Western go through.</i></p> <p><i>RB: No, I don't, I think it just seems more a higher level of organization and a higher level of delivering services to students to me than we were just very elementary I guess. And Western now and of course part of that's the technology that's available that was not then but to me it's just, just a higher level institution [unclear] organization and all that. And the people are just as good a people then as now.</i></p> <p><i>PT: That's a good ending to this interview. Thank you so much.</i></p> <p><i>RB: Okay.</i></p> <p><i>[end of tape]</i></p>