

## Library Discussion Panel Part I

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Name of Interviewee: Lowell Walters, Carl Merat, Abigail Sattler and Greg Smith

Name of Interviewers: Randy Miller

Transcribers: Stephanie Medina, Josh Calloway, Bonnie Zahne

Interview Length: (2:47:25)

Notes:

**Miller:** (0:01) Welcome to this interview in the oral history project of the Liberty University archives. This interview is being conducted on November 14, 2013 and is the first of several parts to be recorded. Today we are having a panel discussion on the history of the Liberty University Library. My name is Randy Miller and I will be moderating today's discussion. I would like the other panelists to introduce themselves and tell us their current job responsibility.

**Walters:** (0:29) I am Lowell Walters and I am the Associate Dean of Library Technologies and Collection Services.

**Merat:** (0:37) I am Carl Merat and I am the Acquisitions Librarian.

**Sattler:** (0:41) Abigail Sattler and I'm the Archivist.

**Smith:** (0:45) Greg Smith, Director of Management Information Services.

**Miller:** (0:48) Alright, Thank You. We're going to be talking today about the history of the Liberty University Library. This is somewhat an anticipation of the new Jerry Falwell Library that is scheduled to be opened here in January of 2014. But very often, instead of calling it the Liberty University Library, we're calling it the ILRC, the Integrated Learning Resource Center. Let's start off; what is the Integrated Learning Resource Center?

**Merat:** (1:21) The Integrated Learning Resource Center is a space in the DeMoss building. It was constructed, uh there was a separate academic lab space and Science Hall and then the library was on the first floor of the DeMoss building originally. As the campus grew and classroom space started to grow short and computing became a more important part of the campus the need for more academic computing space became apparent. And as the DeMoss

expansion was proposed, it was also proposed to expand the Library because the Library and computing lab had a very close collaboration a lot of students were doing research on computers in the labs and we had computers in the first floor of the lab for that purpose but students also did computing work on word and excel, we had some of the Office Suite installed on those computers. It lead to a natural discussion about merger of the labs and the library and out of that was born uh the space in the Science Hall was called Integrated Technology Resource Center and as we searched for a name for the merged facility it was decided that it would be ILRC or the Integrated Learning Resource Center.

**Miller:** (2:49) Now, who was someone that was really instrumental at that time, who was the Dean of the library and was there another driving force behind that merger?

**Merat:** (2:58) Uh yes there was. Maurice Zaffke at that time was Head of Academic Computing I believe was his title. There was an academic computing committee as well in place, had been put in place, a year or two before some of this had occurred and the Dean of the Library at that time was Dave Barnett. So there was a lot of close collaboration in planning that went into that design and thought behind expanding. At that time the idea was as the building went up to four floors, as the university would grow, the Library, ILRC footprint would expand from the first floor the same footprint up all three floors above that.

**Miller:** (3:43) Well now, Lowell you're a Liberty Grad and so when you were first here; were all four floors on DeMoss already there when you first came to the campus?

**Walters:** (3:54) Well when you say first came to the campus, no. But um because I was on the campus in 1979 as a little brother to an older sister who was going here so I believe at that time the Library was in the education hall but um which is being torn down this year. But when I was a student I was here from the fall of 87' through spring of 91' and no the DeMoss Building was one floor at that time. I do remember some of my colleagues and I saying, why in the world did they build these pillars so huge? We actually did think about that, and we were told by the faculty at that time that there were plans to add to DeMoss and we were like well when will that happened. So it happened then around 2000, 2001 and but the library at that time was two separate squares so to speak of stacks or book shelves. The larger stack being the general collection and then the reference collection out near the front doors. Then there was seating the whole way around the main collection and sometimes they'd move the bookstore in there and disrupt everything because the bookstore was too small at the beginning of each semester so they'd do that sort of thing. But there were actually windows on the north side to of that building that were filled in when they added the um

**Miller:** (5:35) Second, Third and Fourth floors.

**Walters:** (5:36) yeah, so.

**Miller:** (5:37) Now, Greg Smith you were the Dean of the ILRC in the early 2000's so by the time you arrived the second, third and fourth floors were there. Why is it that we didn't move the Library collection to those higher floors?

**Smith:** (5:52) Well when I arrived in 2003 the shell of all four floors was there and the library had recently expanded in the form of computer labs and classrooms into the second floor. But floors three and four remained vacant for several years and sort of the word on the street that I received coming in was that the upper floors were not built, were not engineered to withstand the weight of stacks full of books. So you know those are very uh I'm told that those are actually uh weigh more than a parking garage so we were very, very concerned about moving much in the way of collections to the upper floors and therefore always kept the books segregated, those were restricted for use on the first floor and the upper floor and then floors, eventually, were just space for study and space for computing.

**Miller:** (6:49) Okay well before we leave this point then. What were some of the benefits of merging together the computer labs and the library? Instead of having them as two separate standalone facilities, what was the benefit of having that? And were there any disadvantages in bringing those together?

**Merat:** (7:06) I think some of the benefits were the faculty, the library faculty, benefitted by having technology support close by and we had an opportunity to participate in the growing field, so to speak, of library technology that way. It really enhanced having our support people close by to us and partnering with them in terms of bringing internet services on and it was about that time also that we really started to move away from CD-ROMs and moving more towards internet services. And also I think the lab folks benefitted by, you know, taking a different approach to the research support that they were always asked for around the computers. So you know that some of the idea behind the design of the space was about social learning; students would come to the labs to socialize but we also wanted to give that opportunity in a learning space again looking forward to what we collaborative learning today, some of the early designs were based around allowing students to have opportunities to collaborate around computers and with librarians and technology folks. So, the challenges were the technology support people and librarians thought differently and were trained differently and had a different culture all together so it was a real challenge in trying to bring those two cultures together. And I think it took several years before we found a lot of success with that but it was a good challenge.

**Miller:** (8:47) So there was a certain time in which we went from let's say for finding a journal article we would go from printed index, like the readers guide back in the old days, then there was a time when you had CD-ROMs that had the text of the articles, no pictures or anything, just the words.

**Merat:** (9:05) Some of them were indexes alone and then you had to go find a print periodical to look them up and then a real innovation came when you had an index but you had a CD disk that

you could go and find and put into a CD reader and associate it with the index that you had used to look it up and pull that full text article up on a computer screen not from the internet but from another CD.

**Miller:** (9:28) And so then finally the final step in that progress that we'll remain to see in the years ahead where we go from here is that now you can go to the internet and it is a subscription resource but they are finding everything including the full text of the articles and if there are pictures and all within the database itself.

**Merat:** (9:45) That's right.

**Miller:** (9:46) Well, so, we were pretty landlocked if you had to stay on the first floor because of the weight bearing capability and you had only this limited number of places to put books and you also wanted to have people in there so at what point did we start thinking about the need for a new facility? When were we starting to think about that?

**Smith:** (10:16) Certainly when I came on board in 2003 the understanding was we were expanding within the context of the facility that we had. The upper floors were still vacant, third and fourth, so we had presumably the opportunity to expand into those floors and maintain the same kind of footprint of roughly 40,000 sq. feet on each story. And I think it probably took quite a number of years, we expanded into the third floor in I believe the Summer or Fall of 2008 and so even then the intent was to continue to expand upwards. But there was a survey that we ran in I believe the Spring of 2009 and one of the themes that came out of that with the resident students was that we really needed to have Library Facilities that were worthy of a major university and while we had certainly had sort of this pipe dream of having a standalone library facility for years, we always thought that it was not really going to materialize and were always trying to find ways to make the best of the space that we had. But I think that around 2009 maybe became sort of this understanding that the enrollment was growing so large and our needs were so significant that we just really couldn't make due perpetually with the facility that we had and took some years beyond that for the reality of a new facility, standalone facility to materialize but I sort of see that you know the voice of the customer so to speak that made clear to us that it wasn't just the shortcomings that the Library staff and faculty saw but that it was really a significant impact on the user.

**Miller:** (11:58) So what were some of the things then that could possibly be done with this landlocked space that you had on the first floor? What were some other options that you were considering in pursuing?

**Smith:** (12:08) As far as what other?

**Miller:** (12:09) As far as how can we just fit more books or people? How can we possibly expand the collection?

**Smith:** (12:16) Well we were certainly considering as early as about 2004 or 2005 compacting the collection in some way. At that point we were thinking, and this was sort of a brain child of mine, was to take the lesser used materials from the collection and put into some sort of mobile storage but we were thinking of putting that outside of the perimeter of the main library so as to free up space for study. That didn't materialize in that exact form at all and it took a number of years for some sort of relative materialized but that's akin for what we have planned for the Jerry Falwell Library

**Walters:** (12:58) I know that, Greg, you took me along with several other people up to Virginia Tech to see what they were doing because they had high density warehousing that they used a scissor lift to get to their things and that had a delay of like a day or two for people to get to the items. But I also, correct me if I'm wrong Greg, I think we piloted compact shelving with the deployment of what we have in the periodicals.

**Smith:** (13:33) Yes. I think we did that under Dave Barnett's second tenure as Dean which would have been around 2007 I believe. So we put in a number of compact mobile shelving units that would allow us to see what the variables were on compacting the collection there.

**Miller:** (13:50) So just to explain, compacting shelving allows you to move where the aisle is so they're all bunched together but you can kind of move the shelves on a track or a rack in order to be able to only have one or two aisles there as opposed to every bookshelf having a three foot aisle in between.

**Smith:** (14:10) It represents about a 50 percent savings in floor space versus a traditional library shelving and then what we ultimately opt to do in the Jerry Falwell Library with the automated storage and retrieval system it represented something on the order of less than 20 percent or maybe closer 15 percent of the total of square footage that it would have been required for the same collection in traditional shelving.

**Miller:** (14:32) Because with the Americans with Disabilities Act you have to have wide enough aisles and so it would have taken, and what I'm hearing you say is with the type of storage system that we have it only would take 15 percent of the storage space with that robotic system than it would have taken had we have built a much larger facility with those heavy weight bearing floors and the regulation size aisles.

**Smith:** (14:58) Right and I was just doing some calculations in my head I think though that the engineers specifications were like a seventh to a ninth of the original space so more like ten to fifteen percent of the total square footage that would have been needed.

**Miller:** (15:10) Okay so we're in this facility. We have Library on the first floor of DeMoss, we have computer labs and classroom spaces on the second and third floor in one about one fourth of DeMoss. So how did the idea of a new Library building how did this kind of evolve?

**Walters** (15:36) Well everybody is looking at me but um if actually if you stay within this oral history program that we have together here through the archive you'll find that we did an interview with Dave Barnett in probably October of 2010 so you can pick up some of that history right from that point it's kind of an interesting point in time because it was only within weeks of him going to a different position in Florida that we had a faculty meeting and that faculty meeting I believe was, I have some emails in front of me here which I won't read verbatim, but must have been Monday November 15<sup>th</sup> of 2010. It was kind of a question and answer session, at that time Faculty meetings they conducted business but it would go into a question and answer session and Dr. Tyler Veak who was one of our librarians I think was called a Scholarly Communications Librarian even then, he asked a question I can't remember exactly how it came up but he asked "What about building a new library?" I think the University had just released something like 150 million dollars in bonds and the administration was talking about what they were planning to do long term. So Dr. Veak got up and said "What about a new library?" and some of the options that came up, mainly it seemed that the University administration had offered, they were thinking about offsite storage and warehousing down town with like a one hour delay in delivery and actually we're kind of doing that right now as the building is being finished we're kind of using the new building as offsite storage this semester so that's what that would have felt like if we would have gone that route to some degree. They were also talking at that time about a separate seminary library which at the time would have been put in at campus north which is now green hall but those were some of the points that were brought up back to Tyler and it is my understanding that the meeting progressed and then the meeting let out and it's my understanding, I wasn't there but due to some other emails and communications I had that day, Diane Garber caught the Chancellors attention once again and said "What do you think about that idea?" and Dr. Veak who you I think you were planning to interview in a couple of weeks here, you know he mentioned "Why can't we build something that would be a showcase for academics" and that key word and that phrasing really seemed to stick and resonate with the Chancellor. So after lunch the Chancellor sent an email to Dr. Veak saying you know "What else do you think about this?" and so Tyler offered him some thoughts back and some other emails got exchanged and that happened on Monday and by Tuesday evening Carl is calling me on the phone, I'm at a PTA meeting at my daughters elementary school and Carl calls me up on the cellphone and says "Check your email I think we're building a library" and I won't go into what those emails were about exactly but it really hit the fan at that time. Well why I know so much about it, well after Dave left I was appointed as interim Dean and so I was covering both Dave's duties and my own and then this new building hits and I about fell over, you know. So Carl was really excited and so Carl can probably give his perspective of those days as well.

**Merat:** (19:53) Right, yeah I think that that email and I don't have an exact recollection but that might have been the one where the Chancellor called a meeting including some architects, bring me some architects in, and that's why I said it looks like we might be building a building. But I'm going to give another historical footnote to some of this as well. It's interesting that in maybe late 2009 or 2010, Dave Barnett was serving on the strategic planning committee to put

together a strategic plan from 2011 through 2014 and he did mention to some of the library leadership at that time that there was a potential of a proposal for a freestanding library within that strategic plan. And I'm not sure that all of us could really hope that that would come to pass, but it actually did come to pass and was actually approved by the board of trustees a week or so before the meeting that Lowell mentioned where the chancellor, president now, had asked for suggestions about that freestanding library. But that was one of the strategic items under academic excellence in that plan. So the planning and the entrepreneurship sort of come together right at that point and really launched this Jerry Falwell Library.

**Miller:** (21:17) So, I do recall I was on a faculty senate committee at the time and we had an advanced copy of this strategic plan. And there it was and we're all, "Yes, that would be wonderful." I remember having some conversations with various faculty members that were really excited for the idea. Before we get into a little bit of the planning here, at that meeting with the faculty, they had talked about the possibility, as Lowell mentioned, of having a seminary library that they were gonna add because at that point the seminary was housed at campus north at that time, now Green Hall. Can somebody address why not have several libraries? We do have a separate law library, but why not have an education department library, and a counseling department library, and a seminary library? From a librarian's standpoint, why is it important to just have one unified collection?

**Merat:** (22:15) Well, I would say you never know who the user of a particular print resource would be, if you're thinking of a library in terms of a collection of print resources. But the same would be true in regards to services. You don't know what equipment people will want to use or what study facilities. And the thinking, I think, was that if you split into a bunch of branch libraries you would have sort of the lowest common denominator of services provided and technology that would be cheapened really. And we would be able to afford to do more. Sort of the same concept that we had done for years with having centralized library and computer labs in one space. It allowed us to have really extended hours and some pretty high tech stuff for that time. And I think there was just a concern that it would come at a great cost, or if it didn't come at a great cost to have those branch libraries, that it would be a cheapened level of service.

**Miller:** (23:07) And, I do recall that with the push even for the seminary library I was thinking as they mentioned that, "well then what are the undergraduate religion students going, are we going to split our current religion collection or are we going to have to duplicate everything in order to have some of those core works and some."

**Merat:** (23:25) Right.

**Miller:** (23:27) Why though why is the Law Library a separate entity?

**Merat:** (23:32) That I think pretty much comes down to the requirements of their accrediting body The American Bar Association and probably similar with the Medical school that is being

built now with an independent, free standing, well not free standing but its embedded within their building.

**Miller:** (23:45) Okay, so we get the email and we're going to have a Library, so to speak and where did it go from there? Was a task force formed? What was the next step?

**Walters:** (23:59) Alright, I well, those emails came about and Carl was all excited as I said and so at that time just transitioning until we placed the next Dean I had a very supportive team of Department heads within the Library under me, and helping me out and so I called a meeting with Greg, as the former Dean, He was working at a distance already I guess again after his sabbatical at BBC. You were part of that crew and so was Carl and Tyler of course and so we started to discuss what it would be, what would we be looking for, for a new Library building and such, so

**Miller:** (24:54) Was the current facility manager on that team? Do you recall?

**Walters:** (24:58) Not, well the current Facility manager is Nick Pavlovic but Casey, Casey Murray didn't come on board until Carl took over as Dean. But, so I don't know what happened as we went through that next week but we narrowed it down then to just the four of us Carl, Greg, Tyler and Me and we started working. As the Thanksgiving holiday approached I remember Carl quickly getting books about Library planning and that sort of thing, you know, and Greg started crushing numbers and looking at other Libraries as to how big they were I can remember assigning Tyler to doing some supportive research in those days to try to figure out how, you know, how big the Library should be. I think Carl spent a fair amount of time trying to find piers and new buildings. I know Appalachian State really rose to the top very quickly in those early days, people who had recently done renovations or built new buildings and were of comparable size in student enrollment and such. So we, we started to realize that with this meeting that was called that the Chancellor wanted to have with the architects that we wanted to be able to put forward general, general things about the building and what we'd look for in it. So Greg would like to say something here so.

**Smith:** (26:32) Yeah I mean Lowell mentioned that this that the whole idea came up in a faculty meeting you said November 15<sup>th</sup> was that right?

**Walters:** (26:39) Yeah I think that's what my memory is saying.

**Smith:** (26:40) Well I have a document from November 22<sup>nd</sup> of that same year so one week later where we in one page envisioned what the new library might be like. So we were in extreme active mode for that week but the fact is that we had been accessing our needs for years. But let me read to you a list of bullets that we thought were the principals that should guide the developer of the new Library. I think with maybe one exception this is basically what you would find in the new Jerry Falwell Library. First is Flexibility for the future reallocation of space, we wanted it to be not constrained by the decisions that were made or that the decisions that were



made would prevent reallocation of space to accommodate for future needs. Abundant access to electrical and network services was a concern at that point, I think we've done that. Maximization of natural light, just toured the facility yesterday, we've done a tremendous job and our architects, obviously, have done a great job enforcing that. Consciousness of environmental factors and I think, I'm not sure if that was physical environment in the sense of noise or if it was more the ecological environment.

**Miller:** (27:51) My recollection of that was the fact that the first floor was just a box so to speak and the lighting was poor and just kind of the old fashioned tiles and so just having a nice thing with the carpeting and the stone and everything was my understanding at that point.

**Smith:** (28:07) Probably so, and one that maybe we didn't accomplish quite as well was a limited number of facility entrances which kind of mitigates security concerns but we've taken a different approach to that. Environmental conditions suitable to the preservation of archival collections that was a concern, we really didn't have what we needed in the old building for that and then lastly aggregating busy or noisy functions near the entrances with a less trafficked required or functions deeper more secluded more remote from the entrances and within a week to come up with those guiding principles it was the Lord but it was also because of a lot of thought that had been done before hand and we were able to come up with the guiding principles very quickly.

**Walters:** (28:51) And I'd like to add to that, about the within a week, you know, one of the things we did have a note here that we met on Monday November 22<sup>nd</sup> all day and one of the first things we did I think was we took a half hour just to pray the four of us and Dr. Falwell has always been known to his quote when something like nothing of eternal significance happens apart from prayer that may not be the exact quote but it's how that's how a former student remembers it but you know that played out too we started off right at that asking for some wisdom and guidance and I think God's been guiding us all along as an institution and we broke it down right there and so we knew we had a pretty big task. Carl you've been pretty quiet on this part. Why don't you give us your perception of those first days?

**Merat:** (29:51) Well it was the same way I think we may have even felt a little sense of panic knowing that things were moving so fast I believe we all thought that our planning process would have a longer timeline than it did. But I remember calling Dave Barnett to let him know, knowing of course that he'd be disappointed that he missed out, on that but also to seek any wisdom that he may have to offer and he said you have everything you need, don't worry about it. He knew Greg had been compiling comparisons of Library buildings for years, he knew that the librarians had been discussing and thinking about the challenges in front of us, that we had survey data, that you know we were ready to take that challenge on but it just came so fast. I have files, you know, multiple versions of files dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup> when we made 28<sup>th</sup> through 29<sup>th</sup> when we made our proposal 30<sup>th</sup> somewhere right in there that Greg was recapping and you know I think one of the things I recall as well maybe I'm jumping ahead we

went into that first meeting with the Chancellor and some of his advisors there and you know we really went in I think adamant against using a robotics system especially if it was going to be off site and that was something that we argued very strongly about, I remembered Dr. Hall, Cline Hall, was there in that meeting the Chancellor had invited him as well to be a part of that discussion. Turner Perrow was there from, he's a city councilman now but he's also an engineer in town, I believe, and I believe he had recommended VMDO as an architectural firm they were working with Sweetbriar at that time on planning for a library and they had been invited in and I think you know we had a very frank discussion about the challenges of storing materials off campus but also looking at what Sweetbriar was planning to do with some robotic storage and the cost savings that were involved and it I think it challenged the Librarians there that we came away with at least considering that as an option you know going forward. I know Greg had done some projections on the cost of that and he's got a median of over two hundred thousand square feet at a cost of around about forty million dollars for similar projects that had been completed since 2004 and so you know we shared that information with them and I think those numbers were pretty close to what the architects came up with in terms of cost especially in that and in terms of the initial projections on the size of the building.

**Smith:** (32:53) Right we were extremely, I was surprised just looking at the document here how close we came in at the targets. Within a week we projected 140,000 square feet, we're coming in at 170,000 which is percentage wise not that far off. 450,000 volume capacity I think we're going to be between 450 and 500 thousand total capacity and then we projected that the new library plus what would remain behind would have space for 3500 seats and that's very close to what we will have, library plus computer lab space left behind so it's just amazing how there have been many points of give and take in the past three years in terms of what exact technology and so forth would go inside the new building but the general direction was set very early and I think helped quite a bit.

**Walters:** (33:43) Well I, I one of the other notes I have here indicates too that we had thought a little bit about where the location would go if we were asked and I have here not in a numbered but in a bulleted list that we had thought of proposing Champions Circle dorms 1, 2, 15 and 16 that area we had, we really were thinking outside the box we had no idea that they were thinking about tearing anything down, we were like what would be the ideal location central on main campus so that was one area we thought of bringing up to them. Evans court some intersection in Evans court and Marie Green drive I can't remember where that was, maybe that was where the tunnels going, near over the soft ball field, we also proposed the former football practice field in Hancock but that's before the Visitors center had broken ground and little did we know what they had plans there and then the last thing on our list was Schilling and I can remember Neal asked you basically saying the Schilling has to come down so and that's where the library is being built there in the Schilling.

**Miller:** (34:59) Where the old Schilling was now what I was going to ask was at that first meeting with the Chancellor and the Librarians committee were there any representatives from the architectural firm? Or this was still

**Walters:** (35:11) Yes.

**Miller:** (35:11) Oh there were some

**Walters:** (35:13) There were at least two and I remember after that meeting Dave Oakland came back with Tyler Veak and I, into my office at the time and we were still like we said before we were kind of in shock and he talked to with Tyler Veak and I and said well this is a lot of work and it looks like it's going to be an aggressive time line, here's what you need to expect and then he started off, Dave Oakland, from VMDO, started off telling us what we should expect with programing, formulation and all that and as he kept going, maybe I'm getting ahead of a transition here for you, but as he kept going I'm beginning to think we need to assign a project manager for this. So I was occupied with general administrative duties and everything and Carl was, Carl seemed to be the most excited and less apprehensive of the whole gang and Tyler Veak was very very you know idealistic and he really acted as our conscious in some ways.

**Smith:** (36: 14) What would we call him? It was some kind of fly. God fly.

**Walters:** (36:20) [*Laughter*] Yes, yes, yes. That's exactly what we'd call him and so as time kept coming along and more and more it seemed like this was going to solidify. I don't know where Carl was at that post, he must have had a commitment or something but as we went into December then on December 17<sup>th</sup> I appointed Carl as a Project Manager and said Carl lead us on this, I'll support you let's keep going with this team but let's make this your baby and so you know, that leads us into early December and by then the initial shock was starting to wear off it was looking.

**Smith:** (36:59) We were still guarded though as far as conveying you know a sense to the Library staff and faculty because we really didn't want them to get their hopes up and so we were just being very conservative with what we were communicating it was pretty low profile even as we understood that this was probably going to mean some very significant changes for us.

**Miller** (37:18) Now, was there a certain point in which the Chancellor said at that time since he's become called the President now

**Smith:** (37:27) We would follow the news. If there were public releases, we knew that we were clear, you know, if it had been announced either by the university or came out in the media. That was our cue that we had freedom, to go ahead and discuss the implications.

**Walters:** (37:39) Well, now I had called Dr. Godwin. I was reporting to him as the interim dean, and I had called him at one point, I don't remember all the details. But I said, "you know, this is

really starting to be a lot of chatter, how do you want me to handle that sort of thing.” And you know he just said, “Oh, just calm down, we’re just you know.” But I adopted that sort of thought then too that, just don’t get ahead of the public media. We’ll react to public, and the rest we’ll just be kind of reserved.

**Miller:** (38:11) Well, if I can ask this question this way. It seems as though with this project to me, I’ve only been here for nine years now, but it seems like for any project, this one seems to be a project that really had a lot of direction from the folks that are going to be using the facility. Did we kind of instigate that, or maybe I am just mistaken as far as other projects go. If someone could address that issue there as to whether it seems like sometimes planning is done at the other end and then kind of imposed down at the department, or whatever. Maybe you could address that.

**Merat:** (38:49) Well, there was a lot of planning went into the DeMoss building itself. I can remember sitting in meetings with Dr. Hawkins and Dave and other administrators at that time discussing where different departments might be located as the building was built out, you know. So that was two or three years before some of like the third or the fourth floor, even longer for the fourth floor, was anticipated, but they were drawing up and talking about plans for things at that point. But, you know, we’re a very nimble university. We do discussion, we do short time lines with a lot of discussion and always open to changes and probably anticipate that there will be lots of changes along the way. We pride ourselves, I think, on doing that and with cost savings, you know, emphasized as well to be able to do it as good stewards. But, this project I think was a little different. I think there was more input from the architects then any project that I was aware of. And VMDO is a very customer centered architectural firm. And, you know, from the very beginning even as we were planning there turned out to be an ALA conference in San Diego that year in January, where there was going to be a session on the architecture of new library buildings. And it was decided that I would attend that. And David Oakland did go along to that conference with me and even did some preplanning I believe and, you know, bonding with me and us as an organization at that particular conference.

**Smith:** (40:49) I’ll give you a perspective on sort of the progress of planning. I think your perception, Randy, is generally right. That as a campus and as a library over the years we have gotten better at planning. And just to give you an anecdote, when I came to campus in 2003, I was scheduled by contract to start on April Fool’s Day, 2003. And I get a call from my boss, Maurice Zaffke, to come into a meeting on March 31<sup>st</sup>, which I think was a Monday. I think I was starting on a Tuesday, if I recall correctly. But he called me in to come the day before my contract said I should start, because we were planning for the development of the library on the third and fourth floors of DeMoss. And so here I get called in, I’m thinking, “What have I gotten myself into?” Of course that was a week before the arsonist tried to light a fire in the library. But literally, that gave me a premonition of what life was going to be like at Liberty. But it also indicated the sorts of stops and starts in the planning process. I mean, here we could, I could be, I had moved across country to come to Liberty with no inkling that we were about to expand into

third and fourth floors. Before I even officially start, that becomes the watch word that we're proceeding with this, and then within a very short amount of time it had fizzled out because the donation of the outfitting of the green hall portion of campus. So, yeah, there was a lot of starts and stops and a lot of gains in the experience of listening to users and becoming more customer focused and just more disciplined about planning as time went along.

**Miller:** (42:19) Now you've spoken a little bit about why VMDO was chosen. But for those preliminary meetings, as were just kind of getting off the ground, was this a two-fold effort between librarian planning committee and the architects, or was it a three-fold approach between upper administration, someone representing the chancellor's office or Charles Spence with building and that, was it a three-fold thing between the university librarians and the architect? Or, explain.

**Walters:** (42:55) Well, the answer to your question will probably be started by me, and then finished by Carl here, because, you know, as we had that initial meeting right after Thanksgiving, then it got quiet a little bit. And I think that my memory is, once I had appointed Carl as project manager for representing and liaising for the library to whomever, whether it be to the architects or the University administration, we soon went into program and space planning mode. And Carl can pick up there but he and I got permission to bring in outside consultation. Carl went to the San Diego meeting, so Carl can speak more to that. But that's where all of a sudden we started to go into space planning and program, so it got a little quiet. We had homework to do at that point. So Carl, if you want to pick up there.

**Merat:** (44:12) Ok. There was concern as we went forward. Well, let me step back. Yes, there was a very intense probably six to eight week period of exchange of data between Greg and Lowell and I and the architects. I'm trying to recall if, I think it was later in that process as we started to talk a little bit about the robotic storage system, and, you know, the cost of what that would be verses the benefits that we decided. We had initially recommended that there would be a library consultant in our executive summary. We recommended that, but weren't sure exactly for what. You know, we were sort of not aware of what all the challenges would be. But when we found out that the determination of the expenditure, a large expenditure for this robotic system, would come into play I think we talked with Dr. Godwin and recommended that he allow us to search for a consultant who could advise us related to, you know, the future of the book and what types of options we had to look at there. It was interesting we looked at maybe three or four different national consultants, folks who had been advising libraries on both space, some of them have been advising them on the actual removal of books from libraries, some who were experienced in working with library vendors and advising libraries about, you know, the development of spaces, and we weren't even considering the consultant we hired initially. And until VMDO recommended to us a consultant that they had worked with. Elliot Felix, was running a consulting called, Bright Spot Strategy. And Elliot was sort of unique in the market. He's worked with museums, he's worked with Google, he's worked with Microsoft, but he also had been a consultant working with the Hunt Library at the UNC campus in North Carolina, that

was probably one of the most innovative designs in the library world at the time. So I think we sort of reluctantly agreed, hoping that maybe this just wasn't a ringer in some sorts. That the architect wanted to work with him more than anything, but we did interview him, both with Charles Spence and I don't remember how much Lowell or Greg was involved in interviews. I think we all did a review of the proposals of what we knew of those folks and we ended up going with Bright Spot Strategy. Who turned out, I think, to be a real blessing for us. He really helped. He likes to say he fills in the dark spaces. There's a language of librarians, there's a language of contractors, there's a language of architects and designers and he knew all of those areas very well and he really helped us to step through the final design process.

**Smith:** (47:31) The proposals. [Interjection during Merat's speaking]

**Miller:** (48:06) Now, my understanding was that he was very instrumental in the design and the philosophy of the customer service center and having that one unified. It used to be that there were reference desks and circulation desks and putting that all together. Did he have more of an influence than just that customer service philosophy?

**Walters:** (48:31) Wasn't he hired, kind of, twice by us? Once for the space planning and then involving Jim Self, and then we did a supplemental consultation with him for the customer service thing a little bit after we got the space planning settled. Because we had to get these large chunks of space defined for the architects to do the general, macro level, I don't know what the architectural terms are but, the macro level space planning to get the general shell of the building preplanned.

**Merat:** (49:08) Lowell is right, and one of the criteria we had for the consultants was that they would be able to speak to the recommendations about the growth of the print book collection. And Elliot was chosen because he involved Jim Self, who from the University of Virginia, who is a national library assessment expert, and you know, he is probably the top people in the country to be able to do that type of work. But Lowell is right. We went from spreadsheets. I mean hundreds and hundreds of files that Greg accumulated over the years, you know, we fed to them and then they would give us spreadsheets back and we would do the calculations on spaces but it wasn't, you know, it wasn't as though we looked at the building. We looked at spreadsheets and then we looked at blobs on papers, you know. This is the mass of this building. Well if the building mass is going to be this big, you have got to break it up into two separate wings. And that's when the library really first started to take some type of shape. But there really wasn't any concept of what it would literally look like. It does look close to those two wings, but then like you said, Randy, there was some discussion about, you know, this integrated service point that we originally called it where, you know, the circulation and reference and all the customer service would be centered. Elliot was probably involved early in some of that process with VMDO, but not as much with us. Once he came on in regards to the books, then he did become more of a part of that in trying to make sure that some of the goals that we had set, again were kind of, he represented us to the architects as well a lot of the time and helped, I

think, with a lot of the statistical planning for the bookshelves and a lot of data that he helped us to work through with that.

**Walters:** (51:10) One other thing that started to happen. I can't remember the date, maybe you guys have it documented. But Carl, you and I and Tyler Veak took a trip up to James Madison's newest library, and that helped us to start realizing too. Um, what's the name of that library? It's on the east side of [US]81 up there.

**Merat:** (51:31) They changed the name of it. East campus or something like that.

**Walters:** (51:32) Anyhow, yeah, but there was really a very small collection of books in that building. That's when it first started hitting us too that this is more about spaces, or just as much about spaces, as it is the collections and the warehousing of the library, and that's where it really started to hit home to me, with me, in regard to what the library is gonna start physically looking like. I think that we were very favorably impressed with the structure that they had built up there. Greg unfortunately wasn't a part of that trip because he was at a distance. So that was a neat trip. And that was kind of impromptu. I remember us putting that together in a matter of a couple days.

**Smith:** (52:21) It was in January of 2011, so again, moving very quickly. And to kind of address the question you asked a few minutes ago, Randy, about sort of the influence of different parties on the planning process. I actually presented at a conference about a month ago in which I shared a slide about the different influences and my perspective was that of a member of the library personnel. But I think there were five influences I would distinguish. Certainly the library staff and faculty contribute a lot to that, and the architect obviously contributed a lot, and Bright Spot contributed at a certain point in some very critical ways. The other two you asked about, you know, the university leadership, central administration and planning and obviously a lot [mumbles] the way we became very dependent on people like Charles Spence to guide us through this process. And then there was input from students and faculty. And so I think that the product that came out of this if you think of a diamond being formed or anything that sort of gets forged under pressure. There was this confluence of pressures from the different perspectives and interests of those different, and areas of expertise. And everybody brought something to the table. And I think we would have accomplished, wouldn't have accomplished, what we did without the expertise that each of those brought to the table.

**Walters:** (53:37) And some of those other, some of the ways in which we got feedback from the library staff and the students. I can remember, we started doing some things, somewhere along the line we did a SWOT analysis. We had every department in the library give us strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and do it somewhat from the perspective of, "how can you do work differently if we can start from scratch? Which appeared at that time we were doing." And we also did some unique things like, we would simply set these easels out in the area and put a general question on the top of the sheet. And I can't remember what some of the

questions were, but we got feedback like, what do you want in the library, just a really broad question. And we got things like, “aquariums, lots of,” and that just affirmed lots of light, lots of the stuff that we already.

**Miller:** (54:33) Lots of outlets was another one.

**Walter:** (54:36) Yeah, yeah. Things like that. I think that was about the time we started at. Maybe I am getting ahead of the chronology there, but

**Smith:** (54:42) Well, you mention two things that looks like the SWOT analysis happened in January of 2011. The priorities survey which we did on the flip charts was a little bit later. It looks like we did that in June of 2011. And it really functioned to, because that’s where we just asked the very simple question, “What should be in the new library?” And people were constrained because they wouldn’t take a sharpie and write an epistle to us. They would give us a very short snippet of what their top priority was. At that stage in the process, I mentioned how far we came in just in a matter of weeks and everything just sort of seemed to be clarifying the picture a little bit more. And within that 6 months, 7 months, after the original concept, and in November, 2010, was when we did the flip chart survey. And it really just affirmed to us that we were on the right track, because most of what people had asked for was already being incorporated in to the plan, the program, at the point. Maybe some small examples, but a real affirmation that we had listened to our customers for a long time, and were poising ourselves to present what we needed to them.

**Miller:** (55:47) Now, I would be remiss, with a group of librarians here, if I didn’t ask this question. Somewhere around November 2010, I heard somebody say, and it was somebody fairly high up in the administration, say, “Well what do we need a new library for? The book is dead, everything is going electronic, you know, pretty soon were just going to have a Kindle or a Nook and, you know, just be able to get our books that way. So why do we even need to build a new library? People are getting rid of books.” I don’t know if you heard that same comment.

**Merat:** (56:23) Well, I think we had heard those comments, but there was actually, I think, a prayer leaders meeting that stirred up some interesting times for Lowell, that the chancellor, president at that time, chancellor at that time, president now, had gotten word of that they wanted more books in the library. They felt very strongly that the print book was not dead and they wanted more books in our library and I believe it led to like a \$100,000 budget amendment that.

**Smith:** (56:57) It did. It happened early in the fall of 2010. We actually ran a survey, asked the 1,200 prayer leaders to respond to that and got about 350 responses. And the immediate impact was getting an infusion of \$100,000 into our library book budget, which has not only persisted from year to year since then but has actually been increased as our consultant came on board and advised to that end. So this was very fortuitous, you know, very providential that we had so many different points of input that really helped us build what we have.



**Miller:** (57:30) But just for the listener, the general listener to this interview here. What is the general response from librarians to the fact that the book is dying or dead?

**Walters:** (57:43) Well, I think we're in a transition period, you know. This is my personal opinion and experience and such, and observations. Definitely reference is digital. Our reference collection is just really stocked, getting used, unless it was something really specialized and only available in print. And of course, if you go back to the early 90's, really it's the encyclopedias that led the way, because they had the multimedia generating sort of attributes of adding video clips and audio clips and that sort of thing. But as time has gone by, I certainly think, you know, I own, I've owned two nooks and now I own a nexus 7, and I find that I personally enjoying reading, leisure reading, very much so in that format. The thing that I'm experiencing, and I think that when I did a focus group with some students on assessment day a couple years ago, and this was a couple years ago, but they were coming back to those questions that I was asking there saying. I was supposed to focus on this very question, sort of. They were basically saying that, in regards to textbooks, they wanted both formats because the textbook, the traditional textbook in paper format, was very easy to study with, annotate, and use that way. But they really liked these multimedia features that they would get with the supplemental disks and things like that. So, I think we're still transitioning there, but what really is driving the electronic side for our institution is the fact that currently we have over a 100,000 head count online and we can't get that paper format to them very quickly. You know, we have an anecdote, I think it was you, Randy, that had someone respond, you answered a reference question with them and they had just come off the battlefield in Afghanistan and they were doing research in their downtime. I just can't, that's almost hard for me to comprehend. But that's the type of student that is out there using our digital. So, digital is up and coming. I think there needs to be more tools developed to help people collate their notes and things that they take from all over the different options there. But Greg you can speak to some of this too.

**Smith:** (1:00:23) Well, I certainly concur with what Lowell is saying that there is a transition from print to digital, and it has occurred at different times for different formats. So, you look at reference materials such as Lowell mentioned, scholarly journals, government documents, all of those, the tipping point is passed. The predominant delivery mechanism for those is the digital. The print is a supplement, so to speak, to it. What is trailing behind is, you've got fiction books, you've got non-fiction books, and textbooks. And those are the areas where most people are reluctant now. Now, fiction books, I think, have made a pretty good transition particularly to the portable, digital devices like the nook and kindle and so forth. Based on the surveys we've done with our users, their still reluctant to migrate in the area of the non-fiction book, especially if they have the option of being here in residence. And so there is that coexistence factor. I would just point out that for the most part when new media are introduced, they don't immediately, if ever, fully displace the old media. The old media continue to have a presence. Now maybe over the course of years, decades, sometimes even hundreds of years in past history, the older media would finally be phased out. You know, we don't use 8 track tapes anymore, but there was a

while those coexisted with the newer technologies and so forth. So I think we are going to find a sense where there is this coexistence, but what direction is the trend moving and how quickly is it moving? And among librarians I think you'll find that we do have a sort of an emotional attachment, and even an olfactory attachment. I was recently on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis, and the tour guide there said, "When I want to show people a building that really looks cool, I take them here. When I want them to have the sensory experience with the smell, I bring them to..." what, it was the Asian studies library on their campus. And it smelled like a traditional library. And I think many of us have, you know, that evokes some intense emotional experiences for us.

**Miller:** (1:02:30) I think even with our distance students, if you asked them on a survey, "Would you like to have the book immediately and be able to read it on the screen?" They'd say yes. But if you'd say well which format do you prefer to read it in? Well I'd just assume have something to hold in my hands that I can annotate or that I can.

**Smith:** (1:02:48) Especially the annotation factor and I as a graduate student you know, gone back to graduate school at this point, I experience that all the time. Sort of the tension of, if I put it into digital form it's very portable, I can call up, I can edit, I can do this. But man when I want to mark something up, keep notes, and organize things that are then going to go into composition there's a real competition there with the print environment. Maybe that's for me, I'm 41. Maybe the younger students feel something a little different.

**Merat:** (1:03:17) One of my favorite episodes of Star Trek is when Captain Kirk retired to bed with a leather bound print book. [*Laughter*]

**Miller:** (1:03:23) Captain Picard did the same thing. [*Laughter*] Um, Well let's get back to the Library at hand. We'll leave the philosophical for just a moment here now, and so when was it determined how many square feet is it going to be and then is it going to be two stories or three stories and when we had this robotic system and we'll talk more in-depth about the robotic system a little bit later on but the fact that if you build one of those you have to build the library around it so when did some of these decisions start being made?

**Walters:** (1:03:59) Well Elliott Felix was brought on board as we said earlier and he started helping us to narrow down what our purposes of certain areas were going to be and then you can find in, imagine it'll show up in the archives, we have photographs of the architects coming to the library one day and it was really kind of fun they put out the general footprint of the building it was two wings attached with an atrium which is

**Smith:** (1:04:33) I have a document from February that was, February 2011, done by VMDO where that footprint design was already there and a similar document that shows 167,000 gross square feet so already those targets were very early in the process.

**Walters:** (1:04:50) Right well they had we knew by then that it was generally going to be four service floors. We hadn't settled on, I'm getting ahead of myself on some of those issues. There were four floors and then they had, they each they had literally sheets of paper that they had as the same scale as the general outline of the building and they had them down to what the square footage of these general purpose areas were. You could find a photograph of us taking these little color coded sheets and rearranging them on different floors in the building to determine where the general spaces were going to go. The ASRS was just a square footage thing at that point with I think the assumption that maybe it would be two stories already at that time but we were, it was basically this rectangle on this piece of paper that we were shoving around and trying to figure out where it would be at with relation to different things so.

**Smith:** (1:06:00) We had to figure out where the biggest pieces fit within the whole and fit some of the smaller things in the distributed user seating spaces around those.

**Walters:** (1:06:11) And so Carl I don't know if you can recall any more on that but if you keep track of the timeline that Greg keeps bringing up and keeping us on track there, you know. We had just visited JMU library a few weeks before and then VMDO is coming with their color coded general spaces. It was along that line too that we were starting to get some definition from upper administrators as to which bodies would be going with us. We had thought of some other support services that could be relocated within our walls, Center for Teaching Excellence was one of them, but they were also remodeling a part of DeMoss where they're at now, I think. So, you know they settled in somewhere else before we could get that built.

**Miller:** (1:07:03) The Honors Office is currently in our facilities. Was that one of the considerations?

**Walters:** (1:07:09) We have, we for a while we were talking to them, that's correct.

**Miller:** (1:07:12) Or the writing center they work with students that are writing, that research would seem to go along with that. So what made things go in or out and then here's the broader question okay so we settle in about 170,000 square feet why not 250 why not 100 thousand. What set that parameter? Was it strictly a matter of cost? Or what made that beginning?

**Walters:** (1:07:36) Well we did, we did go in with a pretty idealistic number at one point, I don't know if we should say the number or not, but you know, we scaled back down, we got to a point where we were given a bull's-eye of fifty million and but we were higher than that at one point and so we started working with that general line. Carl I don't know, do you have any recollections of how that?

**Merat:** (1:08:04) Well I think you're, I think you're correct. You know, it was, there was a lot of development that needed to take place before the architects could actually produce you know, a fairly accurate cost factor, for the university to consider. And they really hadn't put many restrictions on us to that point, you know, and at that initial presentation, the presentation where

they first presented that dollar figure, you know we went through every aspect of the building explaining you know, from staffing to support services. The architects had provided some drawings and broke them out by form and function, and I think you know, the University decided that they just didn't want it to be as expensive as it was coming out at that point. They wanted to see if there was a way to, you know, reduce that cost some and, you know. I was charged with going through that and try to recommend some potential changes that could save, you know, 10% or so something like that, make a presentation to that effect. And I think you know, what happened was the, one of the larger chunks that came under consideration was the curriculum library and the potential at that time was there was discussion about a School Of Education building. And because the Curriculum library had at one point been located in the Education building and it was a relationship that the Curriculum Librarian and the School of Education staff felt was a very productive one. It had changed sometime in the early 2000's whenever we, whenever we, the ILRC was constructed, and the Curriculum library was brought from School of Education over into the ILRC. It was decided that that was a potential change that could be made to offer a fairly significant reduction in square footage and cost for that building. So at that point you know, the size shifted and also like Lowell said like with CTE there was sort of already plans under way for a space for them and CASAS, you know, there was anticipation of their move and Honors was situated in a pretty good space so you know, it was decided some of those areas could be dropped out as well.

**Miller:** (1:10:39) Now, this building, as I've seen it go up, is just a beautiful building. It's got chandeliers, it's got Jeffersonian architecture. We do have some buildings on campus that frankly are just boxes, you know, boxes with sheet rock walls. Was it ever a consideration to not have this be an architecturally beautiful building, to just have it be a functional, minimal cost building? Was that ever even a possibility?

**Merat:** (1:11:06) I don't think so. I think it was always intended to be a showcase. I think both the president and the provost talked about it as being something that the university and its alumni and its students and its faculty could all be proud of. You know we went through some, again with Elliot Felix, in the spring of 2011 there, a day or two of consultations with campus leaders and students talking about what they wanted from a library. And all of those meetings talked about a distinctive, you know, space that the university could be proud of.

**Walters:** (1:11:48) Keep in mind too that back in November of that, in that time period, November of 2010. One of the things at that faculty meeting was the fact that, I believe, the upper administration had just released that \$150,000,000 bond, and I think the general idea was let's build an academic precinct, let's build a more permanent looking campus. And they had already decided. They had already re-painted the brick on some of the dorms to match. They had put trim around the dorms that they are tearing down now, they at least painted that to start blending in the blues and the reds of the university colors and all that sort of thing. So, not only was the library being talked about, but I believe it was VMDO that was designing the whole precinct. That involved this whole area here where the, someday this station, where we are

recording this, is going to get raised and the whole precinct is changing. They are building, you know, the science hall now. The foundation is going in for that. The music hall is getting close to that point. So, all that sort of thing was being looked at, and so their architectural concepts were all being blended with these other buildings.

**Smith:** (1:13:13) Yeah, those proposals, where we first saw something come to graphic and visualization in February of 2011, I was looking at that and the library was set in the context of an academic precinct with surrounding buildings. And just this whole concept of how the quad would be formed and how it would be integrated with DeMoss and what needed to be removed, and so forth. You know, it's taking shape now, almost 3 years later.

**Miller:** (1:13:40) Well now, was there a certain architectural style or pattern? Is there something that they are patterning this quad after, the academic precinct, as well as the architecture of the individual buildings?

**Walters:** (1:13:53) Well, it has always been an ongoing theme that we have heard from the top, that the chancellor, now president, has always wanted to have a lawn sort of affect in this precinct, like UVA has a big lawn. That has been consistently in the communication that we have heard. It was kind of interesting. At one point, David Oakland and Joe Atkins and Jim Kovack and all those fellas at VMDO, at one point, we came to realize that sometimes when we talk Jeffersonian, the typical person off the street, like myself, thinks Jeffersonian means brick and archways and balance and maybe the octagon or whatever it is at Monticello.

**Smith:** (1:14:47) Columns.

**Walters:** (1:14:48) Yeah, the colonnades and that. We tend to think of that as Jeffersonian, but as I remember it, the architects were telling us that Jeffersonian is really more about functionality and the human experience interacting with the building and that sort of thing. So, really what we were thinking in its style it's more like old Virginia, as opposed to Jeffersonian, but it is a blend of old Virginia and Jeffersonian. Greg, do you want to say anything more about that?

**Smith:** (1:15:19) Yeah, two points on that. I think, I was very impressed with the architects, the level of, sort of, intellectual seriousness that they brought when we started talking about Jeffersonian architecture. They had an intellectual discourse about what that meant and that it wasn't just some sort of static feature, but it was more functional, as Lowell said. So that I think, and they had to come back and make a case to the university administration and say, "you know, we are going to honor the spirit of Jefferson visually in form, but we are really after the, you know, here Jefferson might have done this if he were alive today." So that was one part of it. The other is that just looking back at their proposal from February, actually this is February 2012, I think I made a mistake there on referencing February 2011 a bit ago, but they mentioned their design precedencies as where this came from. And some of the areas were from Williamsburg, William & Mary, University of Virginia, Sweetbriar here locally, Washington

and Lee, UNC Chapel Hill, James Madison. So those were some of the influences that sort of were combined and blended into their proposals for our campus.

**Walters:** (1:16:31) One of the themes, and I don't know where this particular emphasis came from, maybe Carl will remember, maybe Greg, but one of the general things that is going on in the architecture with the building, as it is finishing out here is, they want to follow a theme of bringing the outside into the building and the inside, outside of the building. So, we have balconies and terraces that take that and allow the student to sit outside, but yet feeling somewhat sheltered from the environment. Then there is also the big atrium, where you will feel like, you are inside, but you will feel very much outside, and some of that probably has to do with light cutting through the building and all that sort of thing, but the materials themselves, the brickwork that is on the outside, flows right through on to the inside. The stone, the limestone that they are putting in the main floors, that have the heaviest traffic, that flows. And the way the columns and the pre-cast, the pre-cast elements are placed in the building. That all promotes that sort of thinking. Terry Forbes, the one architect who really has worked with us a lot in the later stages here. I just asked him the other day, "Who really, in your firm, came up with these ideas?" And he was telling me that it was Joe Atkins and Jim Kovack. So if I am wrong on that, blame Terry. They are probably going to present for us too, in January here.

**Miller:** (1:18:12) Now, one other thing that I had heard was that our founder, Dr. Jerry Falwell Sr., had a real appreciation for that Jeffersonian effect, and even the old Thomas Road Baptist Church was somewhat patterned after Monticello. And we have, locally here, Poplar Forest, Thomas Jefferson's summer home. Would someone be willing to take us on a verbal walkthrough of the new facility, just somewhat briefly here? But from when I come up and approach the building, some might not ever get a chance to see it but they will be listening to this history and so just to kind of take us on the verbal tour for three or four minutes here.

**Walters:** (1:18:55) Well, everybody is pointing to me because I seem to have been through it the whole way through. Um, you know. Ok so, I don't know. I guess we'll start at the main doors, you're, you face west generally and you come in to the main library floor, which we're calling floor number one. And you come across, um, donor bricks; there was a whole fundraising campaign for this, maybe we'll ask about that later. We come in, across these donor bricks and you come in to an atrium and if you turn to your left you'll see a customer service center which I'm sure we'll talk about at length later. Then you go into a learning commons, we have several different learning commons and the atmosphere and style of them are still being defined. The one is very well defined so far and that is the technology commons. So if you come in those main doors, as I said you'd see the customer's service center on your left, if you turn to your right you'd go into the technology commons. That's where we have more of like the spirit of the open lab of the aisle or seat coming over. About 150, 160 computers are going into that area. Um, then if you keep going to your right there will be uh, an integrative, interactive classroom with different technologies that I really don't think I can fit in the three or four minutes here. Um, but that'll be used for research, assistance, instruction, and for other uh, sorts of collaborative

instruction that faculty members could schedule through the library. If you go further, you'll go down to the lower atrium and there's a kind like a mini suite or a small area for conferencing. So there a double wide classroom there that has a partition that can split that in two. There's a full service catering kitchen near that area so we plan on having events in the lower atrium, um, that could involve food. Almost all of our furniture except for the overstuffed items is, is very portable in those rooms. Um, other furniture, in order to follow through with the spirit of our first desires that we made known in late that November, we're providing lots of furniture with um, electrical plugs. We aren't providing as many computers because along with the book transitioning, computer hardware is transitioning, and so we're depending more and more on students to bring laptops and use tablets. And so we're providing lots of electricity, there's wireless data throughout the building. And so there's going to be seating for about twenty, twenty three hundred students. As Greg said, some of our original numbers, it was interesting that over the past week to get ready for this interview, as I was looking at some things, how much on target we were with that. But uh, seating, twenty-three hundred people, as you go into the, also on that lower level Terrence we have an archive facility that Abigail why don't you tell us about your new archive area.

**Sattler:** (1:22:32) Well the archive has a reception area, where people can first come in, and we're going to have one of the pixel tables in there, which will be a large, interactive surface, like a tablet, only the size of a medium-sized coffee table-ish. And from there we'll have a archive reading room where patrons will go to access the archive materials and it looks very nice; it's got a cool vaulted ceiling and all, and a display case and whatnot. And then past that we have some staff-only areas of a workroom and a storage room, and my office is off to one side.

**Miller:** (1:23:11) And so are you connected at all to the print periodicals? Is that close-by to you?

**Sattler:** (1:23:19) The print periodicals, other than, um, the current issues that are out on bookstands I think are going to be in the regular reading room, which is completely separate from the archive reading room. But all the back issues of the print periodicals, if someone wants to view them, the new policy is if they want the whole magazine or a year's worth of the magazines, not just a single article, they can request those ahead of time and come and look at them in the archive room, because we're set up to monitor people using the materials in place, not checking out.

**Miller:** (1:23:57) Now, the archives, you always have been kind of shunted off to the side in our current facilities there that, um, it's a relatively new area for the University library. Um, do you now have all the space you need? Talk about that.

**Sattler:** (1:24:14) We've got some very nice facilities now, I'm very pleased with it. Um, it's especially nice to have a separate reading room where, you know, none of the archive materials

check out, because some of them are very old and fragile, some of them we only have the one copy. Um, so it's nice to have a separate, dedicated space for people to use the archive materials in, um, where we're right there to help them if they need help making a scan or photocopy, or if they need some reference help.

**Smith:** (1:24:44) You only had to what, wait, what, eight or nine years to, to get that kind of, uh, arrangement, so.

**Miller:** (1:24:49) Is there anything special about your environmental controls that's different, or is the whole robotic system under the same environmental controls?

**Sattler:** (1:25:00) Uh, no, we don't have separate environmental controls for the archive spaces, but all the archive materials are being stored in the robot vault, and the entire robot vault is environmentally controlled.

**Walters:** (1:25:14) It's supposed to be set at sixty-seven degrees, I believe, I'd have to look it up. And fifty percent humidity in the archive vault. And Abigail's facilities are right near the top of the ASRS, the Automated Storage and Retrieval System. And, uh, they're going to have to retrieve stuff at the lower level work stations and bring it up and they, they'll come in the back door of the archive reading room and they'll always be in secure hands. We're even putting, uh, lockers, um, outside of the reading room for the, uh, for the researchers to put their personal items in.

**Sattler:** (1:25:59) Correct, yeah; you'll be able to bring a laptop in and your own pencil, but everything else, like your coat, your heavy winter coat, and your backpack and your notebook and whatever, you'll be leaving those outside. Just to help make sure that, you know, you've got your notes spread out all over the table and when you stack them up to take them out, you might accidentally grab some archive papers and that. We're going to provide note paper that's going to be a separate color, so we'll easily be able to tell, you know, you've got some white paper in there, that's got to be some of ours, so.

**Walters:** (1:26:31) So I've described the lower two levels, generally. There is a basement that won't be available to the public, and the ASRS runs both, well it actually is in, um, it goes through the vault that has the racks which contains the bin, which contain the bins. Um, that is in the basement and terrace levels of the library. There are upper level workstations behind the customer service center where bins will come up, and, uh, in fact that should be the majority of our activity for the, uh, customers requesting books, they'll come up through those workstations. But the vault's a two story vault and that goes through those two floors. Um, but the basement also, uh, has lower level workstations where we'll be able to, uh, do behind-the-scenes things like the periodical scanning, we're doing the interlibrary loan document delivery, I guess we call that, uh, resource sharing now. Um, that department will scan articles, uh we will take a citation from the internet interface, and we will scan the article, send it to a drop box, a virtual drop box, and a student will pick up their scanned article that way. We've already been doing that for



faculty, but now we're expanding that to students. So the basement holds that. There is a very long corridor coming off of our loading dock, that, uh, will service the café. Uh, we have a two story café area that will, um. We know Starbucks is going in there, the signs are up now. And, uh, we also are pretty confident that there's the Pizza Hut Express that had been in the Hangar, uh, which was an eating facility here in the middle of the courtyard, and it's going to be raised someday. But right now the contractor is using that as office space. The Pizza Hut Express that was in there is moving over there. Um, there's supposed to be a sushi bar type outlet as well as something that resembles a Panera Bread sort of bakery. So all that will be serviced through our loading dock corridor, and we also, a unique feature of the building is our loading dock was built large enough to accommodate several buildings. There's a tunnel that's connecting the library at least to the music hall. I don't know if it's going to extend to the science hall, but we're max, the University is maximizing even the loading dock in that way. Um the band trailer, I guess, will sit there, they have a, it looks like they have a special place to park it.

**Miller:** (1:29:30) Are we sharing the, maybe some heating and cooling and electrical systems that are more hefty than they need to be in the basement of the library?

**Walters:** (1:29:39) Yes. Yes, it's my understanding that the chillers and the air handlers and such, um, at least part of that physical plan, I was told, is supposed to help heat and cool the music hall, but whether that's still the case, I'm not sure. But, um, I think it is the case. And they also built it big enough so that they can add another whole unit of boiler if they need to in the future, so then that's all behind-the-scenes sort of thing the typical person won't know, uh, or experience. But then you go up to the second and third floors. The second and third floors is where we have most of our group study room suites. And, uh, some of the feedback that we got from the students was, and from other libraries that we visited, was you can't build enough study rooms. Group study rooms. So we're going to have something like three dozen or so, um, group study rooms and, um, one of the neat things that people are really is we're putting, um. We aren't putting whiteboards, we're doing the writable paint on all those study rooms. So they can do floor-to-ceiling whiteboard, dry-erase marker sorts of things. They could write on the windows if they have the right pens, and they could, they'll be able to write on the tops of the group study room tables because we're putting the glass on top of a very pale surface, so, um, they can practically graffiti the group study room walls.

**Smith:** (1:31:17) So you can honor your toddler-type inclinations, and just kind of draw everywhere.

**Walters:** (1:31:22) So we have, we have several suites, uh, of those rooms and some of them are as large as, I think we can put maybe sixteen people in one or two of them. And, but most of them are maybe six to eight people. And then there's a traditional reading room, a two story traditional reading room; it's a very contemporary look but with, with a traditional feel to it, it's a very nice blend. Um, it's two stories, it has a mezzanine on the upper story and there will be some current popular periodicals, journals, magazines.

**Smith:** (1:31:56) That's a very visually prominent, because it's at the front of one of the, I guess it would be the, uh, South wing of the.

**Walters:** (1:32:03) Yeah, yeah the Southeast, sort of.

**Smith:** (1:32:05) So it's very visible from the front of the library.

**Walters:** (1:32:08) Right. Um. Let's see.

**Miller:** (1:32:12) You mentioned the food court, but now you got us into the library and the customer service center was on the right, I don't think we mentioned –

**Walters:** (1:32:18) It's on the left.

**Miller:** (1:32:19) Oh, it's on the, that's right, it's on the left. There's a media wall isn't there, on the right?

**Walters:** (1:32:23) Oh, yes, yes. Um, there's a media wall that is, I can't remember the dimensions, the listener will have to look up some stuff and read, but, um, there is a very large media wall that the customers will be able to interact with it, it actually is using Kinect's technology, I guess that's Microsoft, um, sort of, um, technology. And, um, the purposes for that are still, um, evolving, but we are at least going to um, do things, it's my understanding we are supposed to be able to post Instagrams and things like that, um, I believe it's, it could be used as a second monitor, um, a really huge monitor for your laptop if you plug it in and do stuff that way, but that, the purpose of that media wall is still evolving and being defined, but, um. Let's see, what else. Abigail mentioned pixel tables, there's four different locations for them, um, but, if we get back touring the building.

**Miller:** (1:33:34) Right, how did I get to the food court, that's what I was missing.

**Walters:** (1:33:36) How did, well you would turn to your left before you get into the walls of the library, there's an airlock, or lobby that you come in, and then you turn immediately to your left and go down, but most people just enter directly off of the- I think there's a bank of donor bricks near there. They'll be able to enter the food court without even coming in that airlock. I keep coming in that way, so I think that way. But, um. And, you know, the whole, uh- the whole, um, southern side of the building overlooks the lake that they- the manmade lake that- that, um, they've. There's a- there was always a small stream- some of the alumni who may be listening who will remember that there was a ravine near with picnic tables and everything and a very big, wooden bridge, and I can remember writing letters home, getting away from my four room- three roommates. There were four of us to a room in those dorms up there that they're tearing down, now. But, um, I would get away and write letters. It was a very nice, little, trickling stream that would go down through there. And that's been running through Vines all these years.

**Miller:** (1:34:52) I was gonna say that's right behind the Vines, so you would go from those Circle dorms, down the hill, and then back up the ravine to get to DeMoss. Well, now, all that's going to be a lake.

**Walters:** (1:35:01) Well, that is a lake, yeah. And that stream. And the, uh, Vines was built when I was a student here, and, um. We were the first class in '91, I believe, to graduate in Vines. But that has had a stream running through it in some way, underneath it in all these years now. But what they've done is they've dammed that up, and, they've added a really nice water feature to it that, that water gets pumped up into a fountain. And it trickles into one reservoir that has some unique outlets and then into another that has like a wall of water that cascades down into the, uh, lake. I keep calling it a pond, 'cause, like you, I've spent some time in Minnesota, and there are huge lakes up there. But, so if I say pond by accident, well, that's uh, that's where it's coming from but it's a very nice pond. But, anyhow, the whole southern side of our building overlooks this lake, and it's really gonna be attractive spots- there will be really attractive spots for the students to enjoy that. Um, but there's also a scholars' commons on the top floor of the building and um, that's an area that we plan on keeping very quiet for one thing. Um, there was also some um, when we designed the building um a lot of, a lot of, newly constructed academic libraries felt that their graduate students and maybe their honor students, they had wanted to rent study carrels all year long. Well what we had determined then was why not have locker spaces near, um, individualized study carrels. And so we have a whole bank of lockers up there in that scholars commons. There's a classroom/ multipurpose lounge sort of room up there with a balcony off of it. Um, the roof of the atrium is actually at the floor level of the top floor of the building. So they've created a green roof there with a bunch of succulent plants that you can look across, and they are supposed to change colors as the year goes along. And then there is a terrace that you can walk out on, a rooftop terrace that you can walk out on. But the whole, the one main feature of the building that I haven't even mentioned yet runs through all four floors of the building, and that is the book tower. The book tower, actually, one of the issues that we have had with the DeMoss building is that there is only windows on the perimeter. It is like this huge rectangle, and a unique fact that I was told back in 2001 was when they really measured the building and thought about it, the DeMoss building is about the size of Noah's ark. So I always thought that was kind of interesting, but it has very few references points for someone with a sense of direction to get around and navigate in it. What they did with the book tower, in this new library, is you can see the book tower from most places in the building and you can always have a sense of direction. So the book tower is a neat architectural feature, but it is also a navigation guide.

**Smith:** (1:38:32) Yeah. These are the kinds of things that we would never have had without some really competent architects looking out for our interests. We would've built another rectangle, I think.

**Miller:** (1:38:42) And, and so, you walk right in that front door and you are looking at an atrium, there's the balcony off to the side, where a staircase type of thing- and so there's a South side

that faces the light. The other side of the South side faces the central atrium, and then there's the left hand side as you'd be facing from the front door of the North side, and so it's getting light in on that area. And then the Northern wall then is going to face the rest of the lawn, of the quad there.

**Walters:** (1:39:20) Well and the lower atrium, and this is a recent development, I don't know when it was established to do it this way, but the, the lawn that's gonna be the, between the Science Hall and the library and then the Music Hall will be on the West side of that lawn. They actually raised that up. They excavated and made that a higher plane. And, the lower atrium now has what we've, we were just talking about this with the architects this morning concerning signage and such, but, as it is now, outside that, that atrium, they're gonna have what we're calling a sunken garden um, that, uh, there's supposed to be some, some nice landscaping out there and everything, but, um. So it'll overlook some sort of a unique garden, as well. Um, I. That's about as best I can describe the building without photos.

**Miller:** (1:40:23) I was gonna say, a little bit longer than three or four minutes, but that's-

**Walters:** (1:40:25) Yes, but it's a big building. The funny thing is is when we take people through and we describe furniture that hasn't even yet arrived, you know, we're still about two months from grand opening here as we record this. But, um, it takes us, even really aggressively taking people through, it takes an hour and a half for me to do this. I just had Greg though last night, how long did it take us?

**Smith:** (1:40:50) I didn't pay attention, but I think it was an hour and half to two hours the last two times you've taken me through, so, we did really well in getting through this in the amount of time we did.

**Merat:** (1:40:58) And just one thing in overview, Randy, I think, uh, the, uh, president used this terminology a lot in the, the development of this contemporary, Jeffersonian-style of this building, and it's rooted in, um, a discipline now called service design as well, and VMDO and Elliott Felix, you know, again, helped guide us through that. You participated in some of the service design sessions we had related to our new customer service model, but it's bringing the services to the customer, their needs, the infrastructure of the building, the architecture, and all that planning and, um, construction process all together and, again, in a really, um, strict customer-focused design and I think that's evident in the building.

**Miller:** (1:41:45) Well it really is innovative, speaking as one who was on that customer service design, uh, team, that, it really is innovative and it gets away from the standard way that libraries have always operated in the past. It used to be that people came and asked really smart people at the reference desks these questions, "What is the population of Japan?" and they would go and get the, you know, the statistical abstract or the, uh, the CIA World Fact Book. And now those kinds of ready reference questions aren't being asked anymore. They're needing –

**Smith:** (1:42:18) They are, but they're being asked of Google instead of us.

**Miller:** (1:42:40) But they're being asked of Google or Wikipedia instead of, instead of at the library. And so what we're getting is more, um, "Here's a concept that I'm trying to find, what search term would you suggest, which database would you use?"; library research assistance is very different. And so, just to mention as part of that service design plan, we developed personas: who are our customers? And we have faculty members that we consider as our customers, staff people, we have graduate students, and this person will never be to the brick and mortar facility. Well we have a call center now where their calls go in. We used to have the call center that, well, somebody could walk up and ask a question, but when you're in the slow times in between them when they're taking questions by phone, well that wasn't working very well, and so now, the call center is separate from the walk-up desk. And it really is a well-designed, well-thought-out plan just as far as the customer service and we aren't going into that extensively here, um. You were saying it took an hour and a half to two hours, and we're at about at the hour and fifty minute mark into our interview this afternoon, so. To talk about some things we don't want to miss here, were there any other libraries that were kind of used as a benchmark or an example, um, that we got some features from them, or we kind of used them as a pattern?

**Merat:** (1:43:45) Well, Lowell mentioned JMU, and I believe I mentioned the Hunt Library at the University of North Carolina, also the Hill Library there. Uh, Georgia Southern, um. Lowell, you have some others in mind?

**Walters:** (1:43:49) Uh, well we- we looked at, you know, you mentioned North Carolina State's, um, it depends on what you were looking for too. Um, the, for the ASRS, I know you're gonna ask us questions about the ASRS so I don't wanna go too far down that road, but in regard to the ASRS and how that works, Georgia Southern and University of Missouri-Kansas City were our main points of interest. I know that one of our librarians popped in on Colgate and saw how theirs was working, um, but then Greg, why don't you tell the listeners about our, uh, our-

**Smith:** (1:44:40) Our Midwest foray?

**Walters:** (1:44:41) Yeah, our tour of Missouri library.

**Smith:** (1:44:44) Yeah, we- I work offsite from Missouri and so I've kept contact with librarians there and I went to a conference where I found out that the University of Missouri, uh, at Kansas City was, not only did they have an ASRS in operation but they had also done some, had a learning commons and had integrated their reference and circulation services, and so we thought, well this is a destination, and as we began to realize that we needed to pay a visit there we thought, well if we're gonna bring people all the way from Lynchburg to the Midwest, we might as well do some other visits. So in the course of, I think, uh, three days, we toured four libraries that had been built in roughly the last ten years. We started with the University of Kansas out in Lawrence, Kansas. I visited the University of Missouri - Kansas City, uh, we went to the University of Central Missouri, and wound up with a, a major research library, one of

the, uh, wealthier institutions in the country, Washington University in Saint Louis. So it was kind of a lightning experience, and the people that participated in that were myself, Greg Smith, Lowell Walters, Marcy Pride, and Rachel Schwedt, I believe. And so, uh, that happened sometime in the spring of, uh, 2011 if I recall correctly. And, um. Could be wrong on that, might check my facts, but.

**Walters:** (1:46:04) Yeah, I'm trying to think, Carl, did you, uh. Now since, you know, one of the things we haven't covered, Randy, is that in- Carl, when did you start as Dean? In the winter there, between 2010 and '11, Carl, uh, came and visited me and said, "Would you mind if I, you know, applied to be the Dean?" And I said, "Oh, please do." So, um, he went from being the project manager to being the Dean, then, and I was very relieved to be in a supportive role for him, so. I don't think we covered that yet in the interview, but then Carl was involved all along in that and I don't know if you, I don't know if you- did you take some other, um- you brought Marcy Pride in as, an Associate Dean, parallel with me.

**Smith:** (1:46:57) Right.

**Walters:** (1:46:58) And then she started getting involved a lot more with the- what started to happen over the winter then as spring emerged in 2011 was that we started to find that we started to get these project emphases, and I started to really, I told Carl, you know, I wasn't thrilled about this ASRS right away, but I'm really- the more we visit- once we visited Georgia Southern and saw how it really worked and everything, I was very excited about the ASRS, so I said I'd be interested in leading the team of people to deploy that, so he said let's go for it. And so Marcy was brought in and she started looking at, uh, the public services and the customer service center side. So you had two different things starting to develop, then, after space planning, and even as space planning was being decided and settled, I started to look more at the ASRS, so when we went on these visits, if there was an ASRS site, I was very interested in that. If Marcy was along, like she was in Missouri, then she was really focused on how did they do their public services and all that.

**Smith:** (1:48:11) And that was 2012, I double checked. I was wrong on that, so.

**Walters:** (1:48:15) So, but you know, that took a little bit longer, but um, so that's how some of these visits went. I'm sure that Marcy visited some other areas, and I know we're going to do an interview involving her. This interview is more focused on the earlier days when she hadn't even been here at that time. So Carl, could you expand on those comments, or..

**Merat:** (1:48:38) Yeah, I think that again, we really started to, again, bringing the whole concept in of not just the infrastructure, but what services we would provide and how. And trying to provide appropriate emphases on our research services, as well as just the general customer service that we provided throughout the building, was Marcy's emphasis as she came in. And Randy, again, stepped up to provide leadership for our graduate students, and specialized services for those folks and our faculty going forward. And again, we expanded our

online services, and you know we, I think we just spent a lot of time, we did a prototype of our customer service center as we thought it might work out in the Jerry Falwell Library, in the existing library. We spent an awful lot of time. I say we, Rachel Schwedt and some of the folks working with Rachel, spent a lot of time developing that, and that's about the point where I stepped down as dean. I think that was December of 2012, and Marcy became the dean in December 2012. And she has sort of taken it from there, so.

**Miller:** (1:49:58) So let's, one more thing before we leave the design of the building, and that would be, "how does the new building, in big, broad categories, differ from basically the book warehouse, with a few seats for student's that we have on the first floor now. So what are some of those major features? I'm hearing the ASRS, or the storage robotic system, what are some other things that this library has that we didn't have before, or that we are doing so much better?"

**Merat:** (1:50:33) Well it kind of goes to, again, the inspirational features I think. When you walk into the front of the building and you walk into the atrium grand lobby area and you look up, you know the two or three floors of glass on the book tower, and you know, see the light pouring in through the skylight above there, and the walkways going across, and you get a chance to look out the south wall on to the lake, and the hanging stairwell that's in that. You know, I think the design of the facility, and it's you know, really evident when you're on the lower atrium and you look up, and just look at the quality of, you know, the materials used in the building. I think that is most overwhelming to me.

**Miller:** (1:51:18) Lots of natural lighting, great architectural features, another area would be a lot more room for students, as opposed to just storing books.

**Smith:** (1:51:27) I think that's one of the chief features. And that brings the ASRS into consideration because we shrank the footprint that would be required, and we re-invested that in user space. And I would really characterize our building as a user-centric facility, and not what so many libraries have been for so long, and that is a collection-centric facility. And so we were able to focus on things like technology presence and just a diverse array of seating, you know, with various kinds of amenities and features that would allow individuals and groups to work with and without technology. And, just, that is the hallmark, and we could document it statistically how we would compare against other major libraries in the region. In fact our consultants did that for us, in terms of the distribution of space for various functions, and ours was, is extremely heavily slanted towards the user, which we think is a great place to be.

**Miller:** (1:52:30) And then group study rooms. That's another function. I know when I was a student, it's every man for himself, but it seems as though there is a lot more team and collaborative type effort today. And so group study rooms, there's lots and lots of them in the new facility here. Having a home for archives and the graduate scholar's commons area there, the nice reading room. Having a nice built-in food court so that you could get something to eat. There's lots of neat functions in this new building. Alright, let's get into the move here now in

the just a few moments that we have left. What prompted the split of the library and the labs? And actually right now we've started calling ourselves the Jerry Falwell Library, why are we no longer the ILRC and what's going to happen with what is currently there on the first, second, and third floors?

**Merat:** (1:53:26) Well I could talk about the split. I think administratively, there had been questions for several years about why the library and the computing infrastructure were budgetary arranged together. And I think the initial reasons for doing that were very valid when we were a smaller school. And the amount of technology that we utilized was not as large and as complex but over the years the labs had spread sort of from a centralized position across campus. And I think the management of both of those operations together was becoming more and more challenging and I think the opportunity to focus more specifically and intently on library functions and the technologies involved in managing libraries as oppose to classrooms and the software needed to support those classrooms and even some enterprise functions that, you know, came into play, related to different technologies was the primary reason for that, it seemed to be, again, in a sense, more efficient to bring those areas together in terms of approvals and communications and budgetary management, so.

**Miller:** (1:55:00) And so when we move over to the new facility, what is the state of what is now the computer labs?

**Walters:** (1:55:12) Well I know that they are, as it is now they are supposed to start remodeling the second floor over the Christmas break coming up here in a month or two. But really, Randy, beyond that I don't know that I can comment on it because I think it would just be rumor-and-hear-say so I really can't even answer that

**Miller:** (1:55:40) And really that's not us anymore.

**Walters:** (1:55:40) Right.

**Miller:** (1:55:41) But I guess the point to be made for this is that we are not recreating the ILRC in the new Jerry Falwell Library building, we're not going to be a combined library large computer labs where as far as floor space goes, right now two thirds of our floor space is computer labs. And maybe even if you add the computers that were on the first floor it was as high as three-fourths lab space and one-fourth book storage. That's not going to be anymore.

**Merat:** (1:56:13) Right, and some of the complications we face, at least in the design in the current ILRC was the traffic that came through the library to get to the labs. Now that's a blessing and a curse, you know, there were people there that we could service and influence and were close to, in terms of being able to service them. But on the other hand, that amount of traffic made a lot of noise and provided a lot of complications for the quiet study spaces. Again, it was a huge emphasis of what our students have really asked for in a library, so.



**Smith:** (1:56:46) I would point out that the fact that the ILRC dissolved after being in existence for, I guess 11 years or so, was also related to the leadership capacity for that. I don't know that the ILRC emerged directly under the leadership of Maurice Zaffke, but shortly after they were formed, he was in charge of it, he was the chief information officer for the university and had a very unique capacity as an academic, as a technologist, and also I guess you'd call him an aficionado of libraries. And that's a fairly unique blend that I don't know is necessarily in any university that there's a set up for a person to have that blend of abilities to supervise all those areas and do them justice equally. And so, I think that was part of it. With his retirement due to health concerns we didn't have on our campus someone who was really equally capable of leading information technology and classroom support and academic computing and libraries in a way that he did. It just took about 5 or 6 years after he retired for us to realize that and to carry it, and well we persisted and were, I think, enthusiastic about being with the labs but ultimately they were able to stay where they had been. And we really needed to have some independent space.

**Merat:** (1:58:14) Well that's an excellent point, I'm glad you mentioned it.

**Smith:** (1:58:16) Hat nod to Maurice.

**Walters:** (1:58:20) Right, I don't know if you guys remember, maybe Tyler will talk to us when his interview comes up but I know that that was one of the things we really had to determine, too, was just how many computers would go with us and what would our relationship be with the computer lab going forward. Now the capacity of the building, like Greg alluded to earlier, is about a half million physical materials between the ASRS, the book tower, and also the reading room. But if the day comes and the book dies a slower death than we think or maybe doesn't die and the university keeps growing and growing, we had to come to a point, too, where, well there does get to be a point where it's not geographically feasible to have everything in one particular building.

**Smith:** (1:59:13) That's correct, and again I think there's a transition in place with computing technology where people are becoming more mobile and it's a bring your own device kind of a world and even though students still will rely on computers the university provides there's probably some transition that will take place and, again, where we provide a power source and a wireless source for them to work, and again that is another emphasis of this building.

**Walters:** (1:59:44) And another point on that, something that came just over the past, really, six to eight months is the fact that we are putting a lot of USB power outlets in the lockers and in other spaces so people can charge their portable devices. You know, that wasn't even on the blueprint, under, until recently, you know, so.

**Smith:** (2:00:08) I would also like to point out that, though the computer labs in the library coexisted for all of these years, they really had very different reputations. Across the campus, one of the ways that we looked at that was a college review site that's totally external to the

university, you know and the computers- computer services across campus were in the, for their rankings, were in the top fifty among about thirteen hundred colleges and universities that got reviewed on this, so they have excellent ratings, nationally, whereas the library was in the eight hundreds out of thirteen hundred. But still coexisting in the same facility. That's why they were able to continue largely on the trajectory that they were, very successful. And we were, in many ways, architecturally bound in a way that we just couldn't succeed at the next level without having a separate facility.

**Walters:** (2:01:01) One of the things that Dave handed to me, Dave Barnett, when he resigned, before the library was even talked about, before that meeting where we started the interview off with, um. One of the things he handed off to me was we need to do something about noise abatement so we were looking at acoustical tiles to be attached to certain wall surfaces and then, you know, Tyler got up at this faculty meeting and the whole thing changed, just like that, so.

**Miller:** (2:01:31) Well, let's switch emphasis here, just for a moment. We have, the majority of our students are online students, and many, many of them will never come to the campus or if they do maybe it's to get their diploma and walk the aisle – walk the aisle, that's for more of a wedding – walk the line at graduation. Um, so, are we planning a change to our website and are there going to be any new functions? For instance, virtual browse, I hear about that, so if somebody could address the website and any changes there and virtual browse.

**Walters:** (2:02:10) Well Carl could probably pick up on the website, because in some ways, he initiated that a while ago. But, um, the website is just totally being redesigned to make it sleeker, um. I think generally less wordy, less- fewer words and more graphic, um, interfaces. But really, um, Tim Siegel knows the most about how that's really going to look but, in general I can say we've redesigned the website. Carl can say, maybe, what precipitated that.

**Merat:** (2:02:48) Yeah, it was a recommendation I believe that came from Jim [Selfenelli] at Felix, originally, that, you know, uh, again looking at some of the data that Greg had compiled, and you know, some of the challenges that our online students had, uh, faced in accessing materials, it was- as well as having a new site for a new building, um, I think the IT department here has done an excellent job of reviewing technologies that we had looked at and suggested to them as well as coming up with, um, a lot of improvements from their own experience, a lot, again, user testing. And I think, again, it's all to try to streamline the user experience and try to, again, service them just as an extension of the library and make it a better experience for them in terms of trying to find materials they need, so.

**Walters:** (2:03:43) But in regard to the virtual browser, that's all linked to the Automated Storage and Retrieval System and what's driving that, basically I can say that, um, our integrated library system, or our online catalog, um. Just how they've evolved over the past two decades is that they're still very text-oriented. And so one of the things as the ASRS got to be a solution for us, one of the real challenges with implementing that is you lose the serendipity browsing: the

human actually going down the stacks, I keep calling them the book stacks, and just browsing, you know, the Library of Congress and Dewey classifications put like books beside each other. And so a lot of people, myself included, we would get a couple good call numbers and then run to the stacks and see what else we'd run into. Well what we're trying to do with the virtual browsing is to simply put everything in call number order and offer that in a very graphical way, using library thing covers, so to speak. Um, not a book cover, but, um. A layer. Yeah, an image that library thing will generate using our catalog data. Now that's kind of technical, but basically we want- it'll actually, the computer will show a bookcase, kind of, if they click the button to do this off of our catalog, it'll convert that into a, like a bookcase, and they'll be able- for the books that have images of the covers, the real book cover, then it'll line them up like a bookshelf you can browse through that way. We're still developing that, but we will turn the switch on with that here when we open in January. Um, but that's where that's coming from. But not only does it allow the user to browse the print books, it's also going to incorporate ebooks, of which we have, how many thousands?

**Smith:** (2:06:00) Hundreds of thousands.

**Walters:** (2:06:02) So, it'll interfile all of that

**Smith:** (2:06:06) And that's a view you'd never get on the physical shelves.

**Walters:** (2:06:09) Right. Right. So there's a real enhancement there once we turn the switch on with that. But I don't know how far you want me to get into the ASRS, but I could tell you the whole big, long experience with that, so.

**Miller:** (2:06:21) Well, so, let's go ahead and do that, that's the next thing on my sheet here, is um. What really prompted us to explore that Automated Storage Retrieval System, ASRS system?

**Walters:** (2:06:34) Why I think some of that's been answered earlier when we talked about the floor, the square footage. Somewhere there's a document I think Greg worked up for us that shows that if you have traditional shelving with the 3-foot between the stacks, verses compact shelving, verses an ASRS. Well an ASRS is definitely high density storage what you do is you create a database that keeps track of which book is in which part of which bin in the system. So what you have is that you take a book, you put it in a bin, that bin has sub-compartments and then you tell the computer to update the database that this book is in this bin, in this compartment of this bin. The computer also keeps track of where this bins going in the rack. Picture a big, uh I guess for someone not able to see this, trying to describe it in words.

**Smith:** (2:07:45) It's what drawer in the card catalog, is it?

**Walters:** (2:07:47) yeah, yeah. It's kind of that way.

**Miller:** (2:07:48) Or a filing cabinet.

**Walters:** (2:07:49) Yeah, a file cabinet. Maybe a clothes dresser even, ya know? Where you keep track of your pairs of sock down to the drawer level. That's kind of how it looks but our ASRS, back when Greg was crunching numbers, in those days, we had to help the architects find out, do we have a big enough collection to warrant the capital outlay to create the thing. And we have one of the smallest ASRS's being used in academic libraries. There are over 20 libraries that have ASRS, um, implementations there, or that are using them. University of Chicago built one recently and of course North Carolina State is probably the newest one. Until we come on board here, full scale in January, we're currently using it as an off-site storage but its only several hundred yards from our old library. What will happen then is a student will, they will go through a catalog and they will maybe use that virtual browse or if they know exactly what title they want, they'll find it like they do any other computerized catalog. But, if their particular copy of say, Tom Sawyer, is in the ASRS and not on the stacks, there will be a little button that comes up with the record of the item saying request from the robot or whatever we end up calling it. We're going to have a naming contest for that, as far as I know, this winter. The students can give it a nickname, so to speak, for the whole system. But, it will say request from the ASRS, and they will be needing to put in their student ID, something to identify them. Their name and student ID, and then it will automatically trigger a response from the robot to shoot a bin up through the floor, behind the customer service center. And then the student worker that's near there will see that bin coming up. It brings up an image on their computer screen and says, "your item, the item that is needed here, is in this bin," and its last four digits of its barcode will be up there. And they'll be able to pick it out and then it will print a receipt, with say, Randy Miller or Lowell Walters, and it will. The student then will walk that to a holds shelf and then the customer will be able to walk up after 5 to 10 minutes after pressing that button. They will walk up and request it, and it will be available for them. So that's how it works.

**Miller:** (2:10:46) So those bins, any idea size? They are 8 inches tall, or how...

**Walters:** (2:10:50) They are all 2 foot by 4 foot, and then the depths, or the height of the bin is variable. We have, let me see if I can, 6, 10, 12, 14 and 18. Most of them are 10 and 12 inch, and there is a good number of 14 and so...

**Miller:** (2:11:12) And so the books are each treated as an individual item, and so if we were to go through the bins and look at them manually, it has nothing to do with call number order. It more is by the size of the book.

**Walters:** (2:11:23) That is correct. We went through the collection once, in fact as soon as we knew we were really going to go with an ASRS, I can't remember what all we did Greg, but Greg is our number cruncher and we did a, we did some sampling. We went through the collection, and I know you had Bob Weaver do some...

**Smith:** (2:11:44) Yeah, we did a lot of physical measurement and ironically, the historic cataloguing procedure has called for cataloguers to measure the height of a book spine, just as

part of the regular cataloguing process. And so we, you know, we mind a lot of that data. I think over 98% of the items in our physical collection had a measurement recorded there. So we had to do something to determine how many bins of 10 inch depth, and how many of a 12 inch depth should we get. And, you know, we had to make some judgment calls. I'm not sure that they were absolutely what they should have been, but they were the best intelligence that we could produce at the time.

**Walters:** (2:12:20) Right. And so we, based on that, then we had to figure just how many, like Greg said, how many bins we would be need. And so we gave that back to the architects who gave it to the vendor that we selected, and they worked up how many bins we would really need, how much square footage it would take, and it turns out we have, I can't think of the numbers of each size, but we have around 4,200 bins in our system. And that ends up being on the small side for the technology.

**Miller:** (2:12:59) So what I was going to ask is, are there different companies that make these automated storage and retrieval systems? I know that they are used by other companies, like UPS uses them for parts for their aircrafts and things, and so they are not just used by libraries, but are there more than one company that makes them?

**Walters:** (2:13:13) Yeah, there's several companies that make the systems, but there had only been one company that was dealing with academic libraries. We did look at that company, but there was another company that wanted to get involved in the academic setting as well, and so we looked at them, and they wanted to do, you know, we had an opportunity to be a first reference. And they were willing to consider things from our point of view. We went around, like I said, we talked to Georgia Southern and UMKC, University of Missouri Kansas City mainly. And we got, I had a, when we were at Georgia Southern they actually own the servers for a discussion list dealing with ASRS technology in libraries. So I put out some questions on that list server and things. But one of the things that we were able to change by going with Muratec were some unique features with our system. One of the purposes, we wanted to harvest and use, we wanted to use the ASRS as a marketing tool as well. Just how cool this technology is and all that and, you know, the wow factor for it in the building. So, Muratec was willing to even create a shuffle, so to speak. Everybody laughs because I call it the make it dance move. But when the visitor's center brings people by the observation area that we have created...

**Smith:** (2:14:54) There's the very fact that we have windows peering into it so that you can observe the system in operation.

**Walters:** (2:14:59) Right, right.

**Miller:** (2:15:01) The mechanism moving.

**Walters:** (2:15:02) Right. Other libraries have windows and things, but we have actually created a viewing area off of our café area that the visitor's center tour guides and other people with the

correct credentials will be able to put their ID card up to a little sensor, like you have with electronic locks, and it will cause the robot to come and do a shuffle of the bin and demonstrate just what it is for the prospective students and other people that are taking tours. And we actually did that outside the secure perimeter of the library, so people aren't always coming through and disturbing our noise. That's one thing I don't think, well I talked about noise abatement earlier, but you know, our library was just really loud and so we were always, as we said earlier, trying to make sure that we kept it as quiet as possible. So we did that observation area outside the ASRS. But there are several places where you can observe its mechanics going on there. We plan on putting webcams on two of the cranes. We have three. The terminology is kind of all over the place, but the system has three aisles and two rows of bins on each side of the aisles, so six rows of bins. And then those three aisles are serviced by three cranes. And the cranes are really the robotics part. And it will take a bin and take it up a lift, or an elevator, through the floor, to the customer service center. So that's how the robotics is kind of laid out in it. But another thing that we wanted to do that other, several other libraries apparently have tried it, but we really wanted to do it and do it successfully, and that was we wanted to preload bins before the building was complete. So in other words-

**Smith:** (2:17:20) Before the racks were assembled, right?

**Walters:** (2:17:22) Yeah. Well no the racks, yeah, I guess that's right. It's getting late in the interview here. But what we were doing was, we wanted to go ahead and get the bins and put our books in them and store them somewhere until the whole system was assembled. Then...

**Miller:** (2:17:39) So what had been the process? What did other libraries do?

**Walters:** (2:17:41) Well they typically just waited until the whole system was built and accepted. And then they'd bring over boxes or cart by cart and then load the bins right there at the work station, which meant they were populating that database, at that workstation. What we want to do is populate the database and put the books in the bins and store them somewhere months ahead of the system being complete. So what we did then was, we were going to work with Muratec to create a special conveyance system that would allow us to put these loaded bins in their workstations while they were full. Um, they were willing to do that but after it really got down to the cost, then the university decided, well we won't do it that way but they did create the database and features in the database and the software, in such a way that we were able to load the bins and take them off site, it's just that when they came back we transferred them compartment by compartment, bin by bin, one for one. We didn't have to populate the database. Now I still think, libraries that may be listening to this that are going to build them in the future, I still think that should be able to be done. If you just deal with, ya know, getting a standard conveyance system to get you this bin that's loaded put into the system. Now, Abigail, why don't you describe for us what that was like, because Abigail here headed that up a little bit.

**Miller:** (2:19:28) Let me just see if I understand. So coming off of our shelves on the first floor of DeMoss to right now, the majority of our books are over there. How did that happen? What's the sequence of events?

**Sattler:** (2:19:39) Well the first thing we did was, um, a group of the librarians went through and they had an exhaustive list that Greg made up of which books are going to be in the robot system because they haven't been checked out in the last 10 years. First we ran through that list and it was a pretty long list so they would go through the shelves and pull the books off the shelves and put them on carts and wheel them into the back. And then our group of guys, mostly student workers, would sort them out by height and any of them that didn't already have the barcode written, they were all color coded according to height, they'd go through those with sharpies and put the barcodes on all the books. So we could instantly tell what height the books were, too, depending on what color the barcode was written in. And then we'd stack them up on tables. We very quickly ran out of tables and started making monstrous piles on the floor. At one point we lost an entire table; you couldn't even tell it was there under the books. Um. So the books started piling up, so then we'd have a table with two computers on it and we'd have two people, you'd scan each book as it came up, and you'd tell it- you know, you have a screen up that said, "I'm scanning these into bin number" and we'd give the exact bin number. And then as we scanned each individual barcode, we'd say, "Okay you're going into compartment A" or, "You're going in compartment B." And then we'd hand the book off to a student worker who would put it into the bin and make sure it was in the right compartment and facing the right direction and all. So then when we fill up one compartment we move to the next compartment, and then once we filled up the bins, we'd have the bins sitting on a pallet, and you'd have two bins on a pallet, once the bottom row was filled up, we'd put Styrofoam down, some big, thick chunks of Styrofoam in between the bins. And then we'd have a second layer of bins and we'd fill those up, then we'd move the pallet back, bring out a new pallet, and start loading bins again.

**Miller:** (2:21:48) Any idea what a full pallet- what a full bin would weigh?

**Sattler:** (2:21:52) I think at least a couple hundred pounds. You could not pick bins up once they were full, it just was not happening. Um, so we started keeping track, we'd have little competitions, you know, who can put the most books of a certain height into a bin. So, you know, one team would be working and night and they'd say, you know, "We got 210 of the ten inch books into a single bin." So then the next group would say, "Ha ha, we got 215 books." So we'd go back and forth and have competitions over, you know, who was able to fit-

**Smith:** (2:22:27) Course they're in so tight, they're never gonna come out again.

**Walters:** (2:22:30) Now, you did leave space for fingers

**Smith:** (2:22:33) There'd better be.

**Sattler:** (2:22:34) Yeah. So then at first they were just-

**Miller:** (2:22:38) Okay so now you, you've got these filled bins. So are they stored somewhere? Do they go downtown? Or, how-

**Sattler:** (2:22:44) Yep. Um, the warehouse guys would come in once we had- they could fit five pallets in a truck. So we'd call them and say, you know, we've got enough to take out a load and they would wrap them up and make sure that they wouldn't get, um, you know, rained on or anything. And then they'd haul them down to Farmville, where they had a temperature controlled warehouse to keep them in. And, um, you know, every now and then, they'd be running slow and we'd run out of room to put new bins in, or we'd run out of empty bins and we'd have to wait for them to bring us more. And another interesting thing we've found was you had to put the barcode on the bin, in a very specific place, because, as the bin slides out of the system, it runs past a barcode scanner that tells it what number the bin is. So we'd have little forms that we'd put down next to the empty bins and we'd draw, you know, this is exactly where you need to put the barcode. And we found out that some of the bins had the handles slightly too far apart, where we couldn't get the form to fit, so we started making piles of those bins. And some bins would come to us dented, so we started making piles of dented bins. And once the bins, the pallet was full, they'd haul it off to Farmville. Um, but, yeah, it was a race between us and the people pulling books, you know. Sometimes we'd have all the books packed and we'd say, "Hurry up book-puller people, you guys need to move faster." And they'd, you know, put in a little extra effort and all of a sudden our tables are filling up with books and we have to stack them on the floor and against the wall.

**Walters:** (2:24:20) Now Abigail, describe to them what happens, and we got the system built and the racks were appearing and the robotic trains started to work. So then tell listeners what happened in the new building when you went to put them in.

**Sattler:** (2:24:37) Yep. We'd pull a full pallet of bin up, next to the work station in the new building

**Miller:** (2:24:42) So now have they been at Farmville for a little bit?

**Sattler:** (2:24:45) Yep. They were in Farmville for probably at least a month, maybe even a month and a half before we started loading them into the...

**Miller:** (2:24:54) Into the actual...

**Sattler:** (2:24:55) into the actual system in the new building...

**Miller:** (2:24:56) ...ASRS bins in the new building, ok.

**Sattler:** (2:24:59) So we'd pull up a pallet full of, full bins next to the work terminal and we had some empty bins already loaded into the system so we'd say, "call me out a 10 inch bin that's empty". So it'd pull it out of the rack and slide it onto the work station and we'd put the dividers in that divided it into compartments and then you'd scan the old bin. There's a certain menu you



could pull up in the software and say all the contents of this old bin which is full are now going into this new bin which is empty. And you'd say, "make this happen", and the system would say, "ok, I instantly take all the data of all the books and which compartments they were in and I'd magically transfer it into this new bin". So then we'd usually have two people: one person would pull the books out of the full bin, compartment by compartment and hand them to someone that would pack them into the empty bin. Once the bin in the system was full, we'd send it back, we'd pick up the bin we just emptied, put it up on the work station and start filling it with books from the next full bin.

Miller: (2:26:08) I'm hearing what Lowell was saying, wouldn't it have been nice to just have some way to take them off of the pallet fully loaded and not have to re-do that last step?

Walters: (2:26:16) Somebody needs to break through that barrier. You can't tell me that, you know...

Miller: (2:26:23) American ingenuity.

Walters: (2:26:24) Yeah, and, you know, it's one of those things, but that was one of the benefits, frankly, of going with Muratec was that they didn't have the software created yet for a library application. And they came...

Smith: (2:26:39) So they had to do it to our specifications.

Walters: (2:26:40) Yeah, whether, now for good or bad, or yeah, for good or bad it's how we told them to create it. We spent months, I had a team of people, including Buddy Shearer, Kim Day, Kim Sandidge, Tom Fesmire, Angela Thompson, we had people from cataloguing, interlibrary loan, Abigail, we had Tirian Wilson representing campus IT in those days. We had to go through software functional specifications and then they spent several months writing the software that they already used in industry to apply it to a library. Their competitor had already done that, but we were able to tell them some, one, another little thing that we did, and I don't know why, well the other libraries told us about how they had back pain in some of their employees. And they were there with step-stools at the work stations. So we asked Muratec. They simply came to us and said, "Well how high do you want them?" You know, so, we did a little, I remember going back to the back of the library and asking our employees, "What is comfortable for you?" And so we told them that, and they were able to do that sort of thing. We have also added in a tilt feature. I think other libraries are doing that, but we made sure that Muratec tilts the bins. And so we have added that as a feature as well in that system. So, but yeah, one of the unique things is that "make it dance" move, they did that, and going back to the building planning, there was one option for a while where we were thinking of running the bins underneath the floor where you could walk on top of it and see these bins going under your feet and stuff. That got to be too expensive for the—if you have enough money you can do anything I guess, but um...

Smith: (2:28:55) One of the most unprecedented things- Lowell mentioned several things. But one of the things that maybe he didn't camp on very much, is that we chose, unlike so many other libraries that have an ASRS implementation, we chose to put the vast majority of our relatively small university library collection into the ASRS. So, about eighty percent of our collection, excluding what's in the Curriculum Library, about eighty percent of our collection is going to be stored and about twenty percent will remain browse able. And that was pioneering for us involved, you know, working with a lot of data over the course of a couple of years, and so the culmination of it came. You know, we'd already put some things into some boxes and began to put things into bins in earnest this last summer of 2013, correct?

Sattler: (2:29:45) 2012.

Smith: (2:29:46) We put the majority of them in 2012? Or..

Sattler: (2:29:50) No, no, no. You're right it's 2013.

Smith: (2:29:52) So, basically, what happened was we thought we had a certain timeline and that was accelerated on us as we entered into summer of 2013, and so we knew it was time to just get started. And we had to, essentially, most of the first floor stack space vacated by the time that school started this past fall. And so, we were moving pretty quickly, and the teams were doing a tremendous job. But I was somewhat on pins and needles until we were able to do an analysis on what was left- the 60,000 volumes or so that were left and what would be our Opening Day browsing collection. Because we had crafted that, you know, just on the basis of data as to what would be most likely to circulate based on its circulation history and how new the books were. But ultimately, we had to run a test and see what's the average age of what got left behind that is going to be physically browse able and how many times is- what's the average circulation for those materials verses what went into the ASRS? And I'm happy to say that the data didn't get messed up. There were not any significant errors there...

Miller: (2:31:00) You might be interested in this from an anecdotal basis just as one who, now that we've headed over there for several months, is I can kind of anticipate as I'm helping students. Well, yes, this 2004 book I- I'm expecting that one to be in the robot, but this latest edition or something that I know it gets used all of the time I've found that hasn't been stuck over in the robot. So, I had in the past two months order two or three books from the robot, but I have been very pleased with the way, you know, with the books that I've used that it seems to be- that you hit upon the right mix there.

Smith: (2:31:39) Right. And we had the data to tell us that it was feasible, you know. As an example, we knew from 2010 or eleven that with just twelve percent of our collection we could accommodate forty-two percent of overall circulation. But we were trying to be even more aggressive than that and say, 'We want or find eighty percent or more of the circulation activity out of twenty percent of the collection.'

Walters: (2:32:04) So, a book to be in the book tower or the reading room has to be two years old or younger, right? And it's...

Smith: (2:32:14) It have any one of several criteria to remain open and browse able. If it was acquired at any point in the last twenty-four months, if it had circulated at least twice during that period, it would stay out-- or if it had circulated repeatedly over a six year period-- if it had gotten ten checkouts in that time. So, any of a number of different approaches that would give us the idea that this is likely to circulate, or we should- it's is new enough that we should give it the chance to circulate.

Miller: (2:32:43) And I went out and had some of my favorites that I made sure they had a couple of circulations.

Smith: (2:32:50) So, there were some people gaming the system.

Walters: (2:32:53) Well, when we move, when we open up in January, it'll have about 200-and-something thousand items in it. And the system will hold, depending on how you count and what you're counting, about 420,000 items. So, it's a little o-- it will be a little over half full when we open. And...

Smith: (2:33:14) Yeah, we figured that it would not be very long into our use of the building that we would have used up two-thirds of the space and therefore need all three cranes to be in operation pretty quickly. So, it wasn't worth delaying the purchase of that third crane. But we'll be somewhere between a half and two thirds.

Miller: (2:33:31) We didn't necessitate a major weeding project. If we never weeded a thing, but just added at current rates, do we have an idea of how long?

Smith: (2:33:41) Well, at projected rates, I think we have space to go through about fiscal year 2027. So, we've got ourselves not quite fifteen years of projected growth. And I won't say that's at constant rates, because we are anticipating a little bit of slowing in the print acquisition, just because of that trend from electronic to print that we talked about.

Walters: (2:34:02) But on a processing level, for on a few years here, we are only going to need to weed from the book tower and the reading room into the ASRS. But once we get the ASRS filled, we're gonna have to do a double-weed. The stuff that hasn't gotten used at all will come out of the ASRS...

Miller: (2:34:24) If it hadn't been used for ten years before it went in and it still hasn't been used for ten years... Well, pretty much, that's a pretty good idea no one is ever gonna use that.

Walters: (2:34:32) Yeah, so we'll probably do either an annual or a semi-annual weed out of the book tower and out of the reading room into the ASRS.

Smith: (2:34:40) Carl are you looking forward to hear about that while you're retired?

Merat: (2:34:45) Yes.

Smith: (2:34:45) You won't have to be involved in that project, so...

Miller: (2:34:48) Um, now, there has to be things in the ASRS besides books. Abigail, can you perhaps, uh, talk about... Do we have microfilms in there or CDs? Any audio-visual materials? What else in there besides books?

Sattler: (2:35:05) Uh, the microfilm is all in the ASRS. The Archive materials are all in the ASRS. Um, we went through and pulled like some little collections. There are things like, um, the music scores that went in the ASRS. I believe all the music CDs did. Although, I think the audiobooks are still out on the open shelves. Um, we're currently loading the print periodicals into the system. That's one of the last big collections still to load.

Walters: (2:35:39) The museum has some- the Jerry Falwell Museum has some bins reserved for three-dimensional items. They also have files and papers. But they're building their own separate database to handle that, 'cause it's not catalogued or organized the same way our items are organized. The system- most library systems that we bumped into- they also have the capability on the system to have dedicated bins and restricted bins. And dedicated bins typically mean that you want the items to stay in human recognizable order. For instance, with the periodicals, we will want them to stay in a chronological order, because sometimes we may need to pull so many years in row out to do something with. And we don't want to call up several different bins to do that. The restriction means that only a certain type of logged-in user, a certain user in a certain population can call up the bin. The bin won't report to the workstation. So, we have several different populations, like we have Archives materials that are available to the publics. So, both Abigail and her workers can call them up, but then there's stuff that's sealed that we can't have available to the public. We're just storing it until it's released. Then, Abigail can call that up. She's about the only person, so.

Miller: (2:37:23) Alright, well, we're just about out of time. I'd like to just go around the panel, here, at the end. And as we finish up here, then, can you tell us what's the most exciting thing or perhaps what's been the most surprising thing out of this process? If you would just kind of have some concluding remarks. We'll just go around and have a final thought. Maybe there's something that we didn't mention in the interview that you've just been dying to say.

Smith: (2:37:48) And I saw the questions beforehand and I think the thing that comes to mind for me is this was a human process as much as, you know I was involved with a lot of the technical aspects, with the data and so-forth and numbers. But the human side of the process really struck me. We began with the committee of four that was introduced very early on in the interview, and introduced early on in the process, being Tyler Veak, Carl Merat, Lowell Walters, and myself. But, as we kind of wind to the end of this three year process, the only person out of those four that's really remained on board with it is Lowell. And that's been for various reasons; we've had two dean changeovers in that time, uh, I've been at a distance where I really couldn't

participate in a lot of the interior design very effectively. We had a changeover in personnel with Casey Murray, you know, as facilities manager, being- uh, staying with the computer labs and Nick coming in his place. So it's really been a testimony to the people that have been involved because it hasn't been the same group at any point, and we could add to the list in terms of what Marcy has done, or Rachel, and Angela. And I know I'm gonna miss people, partly because I've not been heavily involved in the last twelve to eighteen months, but so many people have contributed to it. They have been pulling in the same direction, and that has just... When you think of what should have – what, in many cases might have been a short planning and construction project for three years, you would think, okay, you might have almost the whole team that would stay together. Any just for various reasons, health concerns and other, other situations, that couldn't happen. And yet we managed to get the job done because people weren't out there lobbying for their own turf, they were pulling for the mission. And that really impressed me.

**Sattler:** (2:39:45) I think, uh, of course, one of the things I'm most excited about is the archive facilities. I've gotten in to see it recently and it's just looking like it's gonna be very nice, you know, the whole building looks like it's gonna be very nice. I've been very pleased with the archive facilities.

**Miller:** (2:40:02) Carl.

**Merat:** (2:40:04) Well, I want to say amen to what Greg talked about, there. I know one of the real challenges for me as project manager first and then dean was, you know, how to, um. Keep everyone informed and involved and what were the right times to bring in which people and I think God just really blessed us with the right people at the right time and people stepping up to, um, you know, challenges and working hard to make that happen. Um, watching the building, you know and I say building, it's such an abstract concept sometime, change so much from those spreadsheets to the forms on a piece of paper to renderings to see the changes in the renderings and, you know, the way that the ASRS changed along the way, and then as we saw the, you know, foundations and uppers go up and we looked at them and we said, "That doesn't look big enough," and another time we would walk over and say, "Wow that's really big." And then the first time walking through the building itself, how large it was. Um. Again, I think it's exciting to see the university, uh, pay homage to, uh, the founder this way. Again, it's um...it's been an honor to be a part of that process and see his name go on it. And, uh. You know I think, he would be well-pleased with, uh, with what's happening there, so that's exciting.

**Miller:** (2:41:40) Thank you, Carl. Lowell.

**Walters:** (2:41:43) Well, I appreciate what Greg said in a sense of how teams all came together and kept the project going through the whole time. Um. Something I remember saying in that prayer time that we had clear back in November 2010 was, "You know, this is...physically, this is sticks and stones and steel. You know, we were, we're building a building. But, you know, as

the next interview comes up, that we do with Marcy and some others, you know, what'll be enduring is the services and the people's interactions. You know it's all part of training people to go out, with their Christian worldviews, and changing the world, you know. And once we get the building built, we will be able to focus even more so on- we'll be able to focus on, um, training students to not just be info-literate, which is a key term in librarianship and education right now, but using that information morally from a Christian worldview. And, you know, um, helping them learn to elaborate, and even as I say that, you know, this whole planning and construction was a very collaborative process in and of itself. You know, maybe we've learned how to collaborate more than anybody, and, uh, you know, use these spaces now that we've provided them. But, um, in regard to the building, I love the aesthetics. I'm gonna enjoy all the balconies and the light cutting through and, you know people tease me. I'm even gonna enjoy being by the railroad because I'm a model railroader, so. You know the railroad's been such a drawback to everybody in some ways, they're like, "Oh, will that be noisy?" and everything, but. We haven't noticed that, but I have fun with that a little bit, um. The aesthetics are gonna be pretty cool, and I really think it'll be a nice place to do your work, whether it be study or collaborate, and do all that.

**Smith:** (2:44:06) When you think, you know, I was told, I think, back in college, that who you'll be- the person you'll be, let's say, ten years from now, will be the product of the books you read and the people you meet. And we have the potential in our building to do both of those, and that's just really awesome.

**Miller:** (2:44:23) Well, and my concluding thoughts. Out of the five people here on the panel, I probably, out of the five of us, have been the most involved on the public side of things, and I came here in the fall of, uh, 2004. I was the little library director for a- I was the only professional in our library, and so in one sense, boy I'd died and gone to heaven and come to this big university. I went from one of the smallest four year colleges to the world's largest evangelical university. But I have to say, as I'm working with the public, that, oh, we don't have that book, we don't have this book, you know, this one's lost. Um, people would complain about the facility, "Oh, there's no light, there's no place to sit," you know. That- you're hearing out of the public side of things that this is just kind of an inadequate facility and, oh, they'll build some new facility here, there, and so I always kind of had this, just kind of a sense that, well the library was, just kind of the step-cousin off over here, and it just hadn't gotten the attention that it was due. And it's a very integral part, it ought to be an integral part, of the academic experience. And so I've noticed, before we even started, um, talking about the new building, thanks to some of the folks in this room, that our collection started getting better. And we were making concerted efforts to buy the books that people were reading, and trying to increase, you know, the things that, you know, where are we scratching? 'Cause that's on an itch. And, um, I just have really felt that the library has continued to grow through the years and this almost is like a capstone to me. I am excited for lights streaming in the windows and for the nice places to sit and to read and the furniture and everything. But, it really- the library is here to serve the

customers. And those customers, some of them are internal with our faculty and staff, but also with the students who come here to be trained, and the students that are at distance that will never see the new library, perhaps, in their four years of attending college here. And so, I think that as an institution, both with our collections and our services, and now our spaces, that we really have the full package to, instead of being eight hundred out of thirteen hundred, that we're poised just like we're the world's largest evangelical university that will have one of the finest, if not the finest, Christian evangelical libraries in the United States and around the world, and so I'm really excited for that. And with that, we'll conclude today's panel discussion on the history of the Liberty University Library. This interview has been conducted as part of the Oral History project of the Liberty University Archives.

*[End of Interview]*