

Oral History Interviews with Emeriti Faculty and Retired Staff
Interview with John Palmquist
Interviewed by Julia Stringfellow
Location: Lawrence University Archives
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[Start: 00:00:00]

1. Could you please state your name?

John Charles Palmquist.

2. What years did you teach at Lawrence?

1968 through 1996.

3. What subjects did you teach?

In a three person geology department, you had to be quite versatile, so I taught Introductory Geology, that would be Physical and sometimes Historical Geology, but Structural Geology was my main field. I also taught Mineralogy, and of course Freshman Studies, and a variety of seminars and special courses, too many to document here.

4. Where did you grow up?

Well I was born in Omaha, Nebraska. I was a Lutheran minister's son, preacher's kid, I've overcome a lot, one of those. I left there after my dad took a church in Marquette, Michigan, so we moved there in 1941 when I was five years old. So I had just finished kindergarten when we moved to the UP, and I became an enthusiastic Yooper, that's a name for a person from up there. I remember one Thanksgiving, the first Thanksgiving, snow came up to my shoulders beside the sidewalk, of course it had been shoveled a little bit and I wasn't very big then, but still it was a good introduction to the amount of snowfall we get up there. So we lived there for four years, and I loved living there on the shore of Lake Superior, and perhaps acquired the taste for geology, even though I didn't know quite what it was. It was a town where the ore was shipped, the iron ore from the Marquette iron range, it was a center for lumbering and mining and shipping and things that have enabled that town to thrive. Otherwise, kind of poor pickings up there, it was nine months of winter and three months of poor sledding, they used to say. But after four years we moved to Chicago and I thought at the time, "Oh great to get out of this hick town," even though I really loved it. I got to Chicago in fifth grade, I quickly made friends and I just loved exploring the city so I could get on the Cicero Avenue street car for a nickel and get a transfer and go all over. Pretty soon I was taking my newfound friends, my buddies, I showed them their city, because if you lived there, you just stayed in the neighborhood. So I'd go to the Loop, one time even at night I got as far as Comiskey Park where the White Sox play, and I knew where it was because the lights were on. I don't know what my folks were thinking I was doing, but never had any trouble, even went down to Midway Airport just to watch airplanes, in those days, they were sort of special. So very soon we realized how hot and humid it would be

there in the summer, so my father bought property up on Lake Superior, and that became our Palmquist equivalent of the Kennedy compound in Massachusetts. We built our own buildings and there are three cabins there, and I have had the pleasure of, my wife and I had our honeymoon there, we had our kids there playing with their cousins, seeing my grandma and grandpa and uncles and aunts. I had my summer jobs up there, so every summer for at least part of a summer I've been there, so I really never left the beautiful harbor town of Marquette.

Always a Yooper.

As a matter of fact, we organized a Yooper gathering last May where the Yooper band came, we had over 300 people that were former Yoopers living in the Valley that showed up for that, at the beach in Menasha.

[00:05:37]

Where did you go to college?

I went to Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. It's still related to the Augustana, it's a church related school, but it was founded by Swedes that want to preserve their culture, so it was Augustana Lutheran Synod that started it. So it was a church college, as was my father, was pretty liberal type of school. It was a wonderful school and we still have maintained friends from all those years that now live all over the country. That was very important.

What did you get your degree in, what was your major?

I majored in Geology. I think, as I've alluded to, that may have been a consequence of all that time in Marquette. I had a wonderful professor, Fritiof Fryxell, who was the first supervisor of Teton National Park and had many of the first ascents. He was a wonderful teacher, a very impressive person. His son Roald was a good friend who learned mountain climbing from his father, he used to teach unofficially mountain climbing course for students. He would teach them how to climb by going up the side of the library. Then we had a tradition there of what we called "frigs," college pranks that were more widespread than they were here or are. Our fraternity, with Roald in charge, engineered a project where we built a big spout and a big handle to mount on the dome of Old Main, which was this very big dome, not quite like the Madison capitol dome, but it was big. So on April Fool's Day, it was turned into this humongous teapot. And so everything pales in comparison to that, when college frigs are discussed.

How did you make it up to the top of the dome?

With ropes, he was a mountain climber, so he did that.

What was the fraternity that you were a member of?

Well, it was Pi Epsilon Gamma, the fraternities and sororities at Augustana are all local, didn't have separate houses or anything. We were known as the Pugs, so it was more often, fraternities

and sororities had nicknames usually comprised of, Beta Omega Sigma was the BOWS, and Omicron Sigma Omicron were the OSOs, and stuff like that.

How do you feel that your college experience and now looking at students at Lawrence, what do you think might be the similarities and differences of your college experience and theirs?

When I was at Augustana, it was the era where there were still a few World War II vets, they impacted the campus. There were a lot of rules, especially for women, and hours they had to obey. I think Augustana claims to have the first panty raid. But we were pretty naïve compared to the post '60s students, so there was quite a difference in the morality of the students of then and now. Lots of differences, but on the other hand, they are just kids coming to college, first time away from home, things like that.

[00:10:37]

With your Geology degree, did you know right away that you wanted to go into teaching?

No, I just enjoyed being an undergraduate student of Geology. I was able to, I'm getting into your later question of activities, but one of them was an Earth Science Society, a national one. I was selected to go to a meeting in New Orleans. I had experience of being funded and going down there and entertained by a company of geologists, go to lunch in the fancy places, and have that kind of experience. But I really just didn't have a plan. I knew I wanted to study Geology, and the next step seemed to be to do graduate school. So I went to Iowa, Iowa City, for that and coming from a liberal arts college, I had very many fewer courses than my peers. At first felt behind but very soon turned out to be competitive and did well in graduate school. That was how it started, and so I just did what you did in graduate school. I had a field course in the Black Hills and the Big Horns. I was so taken with the geology of the Big Horns in particular that when it came time to finish my Masters degree, I decided that I wanted to do this PhD thesis project in this area that my advisor had pointed me to. And so that's why I did that, and that was a marvelous experience. The fieldwork part of it especially. And that came about because my graduate school advisor Richard Hoppen, had a friend named John Prucha who was with Shell Development Company. Now Shell Development Company is surprisingly not interested in finding oil, it's a research arm and it selects various aspects to focus on, and John Prucha was a part of that and so he, through Shell Development, supported my thesis fieldwork.

So anyway, when I finished my PhD, what people typically did was go into teaching. So my father really wanted me to be a minister, but I could not imagine speaking before people for twenty minutes and giving sermons. I ended up teaching at Lawrence where they had seventy minute classes! But this connection with John Prucha was really, really valuable to me. I got to know him, and he visited my area and I visited his, met his wife and some of his little kids. But he later took a job as the chairman of Syracuse University which was quite a drop in salary. But he was Roman Catholic and he and his wife Mary had many children who all got a free ride through Syracuse. So at any rate, he later became provost and one of the triumvirate that sort of ran the place. He is a terrific person. It turns out that that not only set the stage but opened up a

number of other opportunities for me, which I'll return to. I think I rambled past your initial question.

[00:15:55]

Upon getting your PhD and going into teaching, where was your first teaching position?

Actually I should say that I went first to work with the California company in New Orleans as a petroleum geologist because there weren't any teaching jobs in 1961. You know how that goes. It's probably like that now. As far as PhDs who are trying to get jobs. In fact, that's why I went there, because the personnel director realized that there were all these PhDs who were not finding work and while they normally hired people with master's degrees, they hired a bunch of us and very soon most all of us left. I thought it was very interesting, I really enjoyed the work. It was not closely related to my doctoral work or anything but it was interesting. I thought it was effectively run and the people were enthusiastic about finding oil, but they were less thrilled about whether they had it right or if they found oil, that was good, even if they had the wrong approach to it. In general, I think that when you go to the PhD you learn to drop your own dreams and when you're there you have to work to drop the boss' dreams and that's probably the sum of why people didn't tend to stay. But in my case it was so different from my graduate training I thought I was not using it so I decided not to stay with it. I had an offer before the first year was even up to go to Monmouth College because the person there was finishing his PhD, although he was from the University of Illinois, basically, he finished his PhD at Iowa, and so that led to my name being suggested to go to Monmouth. I went up there and I decided that it was just too much of a salary cut, but then later they improved the offer a bit and I realized that since I'm not going to stay in the oil business, might as well get started. By then the whole office had been moved from New Orleans which was quite a thrill to work with them. Not only for the salary but to take in all the culture and go from starving graduate student to being able to eat at Antoine's and all those great restaurants for a while. So we moved the whole office to Lafayette, LA and Carol and I never unpacked altogether because by that time we knew we were going to leave. We did go to Monmouth College which turned out to be why I came here.

[00:19:59]

I saw Ron Tank this morning and he was telling me about how he had heard about the job here at Lawrence.

Well, it turns out that Monmouth had a one person department and when I got there he was still in Iowa and so I was a one man department and they had a committee made up of department chairs, kind of a policy committee. So here I am, 27 years old with all these grey-heads kind of running the school. I had kind of a neat introduction. I very soon was able to have the department two and three persons before I left. But at first, learning the ropes from a kind physics professor who had been there a long time and so on, it was a good way to start I think. But, the thing is Knox College nearby had a geology department that had lapsed. They brought in Larry DeMott from Oberlin. So he and I collaborated a bit, being the only other geologist close at hand. I mentioned Prucha before; he had been offered a summer job to go out to Canyon City, Colorado to teach a field course with the University of Kansas. He was too busy to do this

being in Syracuse so he passed that along to me. That area is just so rich in variety of geologic examples that are just fantastic. So I began what turned out to be a series of spring break field trips. I invited Knox and Lawrence and Monmouth to go out there. Those were so successful in terms of, field geology in general is where most people get excited about the field. It really is exciting to recognize that what you've learned in the books you can actually see and draw conclusions about what's happened. Geology is really the history of the earth. You can go out there and decipher that and it's pretty exciting stuff. Through those I got to be good friends with the professors from Knox and Lawrence and that's really how I got to come to Lawrence. Those were successful, as I said, in many ways. One example, a Monmouth girl married a Lawrence man as a result of a romance that started out there. So that was really neat. But Prucha really continued to be a benefactor.

[00:24:08]

What were your first impressions of Lawrence?

I got here in winter for an interview and it's not always that nice, if the snow's gotten dirty. But it was a nice college, I recognized that from an endowment point of view it was a step up and probably the quality of students would be better. But a big attraction for me was not the campus but the location. Great geology in the Baraboo, Wisconsin, Devil's Lake area and the closeness to the Upper Peninsula where the geology is spectacular. Because of my stress on getting students turned on in the field that was the main factor. One of the biggest impressions, was that Carol and I went to a basketball game. And I thought, "What is this, inter-murals?" There weren't many people there. In more recent years that's finally changed. Of course, Coach John Tharp came. But before we leave the topic of those three colleges together, Larry DeMott at Knox and I collaborated together on a National Science Foundation proposal to have Introductory Geology in the Rocky Mountains because we believed, the problem with the small schools is that people don't know anything about geology, it's not taught very much in high schools. So we thought if we could only get kids to the Rockies where geology is better exposed than in the cornfields of western Illinois or even in Appleton or other Midwest schools. We did a successful grant and Professor Fryxell knew a friend at Montana State University in Bozeman. And so we contacted him, his name was Charles Bradley, who incidentally married Nina who was the daughter of the author of *Sand County Almanac*. I later brought Charlie and Nina to speak at Lawrence for Freshmen Studies when we were reading that book, so all these things interconnect. Anyway, by that time Bradley had been the chairman of the department at Bozeman but he was the dean. Part of the grant was for Larry and I to select a field area to accomplish the goals of the grant and because of Fryxell's suggesting Charlie, we went out and thought that the course would best be carried off by having the students work out the history of the Gallatin Valley from seeing it and studying it in the field and having a minimum of lecturing and typical classroom things. But we did need the facilities of the university for housing and food service. So we hired, clever as we were, we hired Charlie to be on the staff, because he bought into the idea as well. So we did that. I taught with them the first summer after that, so we lived in Bozeman, beautiful town. Through that I was able to connect with some faculty there and we started a proposal to do research in the Bear Tooth Mountains nearby, and that was my most exciting research. I spent 2+ summers in the field up in the remote part of the northwest corner of the Bear Toths studying the very complex Pre-Cambrian there with Roland Reed then

of Idaho and a geologist from Boseman. So that was another example of one thing leading to another. That project lasted for many, many years until it was moved to Colorado College bringing it into the ACM, although they're not in the Midwest they are in the Association, and they eventually stole it and made it into a course for teachers. But it lasted for many years and it served the purpose up to a point. Students loved it, but if they had in mind being a doctor or whatever, they didn't all choose geology, but they all gained from it. That was one of many, many highlights.

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When you first came to Lawrence how big was the geology department?

It was three, but I was sort of, in a way, replacing Bill Read because of his mental problems although he stayed around and contributed, working and helping students for quite a number of years. But basically, we were a three person department. As I've already said, I already knew Ted Ross and Ron Tank, so it was an easy transition in that way. I guess another highlight is that we, if you noticed in Ron's book, we were the years of the troika and the fact that we were able to get along so well was special in the sense that quite often faculty members are prima donnas or whatever and they have different ideas and it gets to be personal. There are a lot of departments that have those kinds of issues but we were not at all like that and we were able to work together and develop the curriculum that would accomplish what we thought ought to be done under the circumstances. It was really a very special relationship.

How many geology majors and minors are there?

Well, I think our peak year we had 17 seniors. But more often it was 5 or 6 seniors at a time. We had small classes, usually. And the field trips were again key. I continued to go out to Colorado and expanded the scope but that Canyon City area was really a highlight.

You continued doing these spring break field trips?

We had, sometimes, maybe even before I got here, I think Lawrence came down and we got on the train in Galesburg and went back by train and that was a blast. We rented vehicles and did it like that. But later on, at one time, I arranged a group rate and we flew to Las Vegas and I had contact with a professor that was from Parkside, who was teaching out there, so we had local help in leading field trips, but we went back to the Grand Canyon, Death Valley, the area around Las Vegas. Other times we went down into New Mexico and went on a real long trip by vehicle, we went to Big Ben National Park, Texas. Another friend who was an expert in that region joined us and showed us around. So field trips were the key.

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In fact, one time coming back by vehicle in Colorado, driving along the students were saying just how much they got out of that and I said "Well, I have to go back and teach courses, but you guys wouldn't have to." This was probably in the 80's but there was a fellow from Syracuse named Bill Romey who was championing personalizing education and it had some jargon that

went with it, but the idea was that the students learn what they want to learn, so you put students more in control of what they were doing. So I went through a phase of experiment. I had multiple ways of satisfying course requirements, experimenting with that, humanistic education I think it was called. But anyway, I told these students that you could go in winter term, we maybe could arrange it where you could go down into the southwest and do geology at selected localities. I don't know what order all this happened, but I got permission from the administration to do this and we got them a vehicle and had them plan. But I knew enough friends that they would have some local expertise, but they would have to order the air photos, plan the trip themselves, what they would need. Of course we supervised it, but the point was they set up this agenda and schedule of places to map and to study, mines to visit, stuff like that and they would go for 6 weeks, no supervision except for professionals. They came back and they had to prepare their maps and reports and make a public presentation to the college about what they had done. That went on for a number of years. They would run into other schools on field trips and their professors of course, it just blew them away. "Where's your professor?" The number of students that had done that clearly became the highest proportion of people who went on for PhDs and had successful careers. Now, we didn't really want to reproduce ourselves, but that's a lot of what happens in colleges, that the professors have students who go on and do their PhD and sort of follow in their footsteps. I regard that as a very successful, unique part of what I did.

The geology department was in Youngchild, and then it moved on to, it was in Stephenson, and then it moved on to Youngchild?

Well, it moved into the first floor of...the building named for a woman...

Briggs?

Briggs Hall, yes. Was she at Downer?

She was at Downer. She was a Downer president.

So we were in the basement of Briggs Hall. By that time, I had retired but I was able to have an office in Stephenson, in a little corner of a prep room and then in Briggs Hall, Ron Tank and I were in 122. We shared a room there. Then when they remodeled Youngchild, really in planning for the future, they designated two smaller offices to be emeriti offices. Although I value that, Ron and I loved having that, but it's not likely to last as long as we do even. Hopefully the department will grow and need that space for other things.

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During your time here at Lawrence, what were some of the things that happened with the student body? Like you came in '68 and that was the time when there was a lot of unrest on campus and protests took place.

There was a faculty meeting where some women were there naked, I guess. But I think I missed that. I must have been in the lab or something and didn't attend that. But certainly classes were

normal, as far as I know. One of my students, you know, people said, “Is there a drug problem at Lawrence?” and he said “No, there’s no drug problem. You can get them any time you want.” He was a good guy, turns out that he went on and got a PhD in geology and worked in Pittsburgh and somehow became friends with some of my Augustana College friends. Found out at a reunion. Jim Pinta, was his name.

You talked about the department with Ted Ross and Ron Tank.

Well, one thing I think was consistent with my stressing of field work is that I think I spent 17 summers, plus or minus, teaching field courses and that gave me, well, first of all I did 12 summers with the University of Illinois, which allowed me to learn even more about my beloved Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming, and then I did a summer with Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. The Kansas University I mentioned before. I did an ACM one up in the wilderness area, which is mostly biology, but that is in the complex Pre-Cambrian and it seemed like a pretty involved geology for beginners. So the Association gave up on that, but anyway I did that, too. All of those gave me experience with other faculty but more importantly with the geology of the various locals that I could bring back to classroom and to my background. It really, really was challenging but fun to do.

[00:44:10]

I was going to ask, in addition to Ron Tank and Ted Ross, were there other faculty that really had a very positive impact on you, were a big influence?

I would say, to start with the more recent, I think John Brandenberger and Dave Cook, the way they were able to bring the physics department to one of the top ones, that was kind of there as a challenge to try to achieve that kind of thing. Before them, Bruce Brackenridge who was a physics professor, and he worked with a chemist Bob Rosenberg, and they wrote a text book together. But, you know, they kind of exemplified the inter-disciplinary capability of working together which I respected. Brackenridge also eventually died of bone cancer from prostate cancer. People always say how people fought cancer, but he didn’t give in. He still managed to keep on playing racquet ball. He went on a fellowship to go over to Italy and talk smart with a bunch of other philosophers, scientists, and whatnot. Just managed to live a full life right up to the end. There were a lot of faculty that I respected. But in a way, my years at Monmouth were, 6 years, there was a more connected feeling. Part of that is because there was a mailbox where everybody had to go to get their mail. It didn’t come to your own building. So you mixed with everybody from the coaches to the president. They would come to pick up their mail, have a cup of coffee and visit a little bit. So, I’ve wished that there would be more opportunity like that. Here, you can’t possibly keep up with the Conservatory faculty. I had a lot of friends sprinkled around, but it’s one thing that I thought we could do better at somehow.

Well, obviously the geology students that have been here at Lawrence throughout the years have gone on to go into geology careers. I’m sure you’ve kept in contact with them. Were there any students in particular who really had an influence on you, who you continued to stay in contact with after they left Lawrence?

There have been several like that. One of them that went on to Rice University to get his PhD, he became chairman of the department of geology in Australia. So I went to visit him over there on one of my jaunts. Another one, and this is really kind of neat, because when I got to New Orleans, my boss had gone to Monmouth and he said don't mention my name to the dean of women back there. He knew I was going back to Monmouth. But anyway, the student that he just nailed my exams, he just knew exactly what I driving at, and he began leading their exploration in the off shore, deeper water, which now is getting attention because of the energy situation. But because we really couldn't develop that, they sent him to the coast of Africa where he was doing that kind of thing. There have been a lot like that. But a lot that didn't go into geology. In fact, one thing that I find interesting is we have one professor of religion who was a really top geology student, so much so that she got into Cal Tech. She didn't like the field course though and she eventually switched over to religion. She's a professor at University of South Dakota. We have one of the first Presbyterian women priests, and one I can think of is a fundamentalist pastor out east, and a Catholic priest who's building churches in Mexico, came from Hortonville. But he went on to get his master's degree in Oregon. And so there is sort of a mystical connection between geology and theology.

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Seems that way. I was going to ask about individualized learning, how has it changed throughout the years?

Well, I think that we did that right away, and it's gone on. I would say the big difference, you asked about students, my college years and the present. The difference now is the sophisticated instrumentation that we have and the field trips that we're able to take our students on. Our students now are in Puerto Rico. But I would say there has been more stress, increasing stress on individualized learning. One year I had 25% of the Lawrence honors theses. It may have been just 4 but there were 12 or whatever, that was in one of our reports. I didn't look that up but I do remember the 25%.

In addition to all the different field trips that you've taken throughout the world, where were some of your sabbaticals spent?

The first one was 1975, I guess I left out Indiana University is another one that I taught a field course, twice I taught there. And that was in the Tobacco Root Mountains of Montana where I started the summer of the sabbatical year doing that, but I had planned to take our three kids out of school, and I bought a van with the pop top. And I had winterized our summer place up on Lake Superior, wrapped the pipes under the cabin in heat tape so they wouldn't freeze, insulated it, put in new plumbing. Rebuilt the place. So we went out to Montana for the summer. Then we went out to the west coast and went up to a place called Holden Village with was an old mine but is now a Lutheran camp, but interdenominational, in the wilderness. Then we went to Canada and we came back across Canada to our summer cabin and I did geology around there. Then we went across the rest of Canada to Quebec and down the fall color in New England and it was 1975 so of the national monuments and the parks, especially in the east were geared up for the bicentennial, so we visited all that kind of thing. Our youngest son, we thought he'd become a history major, I guess he did but he didn't really carry on with the spark that he seemed to show

then. But any rate, we ended up at a professional meeting in Miami, Geological Society of America was meeting there, and then we stayed in the Gulf side of Florida until about Christmas. But we had sold our Appleton house, so we were homeless except for the van. Three kids and a dog and we just had a wonderful time. We got back and stayed with the Lokensgards, bought a house, went up and lived in our cabin through the dead of winter. In the spring, I taught at UW Milwaukee, the kids got back in school and we had gotten the equity in our home. Jimmy Carter was president and there were 17% interest rates, so we then bought a house and moved back into that and got back to normal. But that was a lifetime adventure.

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I've had many great sabbatical experiences. One of them was in Costa Rica where, as you know we have the Associated Colleges of the Midwest program, and they give support for faculty to go down there. Of course we won't send people there if we don't know they're good. So I applied for one of those and went down there and I parleyed that first one into joining up with UW Stevens Point who had organized a trip to the Costa Rica national parks which as you know are among the top in the world, especially for a small country. One of their students had gone as a Peace Corps worker to develop audio visual programs for them, so he was the back bone of that. I went with them, first, and then the Costa Rica program was on break so somehow I managed to hook up with Dartmouth University and they have, their ecology group every year goes to these exotic places. They had hired a fishing boat to take them out to Cocos Island and that was 630 kilometers out to sea, so we slept on that. We got there and there was a geology student who was the student of the professor at Dartmouth whose daughter had married the development director at Lawrence at the time. So, I worked with him and we had a great time on the island. Then I went back and did the Costa Rica thing. Then I wasn't done, I had arranged to join two professors from UW Oshkosh who had been working in Mexico. I flew up, did the opera and other things in Mexico City and off the northeast part of Mexico and joined in and worked with them for a while. That was a thrill. Then I went down there again some years later. There was a new director, I don't think the ACM, either they didn't know I'd been there before or they didn't care or nobody else wanted to go. But I went again, and went to both ends of it, got more new experiences, saw more volcanoes. More geology, it was terrific. But then I also went to Great Britain where there was a program run by the National Association of Geology Teachers that visited the roots of geology, it all started with James Hutton in Scotland. So we went all around the island through Wales and Scotland, London, and other parts of England. Each country had their local leader. So that was a double blessing because you learned more about the history of geology and then the classic sites, where it all got started in a modern sense. So that was great. Then I got to go to Micronesia, Palau, Guam, Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, all in one long trip. That's, especially Indonesia, is where the plates colliding, eventually, earlier did India, colliding to make the Himalayas and now the active volcanic action in Indonesia, tsunami you've heard about recently. All of that stuff came to life and I managed to make that an analog to what happened in the orogeny that connected northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula, in a new way. Tank, Ross, and I, we lived through the geology revolution in plate tectonics. That made a lot of excitement in our teaching lives. Later, on another sabbatical, I went to Indonesia, visited Bali and Lambak, Java. There have been too many to mention now but the highlight would be the semester at sea trip which I did in '96. That took us to the Bahamas, Venezuela, Brazil, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, India, Vietnam, Philippines, China and Japan.

And you were on a ship the whole time?

Yep, we had about 4-5 days at sea, which, to some extent was like the normal classroom, but then there was always a notable person who we would take on at port that would prepare us for the next port, some specialized aspect of it. And then the faculty would have individually arranged for trips or activities in the port that we would lead, or have a local expert help us, but usually we'd just lead one or two very interesting parts which connected with our course work. That was definitely a thrill. Thrill-a-day.

[01:03:36]

You had mentioned that you had taught Freshmen Studies and I was wondering if you could talk about any of the works that you covered in that, that really stand out in your mind, or any specific memories you have of teaching Freshmen Studies?

Again, a lot of good students, a lot of interesting discussion, and there were so many diverse books that I think the president that started it all wanted to educate the faculty. So it had that effect that carries on with me to this day. I mean, I just finished reading a book about the rise and fall of the British Empire. Actually, I read *Churchill and Gandhi* by Arthur Herman. He also wrote *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*, both really interesting but then *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* reconnected me with those other books. I'm also currently reading a book now by the current English professor, David McGlynn. I think I met him in the pool a couple of years ago, which I mean, he's got to be friendly, because in the locker room or whatever, we just started talking. He's such a swimmer, how he works that in. I'm anxious now to talk to him even more. I gave a talk once, but it was the whole experience of doing it and stretching, getting out of your specialty field, and working with other faculty. Again, that's a way of mixing that I said I missed from Monmouth, we had a lot of luncheons and hear your colleagues give talks. One interesting outcome of that, there was a time when we had Freshman Studies and then Freshman Seminar, took the place of the second term. I had a student in that that I encountered one summer, he's now a cardiologist in Marquette, and he just loves it, but the point is we were in this Italian deli and he's standing there and I'm standing there and I had my Lawrence sweatshirt on. He said "You're Palmquist, aren't you?" or something like that. So turns out he was in this Freshman Seminar, now he bought a house that's just about maybe half a mile closer to town than ours on the beach. It's a fabulous house, it looks like a ski resort kind of house, just unbelievable. I saw him last summer, or summer before last, we were talking and he was taking his kids down to Chile to see the US ski team. Two of them are nationally ranked and the young one is state ranked, so they just love it up there. They got the water and the snow. That's a bit of a stretch from Freshman Studies. But anyway, it reconnects me with the UP. The other thing is that I was able to bring Charlie Bradley and Nina when we did *Sand County Almanac*. She spoke about the book and her father but we had visited her and Charlie at Sand County and Charlie, until he died, sent us a Christmas card with a picture of the things up there. But their cabin they had built with logs that Nina had planted with her father. It was intended, I haven't been there lately, but they've got a visitors center now down there, they had the intention of having this become a laboratory when they died for the foundation and to be for use. That made the terms when we did *Sand County Almanac* special.

[01:09:09]

What types of activities have you been active in since you retired from Lawrence?

I guess I'll start with the sculpture business. You know all about that. Well, the other places I've traveled since then include, Semester at Sea was first and then I went, this is quite interesting. One of my college friends married a woman who went to school with a famous opera singer named Simon Estes. He happens to be a black man who went to Iowa, he was from this little town in Iowa. I think dirt floor, practically, really poor background. But he went on an athletic scholarship of some sort, but he sang in the Old Gold Singers. The conductor said, "Simon, you have a voice for opera." Simon says, "What's opera?" So, he did follow that up and he's a very special, did a lot of Wagner. He spent most of his career probably in Europe, all over in Europe and my friend's wife, it's by Simon and her but she wrote it, about his life. In the course of that, my friend and his wife visited a lot of these places and we got to be really good friends. My friend did, as well as his wife, who was already a good friend. We went to visit him in part, my friend and I, when my wife was still working here in the library and I was retired, I went with Al to Zurich. Simon met us and we had lunch at his house and we did our thing and went on to Vienna where he was performing the Toreador part in *Carmen*. Kind of stole the show, I thought, and then we were backstage afterwards with him. Al and I traveled on to other places, Salzburg, Hungary, Italy, to Florence and traveled around in southern Italy a bit. But then I thought we ought to give Simon an honorary degree. So I think I'm the first scientist who brought up an artist for an honorary degree, but he was well known to the Conservatory. We did and he gave a nice talk at Commencement and sang "Climb Every Mountain." Fabulous voice. So that was in some respects a consequence of some of those travels after I retired. My wife and I went to London a couple of times and stayed in the apartment that had been used by Lawrence before. Those were great experiences. Then we went to Portugal, Morocco and Spain, Gibraltar, because one of our college friends, the same Al Swanson that did the Simon thing, he and I went because one of our fraternity brothers was a professor at Colorado School of Mines. Actually prior to that we'd gone with him down the Colorado River. I've done that twice, once with Lawrence and once with John Warmey. These geologists that do carbonate rocks, that's limestone, dolomites, includes reefs. So, one summer they take their students to a place where the reefs are forming, like I visited the Australian Great Barrier Reef. I was able to scuba dive in these places in the Pacific, by the way. So they get paid to take their students to do this diving on reefs to see how these carbonates form today and then they go to spectacular ancient deposits, including Morocco. So we were able to join up with them. We parleyed that into going first to Portugal and afterwards to Gibraltar and Spain. Then my wife and I went to Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, since we've retired. I've got a list of countries that I've been able to visit. I just marvel at the range of countries, I feel so lucky to have been able to do all that. I have yet to get to Alaska, that's the only state I haven't been to. We did a field trip to Arkansas, from Monmouth, but what part of Arkansas are you from?

Central, central Arkansas, a little town about 30 minutes north of Little Rock.

I went to the Ouachitas, right near there, south of there. Went to the Hot Springs.

Hot Springs is a major tourist attraction, definitely. It's a pretty little town.

[01:15:55]

Well, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about sculpting.

Another place we went for winter getaway was Scottsdale, and Carol and I, we go to the Thursday night is Art Night, all the galleries are open at night with wine and cheese in a lot of them and it's kind of a special thing. We're walking down the street and I see this gallery window across the street and there are these boulders, sort of balanced, and I said to Carol and said "Is epoxy that good?" because they're just in contact like that. So we went in and I spoke to the gallery, the artist wasn't there. Learned you have to drill underwater and put in a steel rod and then epoxy these things together. So I knew a beach up on Lake Superior that had marbled. Incidentally I took sculpture at Augustana, because it was a requirement, you know how you have to take a variety of things. So I took sculpture and I sculpted something out of wood and out of clay, and that doesn't have much to do with this except it was my first interest in it. But anyway, I thought of this beach and I'd had a student do an independent study project in that vicinity, didn't have anything to do with the boulders, but there's just such a variety of them, I thought it's just too bad this is pretty inaccessible. People just don't get there. They had such a variety of texture and fabric and color and shape. It just was neat. I thought, I could do this. So I came back and told Rob Neilson about this and he said "Well, I don't have a class going on, you could start doing it." So I did. It was really fun, you just get lost in what you're doing. So he came by one time and said, "You ought to have a show in the Mudd." I didn't even know we had a room, a gallery, at the time. It's fairly new I think, for that purpose. So I thought, Geez, either he doesn't have any standards or he's pulling my leg. But later on, as you know it happened, Pat Riley kind of took me under his wing and helped me set it up and arrange for it. There were over 100 people that came out and it was really a hoot. So I still enjoy doing that but mostly I play golf. I played over 120 times this year. So that's a very absorbing passion just in terms of time, the amount of learning that you have to try to carry out. It can get under your skin. I have fun doing that.

Is there anything else that you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered?

I guess that pretty well, I mean there's so much here, that I might have missed. I guess I didn't touch on my activities with organizations and the National Association of Geology Teachers, that should be included I guess, but I just count my blessings and appreciate continuing in the life of the college. We really enjoy the concerts and the sports. I go to an awful lot of things that the college has. I have the office to go to which is extra special. It's been a great life.

[End: 01:21:11]