

**University of Illinois Student Life and Culture Archives
Quad Day Oral History Project
Willard Broom
Urbana, Illinois
February 17, 2010**

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

Daniel Raymond: February 17, 2010. We at the Archives Research Center in Urbana, Illinois. I am sitting here with Willard Broom who was a student at the University of Illinois in the late sixties and early seventies.

Willard Broom: Yes.

DR: And also we are going to talk about the student protest movement focusing on the rumor center and Quad Day. I like to start out these interviews by introducing, having you state your full name, where you are from, what your early family life was like. If you had any siblings and where you grew up and stuff like that.

WB: My name is Willard Broom and I came to the University as a freshman in the fall of 1967. And I was actually the fourth member of my family to come to the U of I. My father was here during the Depression and was a county extension agent or farm advisors, as they were called, in Bond County. So I grew up in Greenville, Illinois.

DR: Small town or?

WB: Small town. Forty five hundred people. Forty five miles from Busch stadium.

DR: Ok.

WB: And my three older brothers had come to the U of I and in fact were here when I came in 1967. One was one staff in the College of Agriculture and a grad student in the College of Communications. And my two older brothers were both in law school.

DR: Oh, ok. Do you remember what high school you went to?

WB: Went to Greenville high school.

DR: Greenville high school in Greenville, Illinois.

WB: One hundred and thirty five people.

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DR: In total?

WB: Graduating class of one hundred and thirty five.

DR: Ok.

WB: Which was and still is the largest graduating class they've had.

DR: Really?

WB: Yes.

DR: Surprising. Kind of an odd thing. How did... So did you just go to U of I, did you have a choice? Or did you look at other schools? Or was it kind of set in stone since everybody else in your family went?

WB: It wasn't... I had a choice but what are the choices?

DR: Yes.

WB: I didn't have a choice to go to a private school because we didn't have the financial means to do that.

DR: Ok.

WB: So I had to go to...

DR: A state school.

WB: A state school. I put myself through college.

DR: Ok.

WB: So... And I looked at Western because I had a friend who went to Western. But no.

[laughter]

DR: Ok, so what were your first impressions of the campus when you got here as a freshman in 1967?

WB: It was huge. It was exciting. It was full of people like I had never met before. I came from, obviously, a very homogenous community. But the other thing that I remember pretty

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distinctly from my freshman year living in a cooperative of thirty guys was that I meet people that were so smart that I didn't know people came that smart.

[laughter]

WB: There were smart kids in my high school but these people were really smart.

DR: Could you talk more about the cooperative where you lived? Where it was located on campus?

WB: It is still on campus but in a different location. Koinonia is now on Daniel Street between Third and Fourth.

DR: Oh, ok.

WB: At the time I was here it was at the corner of Fourth and Daniel. It was a men's cooperative sponsored by the Baptist Church. On the other side of the Baptist Church was a women's cooperative called Stratford. I was not Baptist but it cost two thirds what a dorm cost to live there.

DR: Oh, ok...

WB: Six hundred and forty dollars a year room and board.

DR: That's pretty cheap. Closer to the Quad than probably the dorms. So that is not that expensive.

WB: Yes. And pretty cozy. And all thirty guys we all got along well.

DR: That's good.

WB: And we all took turns cooking and doing chores. It was a good place to live.

DR: Do you know when you entered what your major was or what you planned on studying?

WB: My major was agricultural communications and with an interest in being in the field of advertising as it relates to agri-business.

DR: Ok.

WB: That is where is started.

DR: Did you notice... Was the student protest movement and the Vietnam War have a big impact on your freshman year? When you first came in did you notice any of that?

WB: No.

DR: No? So when did it start then as a follow up questions.

WB: I was totally oblivious.

DR: Ok.

WB: My first conscious awareness of any of that was the following summer, the summer of 1968, I am at home and right before I came back to school and there was the Democratic Convention in Chicago.

DR: Ok.

WB: And I sat in front of the television with my parents and was astounded at what I saw. I was outraged as were my parents. And then a little dim light came on in my head at that point and when I came back to campus, not only had that happened which really impacted everyone's awareness, even people like me, but the other thing that happened at the beginning of the fall of 1968 was Project 500.

DR: Ok.

WB: So we went from a campus my freshman year of two what were called Negroes, two hundred and fifty Negroes and those included international students from Africa.

DR: Oh, I see.

WB: They were not African Americans. I mean it was international students, graduate students.

DR: Oh, including graduate students.

WB: Two hundred and fifty total.

DR: Oh, that's a big jump then.

WB: And athletes. I always made a joke later about out of that two hundred and fifty if you took out the students from Africa and the athletes, I knew him.

[laughter]

DR: So there weren't many.

WB: There weren't many. A kid from Chicago I know him from facebook now, he is a black student and went through fraternity rush and got bonged and the fraternity became headlines.

DR: And this was your freshman year?

WB: My sophomore year.

DR: Sophomore year, ok.

WB: Well, maybe it was freshman but anyway...

DR: Before Project 500 though?

WB: Before Project 500. Yes it was my freshman year. Come back in September of 1968 and now there are five hundred African American freshman. Actually there was six hundred. We thought five hundred. But it was completely different.

DR: So how did the five hundred new African American students change kind of the campus experience for you your sophomore year?

WB: I was still pretty insulated but I immediately knew that I didn't know.

DR: Yes, yes coming from a small town.

WB: Yes. And over the course of the falls semester there were actually, very unusually, there of us that came from my high school together to the U of I. I mean that is a high percentage and second semester LAS offered a course, LAS 199, called the African American experience. And it was a two hour credit course that you could take to learn something about being Black in America because none of us knew anything about that. So we took it as a group from my hometown. And it was every Tuesday night I have a memory of it. It probably wasn't the cause but.

DR: Yes.

WB: It was like I learned something I never knew before. So freshman year I entered a new world and sophomore year the world got exponentially larger for me. Now the war was in full bloom. I was in ROTC.

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DR: Oh were you? Ok. What was the ROTC program like at that time?

WB: It was filled with people like me who had decided before they came to college since we are all going to Vietnam better to go as a second Lieutenant than a private.

DR: Ok.

WB: So you get in the ROTC so you can be an officer. By my sophomore year I am realizing and everyone is realizing that the second Lieutenants are getting killed off.

DR: Yes.

[laughter]

WB: So you combine a declining survival rate of second Lieutenants with a growing awareness about this war is not right.

DR: Yes.

WB: And by the end of my sophomore year I was out of ROTC.

DR: And you could just... How did that process, could you just leave ROTC?

WB: You could just leave it within the first two years. At the end of two years in order to continue you had to sign on.

DR: I see.

WB: And make a commitment. So I got out mid sophomore year or maybe I dropped off mid semester, second semester. I don't remember.

DR: Ok. Just as a side note, did you ever serve overseas in Vietnam?

WB: No.

DR: Were you ever drafted? Or you never enlisted, so.

WB: No, I had a college deferment and by the time I was getting ready to graduate they instituted the lottery.

DR: And you got a good draft card?

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WB: I got a high number.

DR: That is good then. So going back to.

WB: Good but completely arbitrary.

DR: Yes, yes. Going back to the new African American students other than opening your eyes to some of the other aspects of American life, did you notice an increased tension on campus?

WB: Yes because there was a support for the African American students from many of the broader community for the injustices that they were encountering.

DR: Off the top of your head can you think of a few?

WB: Racism in the dorms. Racism in the classroom. Professors saying inappropriate things to students in Project 500 in class. And so there were demonstrations, rallies about that. There were demonstrations and rallies about the war.

DR: Ok.

WB: And I should go back and point out that in the spring of 1968 in April Martin Luther King was assassinated and in June Robert Kennedy was assassinated. So if you think about what was happening it was pretty intense.

DR: Going back, you mentioned the war protests. Do you have any memory of when those kind of started standing out in your mind or when they became more heated or what they were even protesting about and what kind of groups were protesting?

WB: My memory is being aware of them starting in the fall.

DR: Of your sophomore year?

WB: Of sophomore year.

DR: Ok.

WB: I am sure they were there my freshman year but I don't have any memory it.

DR: Ok.

WB: But I became aware of them sophomore year. They were kind of fairly common. There were protests against companies coming to campus to recruit who were part of the war industrial complex, Dow Chemical made napalm. They came to recruit. That was protested. There were defense sponsored research projects on campus. Those were being protested. So more stuff was starting to happen. Becoming more visible. And there were lots of teach-ins, they were called. These were informal noon hour typically kind of speeches done by students or faculty or activists that traveled the country.

DR: Do you remember where these teach-ins occurred. Was in it in the free speech are of the Union or?

WB: South lounge at the Union.

DR: South lounge, ok. And how about some of the main places the protest occurred. Was it on the Quad or was it north by engineering or?

WB: It was on the Quad. The Dow recurring was on engineering campus.

DR: Ok. And do you remember any of the specific names or were these just students? How did they know to come to protest like Dow Chemical coming? Just because they were coming or was there some sort of leadership or, I guess it wouldn't be an RSO, but any sort of student body group?

WB: Yes there was Students for Democratic Society, SDS.

DR: Ok.

WB: There were students who were identified as leaders of the protest movement and actually one of them was my TA in world religions. Do they still have a world religions course? Do you know?

DR: I think so. Yes they do.

WB: One of the most popular courses on campus at that time. The lecture was in the auditorium with Harry Tebow who was a liberal democratic philosophy professor who kind of open my eyes to a lot of stuff. My discussion section was... I want to say Schmidt was his name. He was a philosophy graduate student who led discussion well. That took place immediately before ROTC drill.

[laughter]

WB: So I had to come to class wearing my uniform.

DR: Oh.

WB: And, you know, I increasingly knew this was not a good thing.

DR: Good thing. Yes.

WB: I was never... I don't remember him ever saying anything or whatever. I just knew that this was an inconsistency I couldn't reconcile.

DR: Did you notice a difference, you mentioned that the world religion and philosophy department was liberal, as an agriculture student in that school did you notice that the agriculture professors were more conservative or did you see a divide between the faculty in that respect?

WB: I don't remember thinking about that.

DR: Ok. And now you were a student, as a student you were employed under Dan Perrino? Or how did that come about? How did you get into administration while you... You were an undergraduate when you were helping in that right?

WB: My sophomore year I needed to get a part time job, like a lot of students. Wanted to work ten or fifteen hours a week and my older brother had worked in the office as a graduate assistant prior to me getting to school and he knew the head secretary.

DR: Ok.

WB: And he told me, "go talk to the head secretary. Tell her you want."

DR: A job, yes.

WB: "A ten hour a week as office boy." So I went to her and she hired me while in... My older brother had worked in the office when it was called the office of the Dean of Men.

DR: Ok, that is what I was just about to ask. So when you came on did they change that Dean of Men, Dean of Women structure into Dean of Students?

WB: Student Programs and Service.

DR: Programs and Services.

WB: That had actually been done a long, a year or two before I got there.

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DR: Ok.

WB: But I didn't know it. I mean I didn't know any of this stuff. So I ran the printing room. I did the printing. We used to have machines called mimeograph machines and didomachine because there was no Xerox.

DR: So how did those work?

WB: So the secretary would type up on a special master document and we'd take it down to the printing room in the basement where we had a mimeograph machine and run them off.

DR: Oh, ok.

WB: I mean there's a lot of that going on. So that is what I did. And you know kinds of odds and ends.

DR: Ok, so that was under the Student Programming and Services?

WB: Yes and Dan Perrino was the Dean.

DR: Ok.

WB: I mean I knew who he was but he was the Dean and I was a brand new student worker.

DR: Printer boy.

WB: Yes.

DR: Ok, so how did that, how did you gain... You didn't stay as printer boy right? You gained more responsibilities.

WB: Gained more responsibilities but I always stayed a printer boy.

DR: Oh.

[laughter]

DR: Officially.

WB: And started doing more and more odds and ends.

DR: Ok.

WB: And doing odd jobs. Dan, as you may have gathered, he was an incredibly active and all over the place. So he always had to have a lot of stuff where he was going. So I would help him carry stuff.

DR: Oh, I see.

WB: Help him get to a place and get arranged. Because he just didn't have enough hands.

DR: Yes.

WB: And so we had a chance to talk as we walked over to the Union or wherever and we got to be pretty comfortable with each other. And so he gave me more responsibility and I was hungry for it.

DR: Yes. What was it... You kind of mentioned this but what were your first impressions of Dan Perrino?

WB: He was unbelievable. He was the most creative person I had ever seen. He was bright, energetic, and he really cared about people. Genuinely cared about people. And that was exciting.

DR: Do you think that his attitude kind of reflected in the overall office of the Student and Programming?

WB: Yes. Absolutely. He was maybe the only administrator at the University that the students trusted. The office was a very colloquial nontraditional office.

DR: Ok.

WB: It was a group of people who were intensely dedicated to kind of creating a new kind of campus culture. And so it was quite an office.

DR: So in what do you mean by creating a new campus culture? Can you think of...

WB: When I came in the fall of 1967 it was a campus that was based on the life founded fraternities and sororities because that was really the super structure of student life. Fraternities and sororities kind of ran everything. The residence halls were there but they weren't organized. So the whole campus was set by the Greek system. That had been the case, as I now know, for the most of the twentieth century.

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DR: For most universities.

WB: Because of Thomas A. Clark and Fred Turner. And that was shifting dramatically to a more democratic, more open, more transparent, accessible, student oriented rather than system oriented.

DR: So the office was open not just to fraternities but to everyday students.

WB: And Dan worked hard at that.

DR: Yes.

WB: He's a fraternity man. He had no animus to the Greek system but it tended to insular and exclusive.

DR: How about you? Did you ever join a fraternity or?

WB: Yes, yes.

DR: And what fraternity was that?

WB: Farmhouse fraternity.

DR: Ok and when did you join.

WB: Joined the second semester of my freshman year but I didn't move in until my sophomore year.

DR: And how did you find that experience?

WB: It was a good experience.

DR: Yes.

WB: Yes. It was a good experience. It was a good place to live. A very warm nurturing environment. But it grew increasingly confining to me.

DR: Ok, how so?

WB: Well, by the end of my sophomore year I had transferred out of the College of Agriculture into advertising in what is now the College of Media.

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DR: Ok.

WB: I was very involved in campus matters not College of Agriculture matters.

DR: I see the connection wasn't there.

WB: So my focus was increasingly external. And by its nature really a fraternity is more inwards looking. Not that there is pressure necessarily. It's just that's what it is. There is no overt pressure.

DR: Ok, do you remember... When were you first introduced to Mark Herriot or Dave Bechtel or did you know Hugh Satterlee as an undergraduate? Was there a relationship there?

WB: Well, I knew Dave because he was an assistant dean in the office and that's where I worked.

DR: Yes. Did you ever work under him or do you remember how you guys...?

WB: The fun part of my job was when you are in the printing shop for an office like that before there is a Xerox machine or email or computers or anything like that is everyone who sent out a letter I had to print it.

DR: Oh, so you worked for everybody.

WB: So I worked for everybody and, you know, it's kind of boring. And so when I was printing it I would read it. So I kind of knew what everybody was doing.

DR: Oh, ok.

[laughter]

DR: That's a good way to learn.

WB: Yes, yes it is a great way to learn.

DR: Yes.

WB: So I mean I had a unique vantage point as to what was happening in the office.

DR: How about Mark Herriot?

WB: Mark, Mark was a student who was active in the interfraternity council and this would have been my junior year. And I had gotten to know him. I was not particularly enamored with him. I thought he was kind of a conservative frat boy. So I mean I knew lots of people I didn't figure I would spend with but he would have been in that category.

DR: Ok. To put it bluntly.

WB: Right, right.

DR: Ok. Do you think the overall student population viewed deans and administrators, in total not just in the Student Activities and Programming, negatively or positively?

WB: Oh, negatively. No question.

DR: Ok. And why do you think that was or like what were the main reasons for that?

WB: Because the history of the administration was a history of building rules, regulations, and system to control student life. And that's naturally going to be an antagonistic relationship. Going back again, I feel like I straddle two eras. My freshman year women had hours.

DR: Oh, ok. So talk more about those restrictions. I didn't know they still had hours in 1967.

WB: The last year women had hours was my freshman year. Women had to be home at eleven o'clock during the week and one a.m. on Friday and Saturday. And if you were late, because there was a guard at the door, if you were late you got late minutes. So in other words if you came home at 1:03 you got minutes, three late minutes. And after you got x number of late minutes, I don't know how many, then you got to be the guard at the door.

DR: So you had to stay in.

WB: Yes.

DR: So you had to be back. I see.

WB: Well, men had no hours. Men had no rules.

DR: Oh, ok. So it was mostly the women who had the regulations?

WB: The theory was... The old theory was you control the women, you control the men.

DR: That's true probably.

WB: If you control them women, then you will control the men. And it is largely true at that time, and maybe it still is, I don't know. I mean if you think about it in today's world how just utterly crude that is. How disrespectful. How discriminatory. How wrong. How offensive. But that is what deans did. That was what the administration did. Was create these structures of control and... And they did it little or no student input.

DR: Oh, ok. So how did that... So when they did away with hours going into your sophomore year, what was the student reaction? Were they happy? Saying they are kind of listening to us now or were they still outraged about... Well, did they still want more freedom?

WB: Wanted more freedom.

DR: Ok.

WB: And other issues had blossomed.

DR: Such as Project 500...?

WB: Civil rights and Vietnam and the environment was starting to... The first Earth Day was a year and a half away.

DR: Ok.

WB: And we had student power. We had all these committees and organizations on campus making rules and policies but didn't have any students. The UC Senate, the academic Senate at that time and the only people who belonged to the Senate were full professors. No students.

DR: No students.

WB: And now you've got the Urbana Champaign Senate with two hundred and fifty people. Fifty of them are students and there are students on every committee doing everything on campus. There were no students on any committee.

[laughter]

DR: That's a big difference.

WB: Yes. So those battles were being waged in front of my eyes. And I didn't know it my freshman year. Well, I knew a little bit about that but I became more aware of it because I walked the Quad as a student and then I'd go...

DR: As an administrator.

WB: And then I'd walk into this administrative office and stuff would be going on. And when Dan and I, I would be carrying the stuff for Dan to a meeting. "Dan what's this about?" And we talked about an issue or problem and I got a real tutorial.

DR: That's real nice. That he'd wanted to talk to you about during walks.

WB: And that's Dan, I mean.

DR: Yes. So were the faculty administrators reluctant to change the rules and the students were pushing for it? Was the outside committee at all involved in that battle?

WB: Oh yes, the outside committee was outraged that the students would be so disrespectful to the administrators and faculty.

DR: And do you think that had a pressure on those conservative administrators to hold strong then?

WB: Yes. So it was a very tense situation and many administrators, many there were a number, some number of administrators trying to move things forward but you know people don't like to give up power. And so it is the epic struggle of the times trying to get the haves to give something to the have nots. Another rule was that if you were a women you could go into a fraternity house living room as long as there was a chaperone there.

DR: Wow! Could you go upstairs?

WB: No, no, no, no, no. Well, that was falling apart. So the University instituted what was called room visitation, where you could go upstairs. There was this elaborate process and controls and when you have something uncontrollable you have to have a pretty elaborate system to try to control it.

DR: And when was this implemented?

WB: 1969.

DR: So when you were like a freshman?

WB: No, no.

DR: Was it was sophomore?

WB: Sophomore or junior.

DR: Sophomore, ok.

WB: Well, the religious committee, the conservative religious people in Illinois went crazy. Particularly, a minister down in Mattoon and he had a radio program and boy he just, he just created all kinds of problems for the University by talking about how the President and Chancellor of the University were encouraging students to have premarital sex. Which had never taken place prior to this, premarital sex.

DR: Yes, not, yes.

[laughter]

WB: A lot of the wedge divisiveness that you see in politics today were happening at that time too.

DR: So what were some of the... In what ways did your role as the student administrator or, I guess, better yet what did Dan Perrino and his administration do to kind of further that progress instead of fall back?

WB: Dan was, Dan was always committed to finding the common ground that people have. And so he was instrumental in brining people together to have them meet each other personally rather than demonize each other at a distance.

DR: Ok.

WB: And whenever you are sitting across the table and having a cup of coffee with someone who's unlikable most people are decent enough to be decent about that.

DR: Yes.

WB: And to have a civil conversation and you come to find out that, yes, we may disagree over this part of it but you've got some of the same concerns I've got about getting through college or... I am worrying about getting through college and you are worried about how your kids are going to get through college. We may be thirty years apart in age.

DR: Same kind of idea.

WB: There's a lot of things that are similar to us.

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DR: OK, well let's talk about the rumor center and your involvement with that or how that came to be. Because I know in my discussions with Dan Perrino we actually stopped to give you a call because he was out of town when the first rumor center was implemented and he only remembers discussing it as like a conceptual idea but was not there when it was actually implemented. So he couldn't remember why or the year or like the event that caused it. So do you have any idea?

WB: I don't remember why either necessarily. My first memories are during some of the major anti war demonstrations.

DR: Any idea of the year?

WB: I want to say the spring of 1970.

DR: Spring of 1970, ok.

WB: And there may have been some fall of 1969 but I don't know.

DR: Probably spring of 1970.

WB: I don't remember the fall of 1969 having but that didn't mean it.

DR: That they didn't happen. Ok, that's fine.

WB: The spring of 1970 and then kind of leading up to May of 1970 was extremely tense, extremely active in terms of antiwar protests. And had a level of confrontation and violence that was really unknown to American universities.

DR: Was that Kent State time?

WB: Kent State was one of the events of May of 1970 but there were also the Armstrong brothers in Madison, Wisconsin that bombed the mathematics building in Madison killing three people.

DR: Oh, and that was before Kent State?

WB: That was about the same...

DR: Time.

WB: Same time. If you go to the webpage, the homepage, of the University of Missouri their campus landmark, we have the Alma Mater, out in their Quad is seven limestone columns. What used to be around those limestone columns was old Main. Old Main got burned down.

DR: Oh, wow. Wow!

WB: During the campus protests. I mean there were occupations of president's offices. I mean there was a lot of stuff going on in the spring of 1970 that was just new to everyone's experience.

DR: What, you mentioned other destruction things happened at other campus do you remember anything specifically destructive that happened in spring of 1970 and where?

WB: Oh yes. It may have started in the fall of 1969.

DR: In that time period, that is fine.

WB: At that time there was no bus system and most students did not have car. And there was no Marketplace. There was no North Prospect Avenue. So if you had to buy something you bought it in campus town. There were clothing stores, drug stores.

DR: Oh, and this would be Green Street or like downtown Champaign?

WB: Yes Green Street.

DR: Green Street, ok.

WB: Example, there was a locally owned drug store chain and I remember going in having to buy shampoo and on the bottle, this was before barcodes, on the bottle the manufacture had printed the price as part of the just the overall label of a \$1.20. The local drug store had put a price tag sticker over that, it was a \$1.50. So that was merchandising was done in campus town.

DR: You had to.

WB: It was a monopoly. And so there was extreme bitterness. Records, records which is how you listen to music.

DR: Back then, yes.

WB: Were incredibly expensive because there were only two companies that sold them.

DR: I see.

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WB: Just things like that. So one of the first real angry protests down Green Street against the war, the rocks came flying out of that crowd and all the windows in all the stores were gone. So as you walked down Green Street it was plank.

DR: Ok. Every window was plywood.

WB: Every window was plywood. And so think about doing that today. I mean if you walk down there today between Wright and Fourth Street the only place that wasn't plywood was at Fifth and Green, there were two places, but at Fifth and Green was a tennis shop but they also sold clothes for dance students. And it was an owner that everybody liked. So his windows were...

DR: A clear message then.

WB: Yes. So then protests started going south on Wright Street and all those windows got blown out because they were throwing rocks through the University windows. Well, if I go over to the Armory where ROTC was all those windows were broken. Painting, spray painting. There was a Molotov cocktail thrown at the Champaign police department. I have a vague memory of a bomb scare at Lincoln Square. So there was a lot of violence.

DR: Tension. So that, that is a good segway to the rumor center.

WB: So what was happening was we had these big demonstrations. We had several thousand people marching around campus and communication was extremely difficult. And mom and dad are sitting up in Chicago or Palatine or wherever and they are concerned about what is happening on campus because Dan is down there! And some irresponsible somebody would call mom and dad or get on a radio station and say they've just bombed the Assembly Hall.

DR: Yes, something far fetched.

WB: And WGN radio would put out "The Assembly Hall in Champaign has been bombed." Or "Two people were killed at the Armory." Or, you know, just rumors. So the rumor center was set up that we were, we did... Obviously we worked for the University because everybody who was there... I mean Dan Perrino worked for the University.

DR: Yes.

WB: But the accountability was to the facts not to the public relations line or to promoting a point of view. So you called the rumor center and people did. "I heard the Assembly Hall was bombed is that true?" "No, we just had a person out there and the Assembly Hall has not been bombed. The police have confirmed it has not been bombed. We've had rumor center staff that has been there and it has not been bombed." "I heard two people were killed..." You know?

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DR: Yes.

WB: So we would often confirm it with rumor center staff.

DR: And who composed the staff? You did and students?

WB: Students and young staff.

DR: Anyone who wanted to help?

WB: People who were willing to kind of go out there on the street.

DR: Ok.

WB: Some people were too afraid to go out there on the street. I meant there were cops and National Guard running around with rifles. And I was too dumb to be scared.

[laughter]

DR: Somebody had to do it.

WB: So if there was a demonstration I would go along with the demonstration and take a bunch of dimes because whenever we'd get by a pay phone...

DR: Just call in.

WB: I'd call the rumor center and say, "There is, I am guessing about fifteen hundred people and we are at the undergraduate library. Started on the Quad. Had a few speeches and now we are at the undergraduate library." Because the routine was that you had a rally on the Quad, a thousand people something like that. By the time the speakers got done you probably had about fifteen hundred. You'd go to the undergrad around that atrium, fifteen hundred people around that atrium, "Join us, join us, join us," shouting down into the atrium.

DR: Wow.

WB: So that would get everybody inside who was interested to come out and now we've got twenty three hundred in sum and you walk over to the six pack and do a snake walk through the six pack, "Join us, join us." And by the time you've gotten done with the six pack you've got thirty five hundred people.

[laughter]

DR: That's a lot of people.

WB: And then you start marching around through the Armory and other places more symbolic now that you've got...

DR: The people.

WB: And impressive array of people. So I was one of the people who would go with them and then just stop once and a while and say, "There are now thirty five hundred people and I think we are going to Armory."

[laughter]

WB: "And I've seen no one arrested and no one is hurt. A bunch of windows have been broken."

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WB: Now there were as things started escalating toward May more stuff started happening.

DR: Where was like the... Since you were out on the street where was like the command center of the rumor center? Where was the main locus?

WB: In Dan Perrino's office. 110 Student Services Building.

DR: And do you remember, you might not, when Dan was gone do you know who finally decided to implement it. Kind of spearhead it. Because he didn't seem to know much about the rumor center.

WB: It was probably Bob Brown. Bob was Dan's associate dean and was a returned Lieutenant Colonel in the Marines and he really kept the office going. He was like chief of staff. Dan is running around. Dan's at meetings and gatherings and doing all kinds of stuff that nobody else could possibly do but there is an office back here that needs to be run and that was what Bob did.

DR: Ok.

WB: So Bob organized. Dan had the idea but more often than not Dan was then gone to the next idea.

DR: Yes.

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WB: And Bob and other people would implement it. I mean Dan would help but he's moving on.

DR: Ok. And how about other times the rumor center... Was it like an ad hoc basis, as needed basis that it came?

WB: Totally ad hoc. Totally as needed, yes.

DR: And was it at any point like operational plans or anything drawn up for it.

WB: I remember there being a rumor center manual but I don't...

DR: Yes, I think we have it in here somewhere.

WB: Ok.

DR: So when do you think...

WB: I do, I do remember there was a momentary, momentary concern about...

DR: This is from a lot later. An operating manual.

WB: Oh, this is from me.

DR: Yep, that's why I asked. We are looking at a document, I think what's the date on it?

WB: 1980.

DR: 1980, it is like a rumor center operating procedures so. I am asking because Dan Perrino couldn't remember how many, if it was ever formalized because, as you said, he was on to other things. And I wanted to ask you.

WB: Other things we've had meningitis outbreaks. We had...

DR: To use that for. Ok, so not just, it wasn't exclusively for student protests.

WB: Later on. Anytime, anytime the rumor...

DR: Mill started.

WB: The need to have accurate information out there was not being met we would, whatever it was, meningitis we would put together the rumor center. See this is, I don't know, there is no date on this but here they talk about Bob Brown, associate dean of students, as director of the center.

DR: Ok. Yes. How about Kenn Allen's involvement with the rumor center?

WB: Kenn, Kenn was assistant. Bob was associate dean. Kenn was assistant dean.

DR: Assistant dean, ok.

WB: Yes, yes.

DR: Do you think the rumor center was effective in its purposes in the 1970s and earlier on.

WB: Oh, I have no question in my mind. Some people thought it was too effective because what we found out at one point was that people were coming from other towns and other campuses to join a demonstration. So they called the rumor center to find out where it was.

DR: In case they didn't get the memo or forgot where it is. That is funny.

[laughter]

WB: Not quite the intent of the rumor center but.

DR: What do you think, if you could name one of the main things the rumor center helped to do or prevent what would that be? Can you think of anything?

WB: I don't know how I can judge that. I think, I have to believe that people from outside of the community benefitted greatly from it because giving accurate information was very difficult.

DR: Ok. I ask because, I don't know if I can dig it out, but there was a few newspapers from other like universities even down south saying how wonderful this idea of a rumor center is and asking for our blueprint, which probably led to the creation of a manual because if people are asking about it you have to do that.

[laughter]

WB: Yes.

DR: In those articles they mentioned how they liked to implement that because it kind of calmed tensions on campus because if you hear Assembly Hall's been bombed parents are calling saying how come the school is not shut down and things like that. In calming those fears it sort of prevent the escalation of something dramatic happening between the National Guard or the police and the closure of school, which University of Illinois never went through, which was...

WB: Well, we never went through it but we were close in effect. I mean we used the rumor center it was probably twenty years ago when we had three students die within days of each of meningitis.

DR: Oh, ok.

WB: Worst that has ever happened on a college campus.

DR: Meningitis outbreak, ok.

WB: And they were heavily involved. I don't know if you read the story about no arms and legs that came back and graduated last May.

DR: No, no I didn't hear about that.

WB: She was one of those. So that wouldn't have been twenty years ago. That would have been ten years ago.

DR: Oh, because I knew we kind of had a mini meningitis scare two years ago, a year or something?

WB: Yes, yes. No this was something ten or twelve.

DR: But nobody died because I know a friend of mine got meningitis and was pretty sick for a long a time.

WB: We had people freaked out like crazy because the symptoms of meningitis are...

DR: You act kind of goofy don't you?

WB: No you get a sore throat.

DR: Oh really? Ok.

WB: And a pain in the neck.

DR: A pain in the neck, yes.

WB: Well, how many times do you have that every winter?

DR: Anytime you have a cold, yes.

WB: Yes. So we had literally, totally in some of the dorms and parents were crazy. And WGN TV. We had a rumor center set up. We had a hotline, a rumor center, whatever you want to call it and at nine o'clock WGN TV would come on. They would make a report that was totally inaccurate.

[laughter]

DR: Yes.

WB: And the phones would just go crazy. And I mean it's just... Bad information has legs.

DR: Yes.

WB: So anyway, hotline, rumor center there was any number of different...

DR: Different titles for it. Ok. Let's move on then to the next big event in our kind of administration student protest era thing, is the first Quad Day. If you have anything to say before I ask any questions? Or just any background about when it started and how long after the rumor center? It wasn't exactly in that spring 1971...

WB: It was 1971, yes.

DR: Was it in the fall of 1971 then?

WB: Yes.

DR: During new student week?

WB: Yes.

DR: Ok so the beginning.

WB: The day before classes began. And it would have been September of 1971. You know May of 1970 was really kind of a peak in many respects but the school year of 1970-1971 was very, very difficult as well.

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DR: Ok.

WB: The war kept getting worse. Tensions escalated. It may not have been at Kent State. There may not have been bombing of Hanoi or the mining of Haiphong harbor. There's specific acts of war that the United States took that were incendiary to Americans. So the lack of people getting together as a community to have a sense of community was a problem. I mean it was just a bunch of people who were angry either at the situation or at each other. And Dan being Dan he can't abide that. But this is a learning community and we should all be learning together. So that's in the spring of 1971, now I had a much broader portfolio besides printing things.

DR: Yes.

[laughter]

WB: I had been there three years. And he asked if I would be willing to work on, stay the summer.

DR: Oh, ok.

WB: And help organize this new program he has an idea for.

DR: Ok.

WB: And I am like...

DR: So he approached you probably in the spring of 1970 before classes ended?

WB: 1971.

DR: Ok, 1971.

WB: And I am like, "Yes I would like to do this. This will give me a broad inscription. Yes I would love to do that." "So I am going to have two of you do it. I am going to ask you and Mark Herriot to do it together." And I am like, "No."

[laughter]

WB: I am not too crazy about that idea.

DR: But it worked out.

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WB: “But no, no I need to have the two of you do it.” So, “Ok, I’ll do it.” The opportunity was worth... So that summer I worked all summer on pulling together this even that had never been done before. And Dave kind of supervised us. Dan would pop in and out and we’d say, “We’re thinking this.” And, “Yes, yes.” And, “We are thinking this.” And, “No, no.” And “Think about it this way.”

DR: So what other groups did you work, did you work with Illini Guides or news student week?

WB: Illini Guides helped us totally. They were instrumental in it. They helped set it up. They helped take it down. They helped clean up. They got the freshman out there.

DR: That’s a big deal. You need people there.

WB: And the Illini Union. The Director had told, the Director was someone who was kind of the old school, and he was not supportive of Dan and he and Dan clashed quite a bit because he wanted things to be nice and polite and orderly and Dan was kind of a mess. So he told everybody in the Union, “They are going to do this crazy thing. Don’t lift a finger to help.” The associate director how I knew pretty well and who was a good guy, insubordinate, but a good guy. He would literally bring stuff out the side door to me.

DR: Ok, that’s good for you guys at least.

WB: Yes, because he didn’t have anything.

DR: To have a friend there.

WB: I mean the Union had all this stuff.

DR: Tables and chairs and...

WB: And worked with different arms of the University. Many of whom were not supportive of the idea but the Chancellor had sent word out that this was going to happen.

DR: Ok, so pretty much the big supporter was the Chancellor, Jack Peltason?

WB: Well, Dan was a big supporter and he had the Chancellor’s ear.

DR: And Hugh Satterlee too was probably behind it.

WB: Yes, but neither Dan nor Hugh had the clout to get everybody on board but the Chancellor did and he made it clear. So I went to...

DR: This is a letter I found, Dan always likes looking at that letter because it makes him laugh.

WB: Is this Carl? Yes, yes. You know you don't go over to an office and reserve the Quad.

DR: Yes.

WB: In 1970 you don't do that. I went over to the office to reserve the Quad and I knew the guy real well because I had reserved other spaces in the University. And I said, "I am here. I want to reserve the Quad for all day on September whatever." "Yes, I've heard about that." Said, "I think this is the worst idea I've ever heard but I've been told I have to let you do it."

DR: Why do you think people had reservations?

WB: Because every time a whole bunch of students got together it was a riot.

DR: Ok, so that was the main reason.

WB: And they broke windows.

DR: So they were afraid it was just going to be giving them a place to riot and supplying things for them.

WB: Yes, yes. And he said, "I've been told I have to let you do it." Well, this guy and I became very close. We worked together for the next several years very well. But, yes.

DR: Did when Dan Perrino asked you to stay the summer to work on the program, did he mention why, what was the big overall idea of why he thought this needed to be implemented?

WB: The image that he gave that I still remember, and that is a long time ago, it is like a county fair. It is a county fair for the University.

DR: Ok.

WB: I want the students, the new students, to come out onto the Quad and like you do at a county fair see what is here. You may never have been to a county fair but...

DR: I've been to a Quad Day so.

[laughter]

WB: But the old idea of a county fair was that you went to the county fair, state fair, and you got to see the resources of the county. You got to see what was here. Who did what. What was available. You know all these things that were happening in your county and they were all in one place. Well, that was the idea of Quad Day.

DR: Ok. Where do you think Dan got the idea for Quad Day?

WB: Between his left and right ears.

DR: Ok.

[laughter]

DR: I ask because when we were looking up stuff about Quad Day we ran into a few things from Kathy Olseker. Do you know who she was? She was a student.

WB: Yes.

DR: And she kind of had the idea for, I think she was with Illini Guides, and for new student week she wanted to kind of do a county fair thing but she didn't have the support or resources of the campus to actually do it.

WB: Oh, really?

DR: Let's see. Illini Guide fall workshop, that's what she was like the chairman or chairman of the Illini Guides at the 4-H Camp. This is a good one too. I think she called it rap on the Quad because she wanted administrators and people to have a discussion or a rap, as she termed it. But unfortunately, her ideas did not pan out and she resigned kind of disillusioned from the chairman of the Illini Guides and this is actually a letter she wrote resigning. It is pretty bitter to Miriam Shelton.

WB: Oh, really? Oh, wow.

DR: And actually Hugh writes her back saying sorry for the trouble and it was a good idea and we appreciated your efforts. Things like that.

WB: Well, I guess having not read this what I would say was that if a student had an idea and every other administrator on campus said no.

DR: Yes, she went to the wrong part of it. She went to Miriam Shelton instead of Dan with it.

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WB: That is exactly right. And Dan was... That is why students loved him and that is why he was so effective because he would take a student and give him the support necessary and move their idea forward.

DR: Yes, I asked Dan the same question and showed him the same stuff but he didn't really have a memory of her or the idea. But it just seemed kind of interesting.

WB: Yes, that is interesting. I wasn't aware of that.

DR: But anyway back to the real Quad Day. So you played it during the summer and you were planning on having it in September?

WB: Yes, whatever the first day was. I can't remember.

DR: And so what did you plan? What activities did you plan for it? What was your... Over the summer other than just reserving the Quadrangle?

WB: Well, we wrote to everybody we could think of to ask them to come out and spend the afternoon there.

DR: Ok.

WB: And meet with people. I think we had a volleyball game. It was student government versus the vice chancellor. We had a hot dog stand. We had in the evening a student, faculty, staff talent show.

DR: Ok.

WB: And then we ended the evening with a soul band that went until like one in the morning or something.

DR: Yes. So like what... Can you give examples of who you asked to come to Quad Day? Were they administrators, staff, faculty, state representatives?

WB: Administrators, faculty, state representatives...

DR: So all of the above.

WB: Important student groups, kind of the major student groups. Anyone we could think of that a new student might be interested in having contact with. Not everyone came. A lot of people said no.

DR: Did the majority say no or did you get a lot of resistance or negative comments.

WB: I don't remember what proportions. What I remember is we went and set it up on the south side of the Union like it is now. And we went all the way to the English Building and at the intersection of sidewalks between Henry and the English Building, where the bicycle path cuts across the Quad, that was where the hot dog stand was. And that was kind of the last thing.

DR: So you attended the first Quad Day then?

WB: Oh, yes, yes. You know I have very... That day was so crazy I just don't have many memories of it. The specifics.

DR: Kind of a blur, yes. But a lot of people did show up?

WB: A lot of people showed up but I remember because, to repeat, we didn't have any stuff in Dan's office. So if we wanted the stuff we had to find it. That was the genius of having Mark Herriot because he was a townie and he knew where things were in town.

DR: Ok.

WB: So we had to get, for the hot dog stand that the Illini Union guy ran he couldn't get any stuff from the Union.

DR: Because they wouldn't give it to him.

WB: So we had to go find a tent like thing for him to be in. And the only place we could get it was from the local Boy Scout troop and they told us we had to pick it up that morning at like six o'clock. Well, I can tell you I never, I may have been up at six o'clock but it was on my way to bed not getting out of bed.

DR: Yes.

WB: And so I had to get up at six o'clock and go get this damn tent. So, but anyway kind of everything that happened during the day is a little fuzzy for me. I was really running around a lot.

DR: Was it majority freshman or did a lot of upper classmen come? Or could you not tell, it was kind of a mix?

WB: I don't think I could gauge that at the time.

DR: But there was a significant amount of people there.

WB: Yes, it was a surprising success.

DR: And going before the actual... The set up of Quad Day, who helped with that and what did you guys kind of set up other than the hot dog stand, which you mentioned?

WB: Tables and chairs and stuff for each of the booths, groups, and offices that were out there. So we had Facilities and Services, as they are called now, drop off a bunch of tables and chairs. And then the Illini Guides came and set them up.

DR: Oh, ok.

WB: And kind of posted people. We had somebody here so we would ask two Illini Guides, would you mind checking in there once and awhile with these people to see if they need anything and if everything is going all right.

DR: So what kind of people used the tables? Was it student groups or faculty?

WB: Oh, everyone.

DR: Everybody. So they just kind of mixed.

WB: Whether you used it or not it identified your space. But we had lots of trustees.

DR: Oh, ok and how did... Do you remember what they thought of the event?

WB: Everybody loved it. Everybody had a good time. It was relaxed. It was outside. Everybody's excited. You know how exciting new student week. Everybody is fresh. I mean faculty, students, staff they are all...

DR: So it was a good time to have it.

WB: Yes, you get to see all your old friends. And you are meeting all your floor mates and roommates. Yes, it was a fun day.

DR: For the legacy of Quad Day, how do you think... The big difference between Quad Day today and what it was back then?

WB: Obviously the size of it. It has really turned... It is almost like a student organization fair.

DR: That was my impression of it when I was a freshman.

WB: I don't think that is bad but I do think that is different. I think back to we had several of the University trustees who each had a booth to meet students and welcome them to the campus. It is very difficult to imagine the current trustees doing that. The current trustees might.

DR: Not the old trustees.

WB: But not the old ones. You know so maybe what we did was something that really is not reproducible?

DR: Do you think it would be needed?

WB: I don't think anything bad happens from having interaction.

[laughter]

WB: I mean if I came out of Dan Perrino with any one belief it is the belief that when people get together good things happen more often than bad things happen.

DR: Well, obviously good things happened because we are still having Quad Day today and the rumor center was repeated. And we survived the protest movement as a campus.

WB: And we were a better country because of the protest movement.

DR: So before we wrap up is there anything else that you want to say on the topic? Quad Day, rumor center, or anything in general?

WB: In the spring of 1971 I was, right before I was asked to do Quad Day with Dan Perrino overlooking who is this legendary figure on campus, well I was dating a young woman and we broke up. At her request, which was very... It tore me up and hurt me. But she was a very well known folk singer on campus. So after a couple months of cooling off I wrote to her and said I wanted to have lunch with her in Chicago, where she lived and Dan Perrino had something he wanted to talk to her about. "Well, if Dan Perrino wants to talk to me, yes come on up." So we had lunch and I asked her to sing at Quad Day as part of the student, faculty, and staff talent show.

DR: Oh, that is cool.

WB: And she said yes because Dan Perrino asked. I mean I was asking on behalf of Dan. She sang, she is good. I said after the concert let's get together and I want to get your comments because you've been at Quad Day all day. So a couple of days later we got together and we got married.

[laughter]

DR: That is funny. I didn't know that. Dan never mentioned that. Well, it is a good thing you ran Quad Day.

[laughter]

WB: That is the legacy.

DR: Yes, that is the real legacy. That is funny.

WB: And our grandson was born three weeks ago.

DR: Congratulations.

[laughter]

DR: So post college you stayed at the University of Illinois and became an administrator. I don't know if you want to wrap up just by mentioning what you did post collegiately?

WB: Well, I worked for... It was kind of an unusual situation in fall of 1972. There was a major budget crisis, not unlike what we have got going on now. Dan's office, as I understand it, took a thirty three percent budget cut.

DR: Wow.

WB: And he laid off a bunch of people. Moved them to other units. And he reduced his staff by four assistant deans. And he was left over with a little pile of change with not enough money to hire anybody except I was looking for a job and there wasn't much money for most assistant deans but it was a whole lot of money to me. So that is how I got my start.

DR: Ok.

WB: He hired me and thirty three years later I retired as associate dean of students. So it was pretty neat.

DR: Yep.

[laughter]

DR: He's had a big impact on your life. That is good. All right well, last chance if you want to say anything else. Any other personal stories.

WB: No that is fine. We can stop here.

DR: All right well thanks for meeting.

WB: Thank you.

DR: This is a great interview. I really appreciate you coming in.